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Introduction: forum on autoethnography and International Relations II

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The preceding issue of RIS included a Forum on Autoethnography. The Forum was meant to consist of three interrelated essays: an introductory text by Morgan Brigg and Roland Bleiker and two authoethnographic pieces, one by Elizabeth Dauphinee and one by Oded Löwenheim. Due to a mistake in the production process the last essay was omitted from publication. We would like to offer our most sincere apologies to the author, Oded Löwenheim, all the more because his text actually generated the idea for a RIS Forum on autoethnography.

To present the more coherent textual ensemble the Forum was originally aiming for, the RIS has kindly agreed to publish Löwenheim's article together with two shorter commentaries by Roxanne Lynne Doty and Iver Neumann. Löwenheim's text is the one that most directly inserts the 'I' into scholarly writing while the brief comments by Doty and Neumann engage some of the related contentious issues, such as the role of reflexivity and writing styles, the limits of social science methods or the danger of self-indulgence and the related need to differentiate between autoethnography and autobiography. We still preface these texts with the same disclaimer we made in the original Forum: these texts are not meant as a comprehensive take on autoethnography. But we hope to have identified the type of issues – contentious as they may be – that can initiate a productive discussion about the role of the author in scholarly analyses of International Relations.

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