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| The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales welcomes you to Week 2 of: |

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| **From the Councillors** |

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| Each week, some of our Councillors will share with you a selection of articles, analytical pieces, videos and podcasts about what is happening in the world of international affairs. This week, our Councillors will introduce you to a new book on Europe during the Belle Epoque, as well as articles on climate diplomacy and COVID-19 modelling!*Disclaimer: The views expressed below by Councillors are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions.* |

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| [**“The Man in the Red Coat” and Brexit**](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624409/the-man-in-the-red-coat-by-julian-barnes/) Julian Barnes’ latest book, (Random House, November 2019, [**reviewed in *The Guardian***](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/nov/06/man-in-the-red-coat-julian-barnes)) is an account of the life of Doctor Samuel Pozzi, whose portrait was painted by John Singer Sargent, and of Paris in the “Belle Epoque” period.  It is also a story of the close relations between England, France and the United States, including cosmopolitan public figures such as Oscar Wilde, James McNeil Whistler and Sarah Bernhardt.  Writing as Britain was preparing for Brexit, Barnes wryly quotes Pozzi’s maxim, “Chauvinism is one of the forms of ignorance,” accusing his contemporaries of insularity and incuriosity.  French author Barbey d’Aurevilly’s words are uncannily prescient, “England, the victim of its own history, having taken a step towards the future, has now gone back to squatting in its past.”  For a different take on Brexit, read “The Man in the Red Coat.”  Image credit: [**Penguin-Random House**](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624409/the-man-in-the-red-coat-by-julian-barnes/) |

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| *This book was selected by Jocelyn Chey AM. Jocelyn is an Adjunct Professor at the Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney, Visiting Professor at the University of Sydney and an Adjunct Professor at the Australia-China Institute for Arts and Culture at Western Sydney University. She was previously a senior officer in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Jocelyn is a Fellow of Australian Institute of International Affairs.* |

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| [**N**](https://www.e3g.org/library/covid-19-a-new-era-for-climate-action)[**ew Climate Diplomacy?**](https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/covid-19-has-exacerbated-anti-globalisation-sentiments/)2020 was meant to be a big year for climate diplomacy. Now with December’s major COP26 climate conference under a cloud, there are big questions about what climate action is possible today and what forms it could take. A group of writers from E3G, an environmental policy think tank, have reflected on how the COVID-19 crisis “is changing the geopolitical and national conditions climate diplomacy operates within”. In particular it is raising crucial questions about multilateralism and what sort of political and economic arrangements should be in place after the crisis passes. While the piece does not claim to offer answers, the observations are thought provoking for those interested in climate action.Image: Author's own |

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| [**The modelling industry**](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-its-so-freaking-hard-to-make-a-good-covid-19-model/) Pandemics are hard to get your head around. There’s a natural tendency to speculate about what the impacts might be, how long the outbreak will last and how we can curtail it. Governments and media organisations tend to utilise statistical models to try make predictions about pandemics and inform their news coverage. But those models themselves are hard to understand and even harder to develop. US news website *FiveThirtyEight*is known for forecasting election and sports results, but recently their data journalists and science reporters have turned their attention to COVID-19 modelling and have written an explainer article on why it is so hard to build a statistical model for the pandemic. For those interested in a deep dive into COVID-19 stats or who want to become better at interpreting data, this is a good starting point! |

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| *These articles were selected by Alex McManis. Alex holds a Bachelor of Arts with First Class Honours in Government and International Relations from the University of Sydney, where he wrote his thesis on the European Union's behaviour at the 2015 UNFCCC meeting in Paris. He has served on the Council since 2019.* |

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| **From the Interns** |

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| In addition to our Councillors, we will be inviting one of our interns to share with you what they have found insightful or interesting in the world of international affairs over the past week. This week, Nimaya Mallikahewa takes us through two articles on the Indo-Pacific region.*Disclaimer: The views expressed below by interns are their own. The Australian Institute of International Affairs New South Wales does not take policy positions.* |

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| [**Japan's Nuclear Diplomacy**](https://thediplomat.com/2020/03/what-is-the-future-of-japans-nuclear-diplomacy/)Daisuke Akimoto, writing for *The Diplomat,*studies Japan’s role in the push for nuclear disarmament. He highlights that despite its seemingly paradoxical opposition to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) as a nuclear-bombed state, Japan has made significant commitments to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation initiatives both domestically and internationally. Akimoto clarifies that Japan’s opposition to the treaty stems from the perceived necessity to remain beneath the United States’ “nuclear umbrella” and sustain the protection this affords. Akimoto emphasises that Japan should fulfil its moral responsibility to sign the TPNW as a nuclear-bombed state. Image credit: [**Triston Smith/U.S. Navy**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/compacflt/47407185011/in/photolist-2feddsP-nLEpPS-2dNVU48-2hH6AeX-J8tMmz-nRdkzR-HGRpQ9-Qk2zTb-fKwetG-34Ydj3-2bgTqCU-BW6u6F-2ifsuf3-PixWdB-2hw2PVZ-3fTs2u-2gpCqva-23PaHKt-oVFh13-2gjrFwz-2fuZ43X-2gaamVp-eatqVT-2gxfVLf-ndGxX-Sa2cEK-cdTwzG-2fKvNUm-MxynM-rFhguM-RZy4Q7-fKeAFg-EJqJ1n-7Tx3yN-o87857-7kaF5n-2ak79to-2gs87Yc-VBKsAf-CLggbx-2gjsdC8-SBoucZ-WGWALj-oCWEfb-28iVXEd-nQUi8i-23VTaJT-2exiTDz-otHiqx-pSLge) |

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| [**Authoritarianism in the Indo-Pacific**](http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/enabling-authoritarianism-in-the-indo-pacific/)Democratic governance has been declining globally for the past twenty years. Even as Australia attempts to promote democratisation in the Indo-Pacific, Dr Rebecca Strating highlights that foreign policy movements such as the Regional Processing Centres on Nauru can almost encourage the emergence of autocratic regimes. Strating explains that Australia’s reliance on off-shore asylum seeker management has led to a calculated blindness to Nauru’s rising authoritarianism. She emphasises that Australia is more directly complicit through the way aid and development funding is utilised to control the public and the media in Nauru.Image credit: [**Matt Robertson/DFAT**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/dfataustralianaid/12046384666/in/photolist-jmuStm-4QLYSS-ygMSuX-YgLZtC-7rNMUh-9F5jX9-sSTXm-YgLYXC-jmqtVc-jmqwiP-3kkmr-aQL9Fg-fiB44F-jmszjJ-a8vie6-qFzBYR-qFBe5t-qVJMZh-qY2HwH-qCSKqH-qFt3ih-qFzhGK-qFzbfX-qFrXWG-q22GJE-qY2pw4-q25NQF-qFATbk-qY2JwP-qFrRfL-qY2Gm6-qFsXLG-qFrFLz-qFhTmY-qXWZAo-s8uGP5-iroanS-iropwf-irnTKv-irobNh-irnVq4-iroQh4-ironhL-iroQ1n-irnVGX-2iAxiuf-2iAvY3L-2iAtk65-7pcqEC-WJGPb9) |

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| *These articles were selected by Nimaya Mallikahewa. Nimaya is in the final year of a dual Bachelors degree in International Studies and Media (PR & Advertising) at UNSW, where she has focused her research on development aid, transitional justice, maritime security and foreign policy in the Indian Ocean region. She has interned at AIIA NSW since February 2020.* |

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| **What else we're reading** |

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| * Updated daily, the Financial Times Visual and Data Journalism team has compiled '[**Coronavirus tracked**](https://www.ft.com/coronavirus-latest)', which analyses the trajectories of COVID-19 infections and deaths in urban centres and nations around the world.
* Andrew Cockburn, [**writing**](https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v42/n05/andrew-cockburn/like-a-ball-of-fire) in the *London Review of Books,*suggests that arms lobbies in both the US and Russia continue to persuade their governments to invest in unnecessary and often ineffectual armaments, including Russia's "hypersonic glide" missile, the Avangard.
* *Politik,* the UNSW International Affairs Review, has released its second issue for 2020, edited by AIIA NSW intern Nimaya Mallikahewa! Check it out [**here**](https://0b37f787-f634-4992-b19a-700450c9a26b.filesusr.com/ugd/3e203f_46527f87793a49f993f5f95d37c32493.pdf).
* The Guardian [**takes a look**](https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2020/apr/02/shoot-them-dead-extreme-covid-19-lockdown-policing-around-the-world-video-report) at some of the harsh measures being adopted to enforce COVID-19 lockdowns, including some more [**creative**](https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2020/mar/25/squats-drones-and-angry-mayors-how-coronavirus-lockdowns-are-being-policed-video-report) enforcement options like squats and drones.
* In an [**article**](https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/03/29/illuminati-conspiracy-theory-thomas-jeffersion-1800-election-152934?fbclid=IwAR0DVFGfuvFXJBsH8V_CU2e9WsE-VZ4xzqYu5FlUbaE2XnEw2hl3bnTFNoE) for *Politico Magazine*Colin Dickey investigates whether an Illuminati conspiracy theory helped get Thomas Jefferson elected.
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