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We hope that this editorial finds our readers safe and well. Perhaps by the time this editorial appears relief will be on the horizon, rather as we in Europe thought at midsummer. The COVID-19 measures have slowed down our work somewhat, and we can also report that submissions are up some 40% in the past year. This development comes on top of a gratifying increase in our two-year and, more importantly, also our five-year impact factor as a journal. Both developments are wonderful news for the journal, demonstrating that the *EJIR* is as popular a repository as ever for both authors, readers, and for citations by appreciative scholars worldwide. However, this increased volume of manuscripts places even more competitive pressures on our authors. It also means that there is simply more editorial work to do for the same number of people, adding to the pressures of the pandemic, and thus we hope that our reviewers and authors will bear with us in terms of patience. We hope that we are maintaining the editorial standards to which we pledged ourselves when we took on the *EJIR*. We also are immensely grateful for the support of so many reviewers in these difficult times. As we have said before, our experience at the journal has been of the best side of peer review.

Once a year, a committee of the European International Studies Association (EISA) meets to award the best article prize from those published the previous year, in this case 2019. The prize is sponsored by EISA, and the winner is chosen from the OnlineFirst articles published in the previous year by a jury of four: one Editorial team member, two EISA board members, and one external member. In early September the winners were announced, just a few days too late to be included in the 25th Anniversary Jubilee Special Issue that we published so recently. Our sincere congratulations are in order and we hope our readership all join us in praise of this annual *EJIR* best article prize for 2019.

The committee that selected the best article published by the *EJIR* in 2019 was composed of Felix Berenskoetter, Annette Freyberg-Inan (Editorial team), Maj Grasten, and Ted Hopf. There are two winners this year: Deepak Nair, with “Saving face in diplomacy: A political sociology of face-to-face interactions in ASEAN” (Vol. 25, Issue 3), and Ida Danewid, with “The fire this time: Grenfell, racial capitalism and the urbanisation of empire” (Vol. 26, Issue 1).

Deepak Nair, of the National University of Singapore, offers an original analysis of the genesis and effect of practices of “face-saving” in diplomatic interactions within ASEAN. Rejecting an essentialist and orientalist account, Nair persuasively presents a reading of face-saving as a social code originating in the conservative stance among ASEAN’s founding members. The committee was impressed by the reflexive, skilful and rigorous research grounded in social theory, extensive ethnographic fieldwork

and interpretivist method of immersion. Nair's attention to historical context and his systematic and nuanced observation of practices in both formal and informal settings not only allow him to present a rich empirical picture and demonstrate the pervasive nature of this diplomatic habitus; it also directs attention to the power of this social code within a community of practice, providing impetus for new research.

Ida Danewid's intervention into the debate on cities in the global political economy uses the 2017 Grenfell fire in West London as the empirical hook from which to hang a theoretical argument in favor of bringing race into critical IPE. The study of global cities has been on the rise in IR and has drawn attention to new forms of urban violence, hierarchy, and exclusion. Yet, as Danewid argues, for the most part these have been discussed through the prism of widening class inequality under neoliberalism. Scholarship has neglected questions of race and racism, or failed to fully connect them to political economic analysis and critique. Danewid finds this problematic "because although gentrification and neoliberal urbanism operate [. . .], a broader pattern of racialised dispossession and displacement can be discerned" (p. 291). It is this broader pattern that Danewid brings into view. By connecting urban studies and IPE with post/decolonial, black and indigenous studies, she shows how "the 'making' of global cities has typically gone hand in hand with racialized forms of displacement, dispossession and police violence" and reveals "global cities as part of a much wider cartography of imperial and racial violence" (p. 289). In short, understanding the violence of neoliberal urbanism requires us to acknowledge the role of race and racism within capitalism and see that contemporary neoliberal urbanisation is historically embedded in an urbanization of empire.

We congratulate Deepak Nair and Ida Danewid on this outstanding achievement. We hope our readers enjoyed their contributions.

*Geoffrey Underhill, Luc Fransen, Annette Freyberg-Inan, Darshan Vigneswaran
(University of Amsterdam), and Lee Seymour (Université de Montréal)*