

# Part I

## Conflict, Displacement and Loss: Past and Present

*Janet McIntyre* discusses current cascading challenges and looks at colonisation and the role of the Dutch East India Company in shaping the management of the commons in the Cape and Indonesia. The paper aims to enhance our understanding on governance of the commons and ways to address the UN Sustainable Development Goals pertaining to poverty, food and water security, climate change and co-operation across the public, private and NGO sectors. We need to work more creatively across the social and natural sciences to protect the commons. Historians, sociologists and social anthropologists are well placed to make policy suggestions by looking to the past to inform the present social, economic and environmental challenges that are now making the current way of life unsustainable.

*Christine Winter* uses multiple qualitative methods to explore historical documents on the impact of war in the Pacific on New Guinea villagers and their survival during the Pacific War. She uses history to provide a grounded story of conflict, survival, food, barter and education.

*Sharmin Sultana and Mohammad* use secondary qualitative and quantitative data to develop a short vignette to explore the human rights issues of the Rohingya refugees, and two anonymous students explore the challenges of current conflict in West Papua by using multiple forms of mixed data. The need to avoid another East-Timor atrocity is discussed in the context of the fight for indigenous sovereignty and self-determination in West Papua. Finally a paper explores transnational corporations and human rights abuses and the complicity of Australia.

Documentary analysis of records provides a context for examining current conflicts. The section makes a plea to learn from history and ‘not to repeat the mistakes’. Some of the authors are anonymous to enable them to continue to work on the topics as they are living or working within the context that the issues are unfolding.

Jones (2018) stresses that one of the challenges will be to protect those who are displaced and to ensure that immigration departments work with NGOs<sup>1</sup> and that all human beings are treated in a Kantian sense as ‘ends in themselves’, rather than as ‘a means to an end’, a labour force that is only allowed entry when it suits the economy. This applies on land and at sea. Tondo and McVeigh (2018)<sup>2</sup> estimate that more than two thousand lives have been lost trying to cross into Europe:

“According to figures from the International Organization for [Migration](#) (IOM), 2,383 migrants died in shipwrecks in 2017, compared with 100,308 arrivals in Italy. In 2018, with NGO boats under pressure from Maltese and Italian authorities, the number of victims has already reached 1,130, compared with just 20,319 who have landed in the country.”

Border protection is highlighted as a major concern by the Australian Government’s Foreign Policy White Paper (2017) subtitled: ‘Opportunity, Security, Strength’. The record of the Malu Sara Saga (see McIntyre-Mills 2014, 2017, 2018) underlines that when the policy is to protect borders at all costs, human lives can be placed at risk. The Malu Sara patrol boat was built without appropriate floatation tanks and the Torres Strait Islander patrol officers were given inadequate training. They were sent out on rough seas and they were not rescued when they sent out a distress signal. Eventually a volunteer search and rescue officer spotted one last survivor. But by the time they turned back to help it was too late.<sup>3</sup>

## References

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<sup>1</sup>Jones, S. 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/17/aquarius-refusal-was-betrayal-of-european-values-says-charity-boss>

<sup>2</sup>Tondo, L. in Palermo and McVeigh, K. 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/sep/12/migrant-rescue-ships-mediterranean>

<sup>3</sup>McIntyre-Mills 2018 A critical reflection on the case of the sinking of the Malu Sara Rescue Boat, in the case study of the documentary: “A totally avoidable tragedy, ABC four corners documentary. Discussion at <https://archive.org/details/VN860641>