

New Zealand and Australia

If we are to ‘reframe’ migration history, we need to address two of its traditional weaknesses: the tendency to focus on problematic, poor, male and non-white migrants and to ignore migrant agency. This section shows how this can be done through the prism of migration in Australia and New Zealand. Lyndon Fraser’s contribution ‘Both Sides of the Tasman: History, Politics and Migration between New Zealand and Australia’ points the way to a ‘trans-Tasman’ history encompassing the connections and movements across the sea that lies between the two countries. This would in Fraser’s view encourage us to think beyond the nation as a way of defining the world and our past. In ‘Changing Migration Policy from the Margins: Filipino Activism on Behalf of Victims of Domestic Violence in Australia, 1980s–2000s’, Mina Roces puts migrant women and their agency centre stage, moving away from a focus on victimhood. By highlighting the way in which activists were able to shape Australian policy she puts migrants at the heart of policy-making processes, subverting the traditional distinctions between history from above and from below and highlighting the transnational dimension of policy-making. Her work also acts as a reminder that in a different political climate, dialogue and collaboration between migrant groups and government bureaucracy were possible, offering a contrast to twenty-first-century approaches.