Foreword

Andrew Baldwin

Of all the crises that mark our contemporary world, none are as worrying to me as the outpouring of support for white nationalism and white supremacy across Europe and the West. Climate change is a close second. Of course, the former has always been a feature of capitalist modernity. From slavery to colonialism to postcoloniality in the metropole, race and whiteness are constitutive features of the worlds we inhabit, not just the unfortunate by-products of those worlds. What is different today, however, is just how freely white supremacy is articulated and felt in the public domain in the West. What I find most worrying about this development is the way in which white supremacy's governing affects of injury, resentment, betrayal and nostalgia all seem to be underpinned by a populism that repudiates fact, reason and argumentation in favour of fealty and immediate experience. What seems to matter most to those in thrall to this populism is the retention of white power at all costs, regardless of the way populism cynically undermines contemporary institutions, such as science and law. I have never before in my life believed in false consciousness to the extent I do now. It worries me no end that those in power in Britain and America shamelessly exploit the legitimate grievances brought about by four decades of neo-liberal globalisation to service their own will to power.

But I also worry about climate change. I worry about the worlds it stands to unleash. I worry for those who stand to experience its effects most sharply. And I worry for my kids. But mostly I worry about what will happen when the violence of climate change meets with the populist violence of white supremacy. Climate denialism has long been a hallmark of right-wing populism. There is nevertheless a long tradition of right-wing environmentalism, one of the features of which is anti-immigration. Garett Hardin stands as an emblematic figure in this respect. Not only was Hardin one of the twentieth century's most influential environmentalists, he was also virulently anti-immigrant. He stands as a powerful reminder

that 'saving the environment' is never innocent and that always beneath the veneer of environmental discourses are powerful political projects that rest on appeals to 'nature'. I worry that someday this ugly anti-immigrant environmentalism will enter the climate change mainstream. Maybe it already has.

This brings to me to the marvellous book you now hold in your hand. Sarah Louise Nash does not confront issues of race and climate change in *Negotiating Migration in the Context of Climate Change*. She does, however, provide a much-needed avenue for thinking about the international political context in which climate change is more and more articulated as a problem of migration. Her concern in the book is to trace the emergence of the climate-migration nexus as an object of international climate change governance precisely in order to call attention to the boundaries erected around it. Such boundaries, for Nash, are worthy of our consideration because they tell us something about the process by which 'legitimacy' is constructed in international fora. They become emblems of the possible, demarcating not only legitimate and illegitimate speech, but, more importantly, defining the terms of political possibility. When we trace the emergence of these boundaries, what Nash reveals is a curtailed political imaginary that forecloses the possible. Migration becomes reaffirmed as an object of managerial expertise. The nation state becomes reaffirmed principally as a political container of migration. Migration becomes merely adjunct to markets. Migration becomes, in the words of my long-time collaborator and co-author, Giovanni Bettini, depoliticised.

But what kind of fate is this for a social process as ancient as the human story itself? At a world-historical conjuncture that demands radical new ideas and revitalised political awareness, depoliticising migration seems to be moving in a direction that diminishes the efficacy of migration as a powerfully transformational phenomenon. There is always a risk, of course, that the promise of migration can be overstated and that the figure of the migrant can become overburdened, even romanticised, as the privileged site of change. For most of the world's migrants, migration is a struggle. But equally to take a diminished view of migration as merely the state's constitutive outside delimits the horizons of the political imagination. When we follow Nash through international negotiation of the climate-migration nexus, we bear witness to the political work that is being done in the name of 'climate change and migration', whereby the complex socio-political life of migration becomes reduced to just another object of technical expertise. But the reward that comes from reading this book is that Nash also invites us to think beyond this boundary object, to think in ways that take the future seriously and that locate the true

political act as one that holds the future open to all possibilities. She reminds us that in the face of mounting right-wing populism, our political moment requires not closure, control and containment but debate and contestation as the pre-condition for bringing new worlds into being.