

Introduction: *An American Dilemma?*

Pauli Kettunen, Sonya Michel and Klaus Petersen

In the fall of 1938, the Swedish social democratic economist and social engineer Gunnar Myrdal arrived in New York, invited by the Carnegie Foundation to direct a comprehensive study on the racial question in the United States. The fruit of many years of research by Myrdal and some 48 other writer-researchers, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*, published in 1944, was a path-breaking book. In it, Myrdal pointed to the contradiction between the United States' averred commitment to equality and its actual treatment of racial minorities, particularly African Americans.

The book had a significant impact on thinking about race in the United States and about the relationships between racial and ethnic structures and the welfare state more broadly. This is a topic that still puzzles both academics and policy makers today. Many studies make the basic assumptions that the United States failed to develop a robust welfare state because of its ethnic, and especially its racial, heterogeneity, and conversely, that ethnic homogeneity was a precondition for the making of the strong welfare state in Europe and especially in the Nordic countries.¹ Drawing on such assumptions, scholars have more recently observed that ethnic heterogeneity and multicultural structures, resulting from the myriad push-and-pull factors of the global economy, seem to challenge these welfare states. Thus the kind of 'dilemma' that Myrdal identified no longer appears to be solely an American one. However, the historical contexts and routes to the dilemma are different. In the United States the problem was, and is, how racial heterogeneity may precondition and limit social security arrangements, whereas in Europe and especially in the Nordic region, the growing challenge is how to guarantee universalist and comprehensive social rights with a population becoming more ethnically heterogeneous. Nevertheless, obvious similarities appear in these challenges, and this calls for comparison between European and American experiences.

This volume discusses race, ethnicity and welfare states in the United States and Europe both historically and during the present period. In connection with this theme, Myrdal is interesting not only because he identified ‘an American dilemma’, but also because he found it to be a *solvable* one. Racial prejudices, social institutions, inequalities and poverty might create a vicious circle, but the egalitarian ‘American Creed’ would provide the normative standards for politics that could turn the vicious circle into a virtuous one, decreasing inequalities and poverty and reinforcing democratic institutions. This vision reflected modes of thought and action that were important in the making of the European welfare states, but proved to be, in the end, hard to adopt in US policies.

The Carnegie Foundation had chosen Myrdal to conduct the research in part because they believed he could be ‘objective’ since he came from a country that did not suffer from racial divisiveness. However his Swedish background played a role in other ways that the foundation had not, perhaps, anticipated. When examining Swedish economic and social problems, for example, he had adopted and developed two ideas that subsequently appeared in *An American Dilemma*. The first was that self-reinforcing dynamics, or ‘circular cumulative causation’ between economic, political, cultural and other factors, was characteristic of social processes. Second, Myrdal pointed out that the researcher should choose and explicate his or her own ‘value premises’, which should be relevant, significant and feasible with regard to the society under study. In *An American Dilemma*, he explained his choice of value premises by maintaining that ‘no other set of valuations could serve as adequately as the norm for an incisive formulation of our value premises as can the American Creed. No other norm could compete in authority over people’s mind.’²

For Myrdal, the choice of value premises gave him a way to try to identify the specific sites and forms in which universal modern Enlightenment values appeared in the society under study. Hence, the researcher would become an agent of a political process in which the normative standards of a society could be used to criticize the actual circumstances in the society. This critical potential was inherent in ‘the American Creed’ as it was in the egalitarian norms of Swedish society, and the research actualizing this potential would contribute to politics, turning vicious self-reinforcing social processes into virtuous circles.

Myrdal systematized his ideas on social criticism and politics in an original way, yet his view on the potential for politics to fill the gap between the normative standards and the actual circumstances of a society was more generally applicable to the making of European and, especially, Nordic welfare states. It was based on a strong notion of

national society, which a welfare state could reinforce.³ Indeed, the welfare state became crucial for what were conceived as the normative standards of various societies, not least in the Nordic countries, where it became a key component of national identities. The evolving welfare state reshaped the notions of citizenship and democracy, including social and economic rights as well as ideas and practices aimed at extending democracy in the workplace and in other spheres of life in a national society. Thus welfare states reshaped nationalisms that were, at the same time, constitutive of their own development.

True, the normative standards associated with welfare states, such as equality and inclusion, also could be turned into a critique of their national limits. In the post-war decades, Myrdal himself focused on global economic interdependencies, and in his book *Beyond the Welfare State* (1960), based on lectures he gave at Yale University in 1958, he argued against the nationalism of the welfare state and called for a 'Welfare World'.⁴ Although a global extension of the welfare state did not actually occur in the era of globalized capitalism, in many other ways, the national contents and limits of the welfare state have been questioned.

Both Europeans and Americans have become increasingly aware that their societies need immigration in order to uphold productivity and growth as well as welfare state arrangements. Demographic changes mean that in many countries, care regimes (for children, the elderly, and those with chronic illnesses and disabilities) already depend heavily on migrant workers, while others will begin to do so in a matter of years. Meanwhile, lopsided dependency ratios threaten the stability of pension schemes and future economic growth. In the US, between 1960 and 2010 the ratio of active workers to retirees fell from 6.5:1 to 5:1, and in Europe a similar, even stronger trend – with national variations – has appeared. As this scenario has become prominent in debates over the long-term sustainability of existing welfare state arrangements in both academic and political circles, immigration has gained traction as a possible precondition for sustaining welfare state arrangements.

At the same time, however, discontent and scepticism toward immigration are growing, with popular opinion and the media as well as policy makers portraying immigrants as both a burden and threat. In many debates, illegal immigration, immigrants' low(er) employment rates (or their potential to lower wages for native-born workers) and lack of social integration appear frequently. These issues crop up across the political spectrum. In the United States, rank-and-file union members as well as the right-wing Tea Party movement seek to block immigration reform, while in Europe, we find right-wing populist parties as well as trade

unions and even prominent representatives of the political establishment pushing for tighter restrictions on who can enter.

Many of these groups present immigration not only as a threat to national security, the welfare state and labour standards, but also as a challenge to cultural and social cohesion, and in so doing, have managed to influence national political agendas and change the atmosphere in several countries. At times, being tough on immigration seems to have become almost a precondition for electoral success.⁵ The economic crisis in 2008 and the post-crisis austerity measures that followed throughout Europe have served to intensify discussions. Thus, despite the warnings of Gunnar Myrdal in the late 1950s, 'welfare-state nationalism' has become a prominent feature of political culture in many Western industrialized democracies, appearing in arguments that social benefits should be reserved for national citizens in order to define the national community.

At the same time, in academic circles the relationship between immigration and welfare states has also become a topic of sharp debate. Some scholars, pointing to the pervasiveness of welfare-state nationalism, argue that the increasing levels of ethno-linguistic fractionalization in Western Europe will inevitably erode popular support for the welfare state.⁶ Invoking the example of the US, with its reluctant, racially divided welfare state, these authors predict that Western European welfare states will soon face a similar fate; as 'others' are portrayed as the main beneficiaries of the system, support for redistribution will decrease.⁷

Other scholars, however, argue the reverse: that immigrants and immigration have merely become scapegoats for changing welfare state conditions produced by neo-liberal responses to economic globalization.⁸ Sociologist Yasemin Soysal, for example, contends that as working life has become increasingly defined by flexibility, risk and precariousness, European welfare states have shifted from what is labelled as a system of 'passive benefits' to 'social investment' in human capital. 'These developments', Soysal writes, 'are coupled with a new emphasis in education on "active citizenship," which envisions participatory individuals who are adaptable in an increasingly competitive global market and ready to contribute at local, national and European levels.'⁹ Moreover, she notes, with the burden for welfare placed squarely on the individual, both migrants and lower-educated Europeans are at a disadvantage.

This volume offers a broad comparative and historical perspective on what has become one of the most intense political, as well as intellectual, questions of our time: will growing racial and ethnic heterogeneity in Europe lead to a weakening of European welfare states and their eventual convergence with the American model? Can the specific US historical

experiences inform us about the present-day challenges to European welfare states? The American and the European routes to the Myrdalian dilemma were very different. In the US the public welfare state was never allowed to extend as it did in European countries, and while in the US multiculturalism was the point of departure, only in more recent decades have European welfare states begun to move in the same direction. While we do not propose that historical studies be taken as predictive, we do believe that they can offer important insights into the current situation.

A voluminous literature (including the two chapters here by Desmond King and Dorothy Roberts) shows clearly that over the course of the twentieth century, racial and ethnic diversity served to inhibit welfare state development in the United States. To what extent will European welfare states, in the face of unprecedented levels of immigration and racial and ethnic diversity, follow a similar trajectory? Does the relative strength of their existing welfare states and the strong commitment to universal provision that they have engendered in some sense 'inoculate' them against such an outcome? Or have policies targeted specifically toward immigrants already begun to erode universalist principles? The content of these principles arises as an important historical problem. To what extent has the apparent universalism of European and especially Nordic welfare states actually been limited by national borders and associated mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion – by the inherent nationalism of the welfare state that Myrdal criticized in the 1950s? Do the limits of universalism now provide historical preconditions for xenophobic protectionism or the erosion of social solidarity? These questions are ever more urgent since they also concern ways of meeting the threat of terrorism that has been shockingly experienced even in the Nordic region.

Much comparative research on immigration and welfare states has focused on discourses and attitudes. In this volume, we set out a new agenda that combines studies of attitudes and discourses with more policy-oriented research in order to compare words with actual deeds. Here we are taking our cue from Myrdal, who defined the American dilemma as a contradiction between the 'American Creed' (its normative ideals) and its social actions. A similar line of criticism may be applicable to Europe, where immigration is now challenging classical welfare-state values such as inclusion, equality, tolerance and in some countries universal welfare rights.

At the same time, we are adding to Myrdal's approach in several important ways. Gender, for example, played almost no role in Myrdal's analysis of race relations, but it features prominently in several of the

chapters collected here. The authors show that in conjunction (or 'intersection') with race and ethnicity, gender norms and roles shape both the formulation and delivery of welfare benefits. Gendered stereotypes and behavioural expectations affect immigration policy makers' perceptions of immigrants and assumptions about whether they are deemed likely to integrate or represent a potential threat to the nation's security. This leads to gendered immigration policies (see for instance Careja, Emmenegger and Kvist, and Pellander in this volume) and gendered forms of social assistance (see Roberts in this volume). And gender conventions determine employment opportunities and patterns of caring in both sending and destination countries. One of the most useful examples of the latter is the concept of 'global care chains' – connections that are produced when women migrate from poorer countries to richer ones to take up jobs as paid caregivers, leaving behind children and other family members who themselves must be cared for, sometimes also by paid workers – which Rhacel Parreñas explains in her chapter.¹⁰

This collection also builds on the understanding that migration involves crossing and re-crossing national borders (often migrants do not remain permanently in destination countries but return to their home countries, or relocate yet again). Their movements produce both costs and benefits for sending and for receiving countries: for receiving countries, perhaps social welfare expenses but also access to low-paid labour; for sending countries, both care and brain drains, but also remittances, social and cultural as well as financial. These transnational patterns have consequences for social policies, since access to and eligibility for benefits and services are no longer determined by, provided or produced within the confines of single nation states.¹¹ And access and eligibility are, of course, closely related to citizenship status, as Parreñas explains. Thus migration should be studied not only in single national contexts but as a transnational phenomenon, with social protection and social inequalities treated accordingly.

This book addresses the Myrdalian dilemma from all of these perspectives, moving from the 1940s to the present, and from the local to the global. The first part, 'Myrdal in his time', places Myrdal and his ideas for *An American Dilemma* in their historical context on both sides of the Atlantic and also looks at the New Deal order in the US, from which the book emerged, and to which it was a response. The next part, 'Diversity in the making of welfare states', traces the role of race and ethnicity in the development of both Scandinavian and American welfare states, past and present. 'Europe's current dilemma', the third part, brings the analysis up to the present, examining strains in Nordic and European

welfare states in response to growing racial, ethnic and especially religious heterogeneity. Finally, 'The American dilemma goes global', opens out the analysis to consider the implications of migration and welfare states from a transnational perspective.

The chapters themselves delve deeply into the complex processes that have made up race relations, welfare-state development, and their analysis from the mid-1940s to the present. Opening the first part, Maribel Morey, a historian who is writing an intellectual biography of Myrdal, begins by conceding that it is not clear why he advanced his bold charge of Americans' inherent equality or proposed that black Americans should assimilate and integrate into white American life. Some Myrdal scholars have found that his views of white and black equality were predetermined by his background. Looking longingly to a seemingly egalitarian Sweden, they argue that a social democrat from a non-imperialist country was destined to write a scathing critique of race relations in the United States. Morey's chapter questions this account as well as the view that the Swedish economist and social scientist was a blank slate when he became the director of the study on racial questions. True, Myrdal had not previously researched racial equality, assimilation or integration in a serious way, yet he and his wife, Alva, had learned a lot during their first visit to the United States in 1929–30. His Swedish background did play a role, not simply by providing egalitarian criteria for criticizing American inequalities but rather through the critical analyses of Swedish society and the gap between egalitarian norms and unequal structures in Sweden that served as the basis for his approach. Most notably, this shaped his understanding of inequalities as a question of social environment rather than genetics. Over the course of the chapter, Morey explains how and why Myrdal abandoned his prior equivocation and became a bold proponent of egalitarian racial politics.

The second chapter examines the broader American context in which Myrdal undertook his study. Alice O'Connor, a historian who has closely studied the relationship between social knowledge and social policy in the US in the twentieth century, points out that *An American Dilemma* was commissioned, organized and written during a transformative period in the country's race relations. Widely recognized as a landmark in social thought and the study of racial ideology, the book both captured and contributed to a broader set of changes enabled through political organizing, movement-building and the vast migration of African Americans out of the rural Jim-Crow South that began during the Great War. *An American Dilemma* also stands as an unprecedented mobilization of social scientific knowledge – albeit in ways largely unanticipated by its sponsors at the Carnegie Corporation or even by Myrdal himself.

O'Connor's chapter shows how *An American Dilemma* reframed the 'race question' in the US by challenging the 'scientifically' racist and what Myrdal called 'do-nothing' conventions that predominated in the social scientific tradition. Myrdal's strategy was to invoke the country's own 'American' values of fairness, equal opportunity and political democracy. O'Connor also considers the book's significance as a social policy document, paying close attention to the sense of possibility, hope and ultimate frustration with which a diverse array of activists in the US and internationally looked to expansive concepts of human and labour rights, social and especially economic citizenship in pursuit of racial (and, for some, gender) democracy.

The next part shows how race and ethnicity shaped welfare-state development, not only in the US but in Scandinavia as well, both historically and more recently. By examining in detail how race has persistently inflected the American welfare state, the first two chapters set up the US case as a kind of foil for Scandinavian developments. Even though race is no doubt more explicitly embedded in US politics and social policies, both historically and institutionally, than it is in Europe, the two chapters raise important comparative questions: are European politics and policies evolving in similar ways to those in the US, in the face of recent waves of immigration, and are the same processes in play when it comes to exclusion and inequality?

In Chapter 3, 'America's segregated state', Desmond King argues that a key aspect of a national state's public policy is to provide and guarantee a standardized provision of service to all citizens across its jurisdictional boundaries. A political scientist who has written widely on American race relations, King observes that in the US the task of standardization has been complicated immensely by two features, one political-institutional, the second political-ideological. The political-institutional feature is federalism: standardizing public policy has consistently faced the constitutional barrier of a federal division of powers that has enabled conservative political forces to block progressive reforms. The political-ideological force is racism and the way in which efforts to maintain a segregationist racial order structured federal policies toward welfare from the Progressive era to the reforms of the 1990s. As King demonstrates, these two factors have interacted in ways that historically privileged racist interests, notably in the 1930s but also in the 1970s and 1980s, when the language of welfare dependency became a kind of shorthand for racism. He concludes that the aim of standardizing welfare policy ended up reifying rather than transcending the forces that maintain racialized interests in US public policy.

In the next chapter, Dorothy Roberts examines the interrelated ways in which two chief systems within the US welfare state – public aid and child protection services – punish black mothers for their childbearing and caregiving, and how race helps to maintain the welfare state's punitive features. Roberts notes that as the general welfare and child welfare systems began to serve fewer white children and more black children in the wake of welfare restructuring, which began in 1996, both became more punitive toward their clients. In the last decade, welfare has become a system of behaviour modification that attempts to regulate the sexual, marital and childbearing decisions of poor unmarried mothers by placing conditions on the receipt of state assistance. Similarly, the child welfare system requires mothers to relinquish custody of their children as a condition of receiving needed services. As with the promotion of marriage under welfare restructuring, federal child welfare policy looks to a private remedy for family policy – adoption – rather than to curtailing the flow of poor, minority children into foster care. Roberts, a legal scholar who also conducts sensitive ethnographic studies of minority and low-income communities, is able to show how the law plays out in the practice of social policy. Using in-depth interviews of the residents in a black Chicago neighbourhood, she explores how welfare policy and child welfare agency involvement regulates family and community relationships as well as the relationship between poor black mothers and the state.

In international welfare-state comparisons, the Nordic model is commonly lauded for its high levels of social security, social citizenship, inclusion, equality and tolerance. In Chapter 5, Grete Brochmann asks a Myrdalian question about the relationship between ideals and reality: how well have these highly institutionalized welfare states dealt with immigration and growing heterogeneity over the last four decades? The Nordic system, she points out depends on gender equality, high levels of labour market participation, and the intertwining of rights and duties. Thus it is not surprising that immigrant groups, with their tendencies toward high rates of unemployment, particularly among women, lower levels of education and heavy dependence on welfare systems, have presented a challenge. The Nordic states have responded by regulating immigration more closely and adopting so-called 'integration policies' for groups that were first considered vulnerable but later came to be seen as problematic. Brochmann, a sociologist who specializes in comparative integration, calls this combination the 'Janus face' of Nordic policy: 'most immigrants have not been desired from the outset', she writes, 'but if they manage to come anyway, they must be incorporated in some way or another'.

The next part challenges the assumption that ethnic and cultural homogeneity is an essential precondition for strong welfare states. The

chapters here examine specific cases of immigration in the last decades of the twentieth century, assessing the impact of intertwined major changes: the collapse of the Soviet Union, the rise of neo-liberal economics, globalization and European integration. Three of these chapters address attitudes and policies toward immigrants in Nordic countries and more general welfare policies across European societies, while a fourth compares the impact of attitudes toward Muslims on welfare state development in the US as well as Europe. Opening this part with Chapter 6, Saara Pellander, a historian of family migration to Finland, analyses that country's migration policies since the 1990s. A country with previous experiences of emigration rather than immigration, Finland now faced the arrival of immigrants from Russia, Estonia, Somalia and other countries, and this new phenomenon gave rise to many kinds of concerns, not least about security. At the same time, the Finnish government also had to develop migration policies that would uphold its gender-friendly Nordic welfare-state ideals. Many of these policies, Pellander discovered, centred around the issue of national security. The issue of 'securitization' is often studied separately from those of gender and migration. Pellander, however, believes that they should be studied together. Her chapter analyses policies that construct images of the threats they are designed to address. Pellander asks: Who or what is threatened by what or whom? Investigating how Finnish policy makers construct gender and sexuality in debates over migration law, she shows how questions of gender, sexuality and family become security issues as well.

A different tension, namely that between employment, social benefits, and immigration, lies at the heart of Chapter 7 by Romana Careja, Patrick Emmenegger and Jon Kvist. 'An American dilemma in Europe?' analyses the nexus between immigration and the welfare state by taking a closer look at policy programmes themselves and how they play against one another. The authors, two political scientists and a social policy scholar, argue that aggregate levels of support for redistribution or total social expenditure are inadequate indicators for policy outputs. Instead, they focus on those policy programmes that provide disproportionately for immigrants, especially newly arrived ones, such as unemployment insurance and social assistance. Their fine-grained study examines not only benefit eligibility but also the conditions and sanctions that are imposed on benefit claimants and their families, reflecting what Brochmann calls the 'Janus face' of welfare. This chapter compares such policies in Britain and Denmark – one a liberal welfare state, the other more statist and universalistic – and analyses policies directed toward specific phases in the immigration process, from entry to adjustment and integration. Noting that both countries have tightened immigrants' access

to the country itself as well as to social benefits, the authors identify ten ways in which states have reduced the amount of redistribution from citizens to immigrants. Even though they acknowledge the existence of policies that also support immigrants (such as integration programmes), they contend that the high proportion of policies affecting immigrants negatively must be seen as the result of deliberate policy making.

In the third chapter in this part social policy researcher Helena Blomberg-Kroll questions the assumption that support for redistributive welfare policies will automatically decline as populations become more heterogeneous or multicultural. While this may have been true for the United States (whose welfare-state literature has given rise to this explanation), she does not believe that it will hold for the Nordic countries. Instead, Blomberg-Kroll, who has conducted extensive research on attitudes toward welfare in contemporary Europe and the Nordic countries, contends that a closer and more historically informed analysis of welfare-state development reveals a more complex picture. She points to struggles between conflicting cultural and political values and the importance of national political compromises as well as of an inter-Nordic diffusion of ideas for the development of the several variants of the Nordic welfare model. The Nordic welfare state, she suggests, may offer tools for enlarging the freedom of individuals in relation to both family and markets, rather than as an expression of sameness. In the light of her analysis, it seems unlikely that citizens would lose trust in the welfare state simply because of increasing ethnic diversity. Blomberg-Kroll also questions predictions for the contemporary countries that are derived from American historical experiences. It is not clear how great a role ethnic homogeneity played in the development of Nordic welfare systems. Perhaps, she suggests, 'a kind of similarity of views concerning the struggle for independence of individuals' – in other words, a shared outlook not based on ethnicity – was more important in propelling state intervention in the distribution of welfare in the first place, and this set outlook persists, despite the changing make-up of Nordic populations.

In Chapter 9, however, five political scientists, Abdulkader H. Sinno, Eren Tatari, Scott Williamson, Antje Schwennicke and Hicham Bou Nassif come to very different conclusions. While extreme-right parties in Europe and North America have long associated Muslims with 'overuse' of welfare services, the authors argue that this sort of pejorative discourse is now gaining mainstream purchase across Western societies because of their recent economic woes. By analysing the content of a range of newspaper articles in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, as well as online texts produced by anti-Muslim activists and extreme-right parties, the authors track variations across cultures, offering the

provocative suggestion that stronger welfare states (such as those in Europe) may actually express greater hostility toward Muslims. They also speculate that current discourses on Muslims and welfare might lead to depriving immigrants, Muslims in particular, of necessary state services and the legitimizing of the stereotypes that keep Muslims from gaining education and employment in the first place. The authors are concerned that such populist policies could transform European Muslims into permanently marginalized underclasses with limited opportunities in the formal economy and steer them towards economic activities on the margins of the law, society and the market. A risk of policies becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy appears, bearing a resemblance to the vicious circle Myrdal called 'an American dilemma'.

The final part of the book places migration within a global context and takes up the issue of 'transnational welfare regimes'. In Chapter 10 Rhacel Salazar Parreñas concretizes the notion of transnational welfare by examining the impact of migration on the families of migrant care workers in sending countries and care regimes in receiving ones, while in the final chapter Thomas Faist raises more general questions about the responsibilities of societies to address social inequality and provide protection across borders.

Parreñas, a sociologist, focuses primarily at the level of individual families, but places them within a global context. Her chapter looks closely at the formation of transnational migrant families of domestic workers and their interactions with welfare regimes in Europe and the United States. Peering through a dual optic at both sending and receiving countries, she finds that in both locales, the provision of care is seldom a matter of public policy. She draws on her extensive ethnographic research on children left behind by migrant parents in the Philippines to describe the social issues they confront.

With the burden of care falling primarily on women's shoulders at both ends of the 'global care chain', relations of inequality form among women, including extended kin in the Philippines. While acknowledging the difficulties transnational migrants and their families routinely encounter, Parreñas also questions the current vilification of migrant mothers, who are seen as having abandoned their children, as well as claims of rising delinquency among children left behind in countries as diverse as the Philippines, Romania and Poland. She argues that this backlash against migrant families stems from the stronghold of the 'ideology of women's domesticity' as well as the weak welfare states in countries where care remains a private matter. The global perspective shows consequences of migration that extend beyond welfare woes in receiving

states and in fact point to dramatic inequalities in welfare provision when compared to sending societies.

Moving to a more theoretical level, Thomas Faist looks at the emergence of what he calls a new 'cross-border social space'. An expert in transnational development, and migration, he tracks the large variation in redistribution effects as well as the rights offered in this domain, the result, perhaps, of situational differences between policy makers and their targets – between, say, UN officials or EU employees with international careers, on the one hand, and African immigrants fleeing poverty in their home region or Filipino au pairs living in European households for several years. From this perspective, it becomes clear that neither debates over social rights nor the research they entail can remain within the traditional 'container' of national welfare states. In 'The transnational social question', Faist shows that this situation has not only produced new distributional conflicts but also calls for a new transnational analysis of social policy. Acknowledging that this is no easy matter, he proposes a multi-scalar framework that includes local, national and transnational levels and considers non-state agents such as families, groups and networks as well as state-organized social protection.

Because social security (and inequality) can derive from many sources, Faist challenges the prominence of the state as provider. At the same time, however, he understands that nation states, along with a range of other entities, from families and communities through international organizations, will continue to play a role in redressing global inequalities in social protection. Thus all must be taken in to account. As he puts it succinctly, 'It is of little use simply to exhort the virtues or the emerging horizon of global social policy – akin in its forms to national social policy – as long as the struggles for social protection proceed in complex local, national and cross-border assemblages.'

Defining the social problems of a national society and developing national political solutions was the way Gunnar Myrdal approached 'an American dilemma'. As an economist who had analysed the impact of the Great Depression, he recognized the significance of international economic interdependencies, and the world war that broke out just as he was undertaking his study on American race relations proved to him the importance of international politics.¹² In any case, it was only after *An American Dilemma* that Myrdal turned his gaze to transnational dimensions of social inequalities and became a critic of the nationalism of the welfare state. Nevertheless, the insights in *An American Dilemma* into the tension between ideals and realities, and the ways in which national creeds could be challenged by racial and ethnic heterogeneity remain

applicable to developments that have occurred in the years since the book's publication, and in societies that he did not address. As the pace and size of cross-border migration has increased, the transnational social question has gained growing importance as a practical matter as well as an intellectual puzzle and political issue. Whether or not social and cultural fractionalization will erode support for strong welfare states or lead to tighter restriction of immigration remains to be seen, but greater understanding of the processes that have led to such developments in the recent and not-so-recent past can, perhaps, guide policy makers and citizens alike as they consider the options and ideas before them.

NOTES

1. The most prominent and debated contribution in this respect is probably Alberto Alesina and Edward Glaeser, *Fighting Poverty in the US and Europe: A World of Difference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). But see also the discussion on attitudes and social trust in Martin Gilens, *Why Americans Hate Welfare* (Chicago, IL and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999); and Christian Albrekt Larsen, *The Rise and Fall of Social Cohesion. The Construction and De-Construction of Social Trust in US, UK, Sweden and Denmark* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). Another avenue towards this line of argumentation has also been made from the perspective of state building; see for example Peter J. Katzenstein, *Small States in World Markets: Industrial Policy in Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985).
2. Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), 23; Pauli Kettunen, 'The Society of Virtuous Circles', in *Models, Modernity and the Myrdals*, (eds) Pauli Kettunen and Hanna Eskola (Helsinki: Renvall Institute Publications, 1997), 162–3.
3. Niels Finn Christiansen, Klaus Petersen, Nils Edling and Per Haave (eds), *The Nordic Model of Welfare: A Historical Reappraisal* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum, 2006); Niels Finn Christiansen and Klaus Petersen (eds), *The Nordic Welfare State 1900–2000: Scandinavian Journal of History* 26 (2001): 3.
4. Gunnar Myrdal, *Beyond the Welfare State: Economic Planning and Its International Implications*, Storrs Lectures on Jurisprudence (New Haven, CT: Yale Law School, 1958).
5. True, in the run-up to the 2016 presidential election in the US, some Republicans, concerned that their opposition to immigration cost them the Hispanic vote in the last election, have begun seeking palatable ways to sign on to immigration reform.
6. Alesina and Glaeser, *Fighting Poverty*.
7. Gøsta Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990); Gilens, *Why Americans Hate Welfare*; Robert Lieberman, *Shifting the Color Line: Race and the American Welfare State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Cybelle Fox, *Three Worlds of Poverty Relief: Race, Immigration, and the American Welfare State from the Progressive Era to the New Deal* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).
8. Magnus Ryner, 'Neoliberalism and the Crisis of Swedish Social Democracy', *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 20 (1999): 36–79.
9. Yasemin Soysal, 'Citizenship, Immigration, and the European Social Project: Rights and Obligations of Individuality', *British Journal of Sociology* 63 (2012): 1.
10. Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Hochschild (eds.), *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy* (New York: Holt Paperbacks, 2004); and Helma Lutz, *The New Maids: Transnational Women and the Care Economy* (London: Zed Books, 2011).

11. Yasemin Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Faist, this volume.
12. Örjan Appelqvist, 'Gunnar Myrdal and the Defeated Ideals of a World New Deal' in Kettunen and Eskola, *Models, Modernity and the Myrdals*.

