In 2003, Hubert and Helene were sitting in a Catholic church in Manchester, waiting for the French mass to begin, when Nina came into the church, sat nearby, and introduced herself. This meeting initiated networks that stretched from Manchester, New Hampshire, to Washington, DC, in the United States, on to Goma, in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Kampala, Uganda, and Geneva, Switzerland. Hundreds of people became connected through a campaign to reunite the couple’s seven children with their parents.

Hubert—beaten, mutilated in front of his family, and left for dead because of his work countering the recruitment of child soldiers—felt it was imperative to flee the country. Soon after this, the whole family won the US immigrant visa lottery, but Hubert and Helene could not afford all their plane tickets and requisite processing fees. Borrowing enough money from close friends already settled in Manchester to cover their own plane tickets and fees, Hubert and Helene planned to come to the United States, earn enough money to pay back their generous friends, and bring their children to safety. But when they arrived in Manchester, they learned that their children were
trapped in the DRC. By not flying with their parents, the children lost their rights to the lottery visas and had to “wait their turn”—at least five years—to legally join their parents in Manchester.

Nina had come to the church in search of newly arrived migrants to interview. When she asked Hubert and Helene for an interview, they agreed but had their own request: “Please help us bring our children to America.” To help, Nina and her undergraduate students created the Committee on Rights and Justice (CORAJ). CORAJ learned that the children could come rapidly if they were granted “humanitarian parole,” an immigration status requiring a special act of the US Congress. This could happen only if sufficient political pressure was brought to bear. In addition, they needed to raise about twenty thousand dollars for travel costs and immigration-related fees. To try to bring the children to safety, Nina and her students took the initial steps of what emerged as a new multiscalar transnational social field.

A network of networks developed that involved hundreds of people: pro bono lawyers from a prestigious Manchester law firm, a freelance journalist from a small New Hampshire town, a Democratic Party activist who was a former University of New Hampshire trustee and New Hampshire legislator, three Republican US congressmen from New Hampshire, a congressional staff member based in Manchester, the US consul in Kampala, a local nonprofit organization, rotary clubs in New Hampshire, the International Red Cross in Geneva, the president of the University of New Hampshire, a local supermarket, a family foundation based in Boston, a Manchester Catholic parish, a local born-again Protestant pastor, and many individuals throughout New Hampshire. These were the days before social media, so word of the struggle and the need for funds spread via coverage by the University of New Hampshire Magazine, New Hampshire Public Radio, the Associated Press, regional television stations, and newsletters of the New Hampshire Bar Association and New Hampshire Business Review.

Each of these network ties represented personal actions taken by individuals. For example, junior Republican congressman Jeb Bradley called the US Consul in Kampala from his home phone. Two years after their parents left them behind, the children arrived in Manchester in September 2004—a reunion broadcast on regional television. The massive outpouring of support raised enough funds and resources not only to process the necessary papers and fly the children to the United States but also to provide the family with clothes, furniture, a donated freezer filled with food, a used van to transport them around Manchester, and a down payment on a subprime mortgage for a large dilapidated house.
In this chapter, we explore the daily sociabilities that lie behind the surges of public support for migrants that have periodically emerged in both Manchester and Halle. We link them to shared sensibilities and aspirations. Tom Holdreth, Hubert and Helene’s lead lawyer, explained the domain of common feelings that led him to work tirelessly to bring children he had never met to Manchester. “Hubert and I are about the same age. We both have young families. I could immediately understand the anguish that Hubert and Helene lived with every day that they were living apart from their children” (Rorick 2004). Identification with Hubert and Helene as parents bereft of their children was expressed repeatedly throughout the campaign. In this chapter, we link the sociabilities engendered by such sentiments to conditions that the residents of Manchester confronted within the dispossessive processes of
multiscalar urban restructuring and the regeneration that city leaders initiated beginning around 2000.

Building on our research in Manchester, we argue that to understand the full range of urban sociabilities—for all urban residents, migrant and non-migrant—we need to explore how, where, why, and within what structural contingencies city dwellers build domains of affect, mutual respect, and shared aspirations. To find a way to speak about the bonds that underlie such sociabilities beyond the idioms of community, we use the terms “domains of commonality” and “sociabilities of emplacement.” This chapter focuses on sites where these sociabilities were initiated, including the shared physical spaces of apartment buildings, city streets, workplaces, and urban institutions. We explore the situations in which displacements engendered by urban regeneration in Manchester, New Hampshire, give rise to domains of commonality between migrant newcomers and people seen as local. When migrants and non-migrants seek their place within restructured urban sites, they always do so within conditions of ongoing multiscalar processes of capital accumulation.

In the years following Hubert and Helene’s children’s arrival and emplacement in Manchester, local and national US media and some New Hampshire and Manchester political leaders increasingly focused on anti-immigrant politics. Migration has become a partisan issue, with the Republican Party taking the lead in rallying anti-immigrant public opinion (Scott 2015). Meanwhile in Germany, refugee housing has been attacked and some burned, including a 2015 arson in Saxony-Anhalt (Der Spiegel Online 2015). But networks of volunteers who wished to welcome newcomers also persisted in Halle and elsewhere in Europe, as they did in the United States, including in Manchester. Even as the historical conjuncture changed, the US Conference of Mayors continued to welcome migrants, including Syrian refugees (US Conference of Mayors 2015). Media reports provided little insight into the social basis for social movements that support migrants, and social theory built around “binaries of difference” (Glick Schiller 2012b) also offered little to explain the continuing outpourings of support or the daily sociabilities that unite migrants and non-migrants.

While this chapter focuses on sociabilities of displacement and emplacement in Manchester, we found similar sociabilities in Halle. Our research helps us to identify a crucial component of the larger puzzle of what brings migrants and non-migrants together in relationships of mutual support around the world. To date, when scholars address how migrants build their daily lives as they settle in a new place, they too rarely examine what Hage...
(2014, 236) calls a “space of commonality.” As Hage notes (2014, 236), this domain of commonality characterizes “any desirable intersubjective relation. We do it all the time with people we care about despite being differently positioned in hierarchical structures.” Yet most of the literature approaches relationships between natives and migrants as one in which newcomers are tolerated through the bridging of differences. Those outside the national community are classified as “strangers,” to whom we respond with a different dimension of affect, one of “humanitarianism” or assistance, compared to the shared solidarity that accompanies a shared national origin (Kymlicka 2015, 4).

**Migration Theory and Migrants’ Social Relations**

The emphasis on difference in social research and in policy seeking to respond to migration is not surprising. For more than a century, the question of living with difference has pervaded Western theories and imaginaries of the city. Initially viewing urban vistas as characterized by “mutual strangeness,” Simmel ([1903] 2002, 15) posited that city dwellers formed situational, utilitarian, and illusive social ties devoid of the overlapping unities of kinship, neighboring, and cultural commonalities that knit together rural communities. The classic rural–urban dichotomy (Tönnies [1877] 1957; Wirth 1938) envisioned a rural folk society unified by multiple dense social ties, while urban dwellers were thought to live detached, alienated solitary lives. When urban ethnographers began to contest this dichotomy (Miner 1952), they adopted the anthropological penchant for studying territorially situated cultures and selected locations that they thought shared common class or ethnic traditions (Whyte 1943; Young and Willmott 1957; Gans 1962; Liebow 1968). They portrayed cities as composed of multiple neighborhood-based communities (Apparicio 2006; Baumann 1996; Stack 1974). When the rural-urban continuum (Redfield 1940) was repudiated in social theory, many researchers continued to understand social solidarities as built on shared territory, culture, and culturally or religiously inflected forms of identity.

Debates about multiculturalism, diversity, and mixity have been imbricated with this flawed social theory. Researchers begin with the methodological nationalist assumptions that nation-states are culturally homogenous and that homogeneity produces social cohesion. They also assume that both the “native” local communities and the national cultures are homologous. That is to say, if you study a neighborhood, you can say something about the social cohesion of the nation-state. This approach defines all migrants not only...
as introducing difference but also as inherently threatening the social fabric of community and state. According to Robert Putnam (2007, 139), a seminal researcher in the contemporary study of social cohesion who has been widely quoted as well as critiqued, “immigration and ethnic diversity tend to reduce social solidarity and social capital.”

Both scholars and policy makers who oppose diversity and multiculturalism and those who seek to valorize multicultural difference have tended to equate migrants with concepts of diversity (Huntington 1996; Gilroy 2004; Grillo 2005; Johnston, Poulsen, and Forrest 2010; Eriksen 2010). Putnam argues that “new evidence from the US suggests that in ethnically diverse neighborhoods residents of all races tend to ‘hunker down.’ Trust (even of one’s own race) is lower, altruism and community cooperation rarer, friends fewer” (2007, 138). For Putnam and others engaged in integration polices who see the value of immigration, “fragmentation,” which they see as caused by migration, may not be inevitable “in the long run.” It could be “overcome . . . by creating new, cross-cutting forms of social solidarity and more encompassing identities” (2007, 138). A view that nation-states constitute discrete societies that must maintain social cohesion to prosper and be secure informs metaphors of bridging difference and crosscutting solidarities, which have been central to discussions of migrants in cities.

Most ethnographers of migrants in cities continue to study neighborhoods or sites such as markets and festivals or ethnic or ethnoreligious organizations because they are perceived as locations where “differences” can be overcome or mediated. Often scholars who study migrant sociabilities within migrant neighborhoods also situate migrants and non-migrants within differential temporalities. A neighborhood imaginary invokes time as well as space. To envision spaces as imbricated by traditional cultural difference is also to convey a different temporality that denies migrants’ coevalness.

Contemporary urban ethnographers, committed to countering political narratives that define migrants’ cultural difference as problematic, argue that diversity and difference are assets central to everyday urban social life (Vertovec 2007). They stress that multiple intersecting and fluid diversities are found in everyone’s lives, including those who face racialization, discrimination, and differentiation (Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010). These scholars of everyday lives and urban sociabilities of people of migrant background build on pioneering work by Baumann (1996) and Back (1996), which contests the utilization of an ethnic lens.

Yet despite this foundation, scholars of the everyday highlight cultural and religious “diversity” (Berg, Gidley, and Sigona 2013), “superdiversity”
(Vertovec 2007) or “living-with-difference” (Nowicka and Vertovec 2014) and search for how ethnoreligious differences are “bridged” (Wise and Velayutham 2014). Paul Gilroy (2004) links his conceptualization of “convivialities” to “multiculture.” Amin (2012, 5) insists that although convivialities emerge, “a slew of personal and collective labeling conventions—inhaired, learnt, absorbed and practiced that flow into the moment of the encounter” are central to social life. A vast body of literature identifies organizations built around ethnoreligious differences as the primary venues of migrant incorporation into the social, political, and cultural life of countries and places of settlement (Pries 2007; Pries and Sezgin 2012).

These organizations are seen as the primary vehicle of migrant settlement as well as transnational connection (Portes, Escobar, and Radford 2007; Portes and Fernández-Kelly 2015; Waldinger 2015). Most research examines the role of these organizations in the claim-making processes of migrants who seek recognition as a collective representative of what they project as a unified ethnic or religious community within the city of settlement or the national society (Glick Schiller 1977; Sökefeld 2006). Setting aside whether, where, and when these organizations represent the migrants for whom they claim to speak, confining research to the activities and leadership of these organizations keeps us from studying migrants’ multiple sites of sociabilities. Moreover, these kinds of organizations generally persist to the extent that they become part of organized state-“minority” relations and receive some type of public funding.

Generally, urban ethnographers researching migrant neighborhoods have persistently disregarded the broader multiscalar structural forces within which patterns of inequality, opportunity, residence, and sociability are constituted and restructured (Kalandides and Vaiou 2012) or have relegated them to “context.” It is insufficient to relegate structural issues to what Leeds (1980) and Brettell (2003) call “the city as context” (see also Cadge et al. 2010) without connecting them to multiscalar value-creation processes taking place in these cities. Only by setting aside neighborhoods or migrant organizations as the primary and often sole units of study and analysis can urban sociability researchers make visible processes of displacement and emplacement shaped by the structural positioning, regeneration possibilities, and limitations of a city.

Over the years, a potent critique of the literature that sees economic disparities as threatening to social cohesion has developed. A number of researchers have found that lack of social cohesion in economically restructured cities is related to social inequality and disparities of wealth (Kearns and Forrest 2000; Ratcliffe 2011). In addition, important bodies of research document
that worksites and social movements continue to be significant loci of urban dwellers’ sociabilities and social networks, despite neoliberal restructuring of urban life (Amin 2012; Leitner, Peck, and Sheppard 2007). However, much of this research on solidarities ignores the presence and participation of migrants, despite the fact that migrants, whatever their legal status, occupy key niches in neoliberal service economies and have become again, as they were in the past, significant actors in social justice movements.

**Theorizing and Studying Sociabilities of Emplacement**

In summary, the social theory upon which research on diversity, superdiversity, and bridging diversity is built leaves no room to observe and analyze sociabilities. Research on the relationship between cities and migrants requires a concept of the social that is built on domains of commonality, as they arise within the multiscalar constitution of place and time (Glick Schiller 2012b, 2015a, 2016; Eckert 2016). It may well be that the penchant in anthropology for the study of signification (Geertz 1973) and, since the 1980s, for research on identities of difference and identity politics left little conceptual space for theories of relationality, which are only now reemerging. We suggest that a useful step in theorizing relationality is to distinguish between sociality and sociability.

The term “sociality” denotes the entire field within which individuals are embedded in a “matrix of relationships with others” (Strathern 1996, 66). Much of what is described as living with difference, encompassing relationships of “commonplace diversity” and the “ethos of mixing” (Wessendorf 2013) as well as conflicts and hostilities made visible in terms of difference (Rogaly and Qureshi 2013), is best understood as sociality.

In contrast, “sociabilities” can be defined as social relations that provide pleasure, satisfaction, and meaning by giving actors a sense of being human. In this definition, we build on the Latin origins of the term “social,” which refers to fellowship and companionship (Isin 2008; Brodie 2008; Çağlar 2015), and return to the concept of sociability offered by Simmel. He defined “sociability” as relations in which “one ‘acts’ as though all were equal, as though he esteemed everyone,” exactly because these interactions are not about difference (Simmel [1910] 1949, 257). For Simmel, the stringent demands of “real life” ([1910] 1949, 255) impose limits on situations in which this form of social relationship is possible. However, beginning with the path-breaking work of Lofland (1985), urban researchers began to document multiple forms of daily sociabilities based on shared affect and demonstrated that urbanites
frequently turn casual informal meetings into ongoing affective relationships linking them to urban spaces (Pink 2012).

Our research explored sociabilities that developed even though the people who came together had unequal access to resources, including information, skills, and institutional networks. We examined social bonds that emerged from a perhaps limited but potent shared set of experiences, emotions, and aspirations: “a desire for human relationships” (Glick Schiller, Darieva and Gruner-Domic 2011, 415; see also Glick Schiller and Irving 2015). Such interactions can be fleeting or can persist and develop over time (Lofland 1985). Our respondents used the term “human” to refer to the domains of commonality that emerged from some of their interactions. Some used the word “friendship” to encompass sociabilities that combined mutual support and positive affect.

Our research took place in Manchester, where, aside from the historic east end / west end division dating from French Canadian settlement, named neighborhoods were generally not units of self-identity, service provision, or governance. Distinctive neighborhood cultures were not part of the contemporary ethos of the city, although the city did have areas associated with richer and poorer residents and areas that could be considered multi-ethnic, with migrants from diverse countries. However, people of migrant background lived throughout the city. This research challenges the neighborhood bias of urban ethnographies drawn from “global” or primary cities. Rather than operating with an assumption that cities consist of neighborhoods whose residents identify with each other and share an experience of community, we need to explore whether neighborhoods become important sites of sociability and, if so, under what conditions, when, and through what kind of relations.

By developing a global, relational perspective on all potential sites of sociability, including neighborhoods, our research in Manchester raises broader questions about the nature and sites of migrants’ sociabilities in all cities. We join with authors such as Kearns and Forrest (2001, 21–25) who critique the reemergence of “the neighbourhood . . . as an important setting for many of the processes which supposedly shape social identity and life-chances.” Our goal is to address the multiple hierarchies and institutionally networked structures of power within which these spaces and their conditions are constituted (see also Gijsberts, van der Meer, and Dagevos 2012).

All residents must build their daily sociabilities and the socialities of their lives within their city’s multiscalar political and economic restructuring and
its concomitant narratives about itself and its residents (Smith 2002). Relationships of urban residents to each other are shaped by these processes, which in turn contribute to the restructuring of each city and the construction of its narratives. To address, particularly in cities, what sites and what kinds of sociabilities emerge between people categorized as native or local and newly arrived migrants, we suggest that our units of study become the social relations formed by people as they encounter each other. The ethnography in this chapter indicates that from 2000 to 2008, the period of most of our participant observation and interviewing, migrant newcomers of various legal statuses in Manchester, including the undocumented, were able to build urban sociabilities in similar ways. The sociabilities we describe were sociabilities of emplacement. They connected migrant newcomers and local people who together built aspects of their livelihood and social belonging in Manchester within the context of opportunities and constraints of a particular historical conjuncture.

Restructuring and Sociabilities of Emplacement

The relations of sociability we found in Manchester must be understood as part of residents’ responses—migrant and non-migrant alike—to the city’s redevelopment strategies and their outcome. As we indicated in chapter 1, to confront conditions Manchester faced, including its negative reputation as deindustrialized, backward, and having an abandoned and dangerous city center, city leaders and developers, around the millennium, crafted a migrant-friendly narrative. This narrative made a difference to the way migrants related to Manchester; indeed, a representative of the Office of City Planning (interview O., September 2002) insisted that migrants “were not a drain” on the city but, to the contrary, vital to its redevelopment. The mayor at the time forcefully conveyed the message that migrants were welcome. In 2002, he called on his fellow citizens “to continue to make Manchester a welcoming threshold to New Americans” (Baines 2002). Newcomers could settle in an environment where they were not politically targeted.

However, as we documented in chapter 1, Manchester was similar to Halle and Mardin in that it provided few resources for settlement. Without well-funded institutions and voluntary organizations, all newcomers, migrants as well people arriving from elsewhere in the country, generally depended on personal networks for support in their processes of emplacement. Our data revealed that, to learn the routines of local daily life, find work, shop, and ac-
cess schools and medical care, migrant newcomers often forged relationships of mutual support and positive affect with people seen as local.

Our respondents searched for individuals who might help them: in many cases, migrants took the lead in establishing forms of sociability. Doing so transformed their lives as well the lives of those with whom they interacted. As Leila, an Iraqi refugee, recalled: “The people are friendly. Not at first, you have to talk to them. . . . My neighbor had a bad attitude toward me, but I made her cookies and now she is nice” (interview L., March 10, 2002).

Our research revealed that newcomers in Manchester established sociabilities in three types of sites: proximal, workplace, and institutional. In all three sites of emplacement, relationships based on domains of commonality, not differences or common cultural backgrounds, were pathways of emplacement for newcomers and locals alike. Emplacement opportunities and new displacement situations arose within the regeneration processes that altered spaces and conditions of daily life, including housing, employment, and the organization of civil society.

**Proximal Relations**

While Manchester’s city center redevelopment, documented in chapter 1, had some “success” in that the city center became repopulated and local retail activity increased, its dispossessive aspects—the revaluation of land, housing, and storefronts—increased the precarity of the city’s less wealthy population, both migrants and non-migrants. Urban regeneration and its accompanying revaluation of land and real estate during the years of our research produced a situation in which Manchester’s population became more impoverished as redevelopment proceeded (City of Manchester nd). The poverty rate increased from 10.6 percent in 2000 to 13.7 percent in 2007 (before the subprime crisis) and to 14.2 percent in 2013 (City Data 2015). The cost of living index in Manchester was higher than the national average (City Data 2015).

Housing costs rose as housing prices inflated through gentrification processes, leading to a rise in rent and to very low vacancy rates after 2000. Investors who bought rental property charged higher rents, and new owners faced large mortgage payments. Property owners also found that the assessed value of their property rose and, with it, their property taxes. City coffers had been emptied as Manchester borrowed money for regeneration. The redevelopment of the city center was made possible by public financing of 85 percent of the 65-million-dollar cost of land acquisition and construction (Lincoln
NE City Government 2008, 96). These debts had to be repaid from tax revenues. This required increasing property taxes and decreasing public services.

At the same time, during relatively high employment—with rates fluctuating in relationship to the 2000 and 2008 financial crises—the wage rate remained relatively low. Many residents faced higher housing costs but not rising incomes. This situation affected the social relations of many migrants and non-migrants in Manchester. Many of our respondents shared a sense of precarity, which they expressed in numerous conversations with members of our research team. Tenants shared concerns about being forced from a neighborhood by higher rents or job loss. Homeowners simultaneously faced difficulties paying taxes and mortgages. They also feared deterioration in the quality and security of local neighborhoods in the wake of cuts in public services and the inability of some neighbors to maintain their property. While this sense of being at risk was common in poorer neighborhoods, respondents generally did not have a sense of the neighborhood as community in the forms depicted by social cohesion researchers.

We did find that migrants and non-migrants sought support, solace, and a sense of commonality with certain neighbors who lived close by. Most of our migrant respondents found themselves initially in dilapidated rental housing near the city center, in areas where some of the buildings had been constructed to house workers, immigrant and nonimmigrant, during Manchester’s long, slow industrial decline in the first half of the twentieth century. These streets also contained stately large houses that over time had been converted into multifamily dwellings. Interspersed were three-story apartment buildings built between the 1950s and the 1970s. Through random encounters with someone living nearby, or within the shared proximal space of an apartment building or apartment complex, newcomers found supportive and sympathetic people who became key to their emplacement in Manchester.

Kate, a refugee and single mother from Sierra Leone, was one of many people whose ability to become settled in the city was linked to someone she met in her first place of residence, a three-story building with several apartments on each floor. The building housed refugees from different countries as well as people native to Manchester or to the region. Kate explained: “The people on the first floor were ‘black and white’ and were friendly with me. Roz lived on the first floor. She is very good. She is . . . unable to walk. She helped me read and played cards. After that building was sold, she had no apartment near me and moved to Maine [the neighboring state]. But she brought her friend Karen . . . [who still comes to visit and brings her daughter]. . . . Roz still visits me and I like her” (interview K., April 14, 2002).
Kate’s memories of the conflict in her homeland were often too painful for her to readily talk about, but Roz, her neighbor, was initially able to approach Kate’s traumatic experiences through her own disability and its accompanying social barriers. Soon after they met, both were displaced by the city’s regeneration processes and the redevelopment of property in their neighborhood. Roz was not only forced from her home but also from her neighborhood, city, and state. She was not able to find the housing and support services she needed in Manchester. However, Roz and Kate maintained their relationship, and, through Kate, Roz continued to be linked to social networks in Manchester.

Several respondents reported that they “found” people who proved to be significant in their lives on streets where they lived. These strangers, who became companions, sometimes offered immediate help, ranging from food to a telephone calling card and survival English. Such local, serendipitous relations often linked a newcomer to work or to local institutions without the mediation of communitarian structures and narratives. On the street where he initially settled, Emrah, who fled from what is now Bosnia, found not only informal employment but also someone he liked and trusted.

Emrah recalled that “the first two months I was here I got to know a black man, Dave—an American. I was watching him from across the street. He was mowing the lawn and . . . I said ‘I can help.’ He offered me a job working with him. This was my first job, although it was informal. I consider this man to be like a brother. I still see him, although now I have moved” (interview E., February 6, 2002). In understanding this social bond, it is helpful to note that Dave was no stranger to precarity, although he was a local with more knowledge about how to get by in Manchester’s low-wage economy. Manchester offered few opportunities to any of its residents, and even fewer to African Americans.

After Emrah managed to buy a house, he moved from his initial location. In the short term, the ability of Manchester’s working poor to access subprime mortgages mediated some of the high costs of local housing. They could buy houses, but many buildings needed repair and were bought at inflated prices and with loans that had adjustable interest rates. Migrants were targets for these loans and their subsequent dispossessive processes. Local real estate brokers told a team member who was studying migrant home buying that loans backed by the Federal Housing Authority were granted even when mortgage costs were 50 percent of the borrower’s income (Buchannan 2002). Until 2008, a widespread strategy of migrant newcomers was purchasing a multifamily house that could shelter not only their family but also ten-
ants or relatives, who could contribute to mortgage payments. Our interviews with local real estate agents made clear that local lenders were more willing to give mortgages to migrants who bought multifamily homes.

Proximal relations between migrant landlords and migrant tenants sometimes led to new sociabilities that furthered the emplacement of both families. When Hubert and Helene bought a two-family house, the ground floor apartment was rented for a while by another migrant family from Vietnam, with whom they shared information about Manchester as well as informal social relations. When one of Hubert and Helene’s children graduated from high school, these tenants were among their guests. After a few years, Hubert and Helene faced foreclosure. They were forced to move when the house’s aging plumbing required tens of thousands of dollars just as their variable mortgage rate ballooned to something they could not afford. Their tenants were also forced to move, and the relationship weakened, though it did not fully break.

Proximity did not automatically lead to sociability. Migrants who saw themselves as superior in class to their neighbors might keep their distance, despite being ethnically similar. Boris, a Bosnian refugee, initially related to his neighbors in “a good part of the city” where his family first rented a house. The commonality of class he felt with his neighbors made him feel at home: “Neighbors were talking and . . . visiting, it was good. Some Vietnamese, but mostly Americans we were visiting.” This experience evoked his sense of home. “My home is where I find myself comfortable and that I can live . . . to be free, to be safe. Anywhere in the world. Just, I want like peace, I want to live in happiness. So it doesn’t matter if it’s Bosnia or here, just I want the peace, you know, human rights, a normal life.” However, the multifamily house that his family later bought was in a poorer neighborhood. Boris avoided his neighbors because “they did not lead respectable lives” (interview B., June 6, 2003).

Sometimes proximity precipitated hostility. In the same building where Kate made her first friend in Manchester, she also encountered hostility. On the second floor, one “white woman . . . turned her back to me whenever I passed.” Kate challenged her, saying, “Did I do something bad to you, you don’t say hi?” The woman answered, “Maybe I don’t want you here.” However, like other respondents who described threats or conflict, Kate emphasized that this incident did not characterize her reception. Instead, she said, “I like Manchester. . . . My children and I are getting help and I meet nice people” (interview K., April 14, 2002).

In some instances, a concern for protecting the street and its property values could turn hostility into mutual support. In several instances, migrants
and non-migrants came together out of a need to respond to conditions in a neighborhood that had been marginalized, criminalized, and devalued, usually through the processes of dispossession and repossession. The Nuhano-vich family, who came to Manchester as refugees from Bosnia, bought the two-family house that they had been renting and began investing their time and labor in renovating it. Their renovations bound them to neighbors who at first kept their distance but over time began to help and exchange labor and supplies with the family (field notes, March 9, 2003). After housing prices dropped dramatically as a result of the subprime mortgage crisis, Hubert and Helene bought a house on a street that previously had no migrants. They were warmly welcomed by one neighbor who continued to be a source of information and support, but another neighbor was openly hostile, to the point of waving guns. Still, after several years of not only living in their new house but also clearly keeping it in good repair, the hostile neighbors came to see Hubert and Helene as local residents and warned them about a gang coming into the area and breaking into cars (field notes, April 16, 2015).

Our respondents’ generally positive view of their reception in Manchester was supported by city statistics that recorded only one violent incident in 2008 and three in 2009. Although these statistics are inadequate measures of racial or religious slurs and other forms of discrimination or attack, Manchester had a very low incidence of “hate crimes” “compared to other multiculturally-dense communities nationally” (City of Manchester Health Department 2011).

We have designated the sites of these sociabilities as proximal rather than neighborhood-based for several reasons. First, as we indicated above, Manchester’s neighborhoods were generally not units of self-identity, service provision, or governance. Second, relationships with neighbors did not necessarily develop on the basis of communal identities, be they cultural, ethnic, religious, or neighborhood-based. Third, participants in proximal relationships did not seek to initiate neighborhood-wide, territorially based solidarities. If any broader localized collective identity emerged, it was identification with the City of Manchester. Identification with the city was widespread among the newcomers we interviewed.

Residential proximity in itself did not produce sociabilities. What brought people together was not simply shared space but the fact that each, in very different ways, drew from their own history of social or spatial displacement and their own precarities to seek new social relations of emplacement in the city. Although residential proximity was one means through which domains of commonality were facilitated, the sociabilities of our respondents were
not confined to relationships with those who lived nearby. Migrants moved through the city and the region, forming relationships in different sites of sociability.

WORKPLACE SOCIABILITIES OF EMLACEMENT

Workplaces have long been sites for the study of social relations. Some of this literature developed within studies of labor history, labor relations, or work councils in various contexts, including that of colonial rural labor migration (Kapferer 1972), domestic workers (Gutierrez-Rodriguez 2010), and workplace teams in scientific projects (Amin 2012). Our interest here, however, is how newcomers to a city participate in sociabilities of emplacement within multiscalar processes that are shaped by urban regeneration. In this regard, it is important to note that, given the precarity of the local economy, not only the workers but also the managers, professionals, or even owners were in relatively insecure positions. Many sociabilities we traced remained confined to the workplace; others extended into social relationships that continued outside of and after workplace encounters.

In addition to restructuring conditions of settlement that had been actuated by property redevelopment, rising land and real estate values, and mortgage markets, city structuring also produced changing conditions and possibilities of local employment for migrants and non-migrants in Manchester. Waves of investment and disinvestment in local industries and businesses marked the multiscalar restructuring of the city and region. City developers sought new industries by advertising that Manchester offered good workers, including immigrants and refugees, for relatively low wages; employers who moved their businesses to Manchester tended to pay relatively low wages. Many of the new jobs, whether they were for high-paid professionals or for low-paid workers classified as low skilled, were short lived. The industries and new businesses, generated by the city’s redevelopment and tax policy came and went, leaving behind newly rebuilt and rapidly abandoned buildings and sites. Although patterns of layoffs and business closures did not constitute a lineal downward trend, manufacturing in New Hampshire declined from 13.4 percent in 1998 to 9.5 percent in 2004, and much of the decline centered around Manchester (City Data 2015).

Initially, many newcomers found work in the shrinking manufacturing sector. Factories offered very low wages, benefiting from the arrival of refugees whom US policy required to take the first job they were offered. Working conditions were hazardous, unions were generally nonexistent, and patern-
nalistic personalized management policies functioned to forestall workers’ struggles for improved working conditions. Hiring was often through personal networks of managers and workers, and more experienced workers were expected to informally train and discipline newcomers.

Given that Manchester didn’t contain concentrations of people who shared a common ethnicity and that most workplaces had relatively few employees, migrants relied on coworkers with different cultural backgrounds. Armando, educated as an architect in Colombia, had to master assembly line and kitchen skills as an undocumented worker in Manchester. He explained the need for assistance and the significance of workplace sociabilities: “The moment I begin at the factory, I start to be a dependent person. . . . What I need to do, I don’t understand. Jose, my Puerto Rican friend, said ‘don’t worry. . . . I made that [mistake] a lot of times.’ . . . This guy was a really remarkable friend” (interviews A., May 24, 2003; October 10, 2003).

The welcome extended to newcomers often went beyond sharing workplace knowledge. Armando continued: “So Jose says to me, ‘Hey. Are you hungry? . . . Take my food! Enjoy!’ And I say, ‘But it’s not my food, you are supposed to eat.’ He says, ‘You don’t know my wife. She’s doing a lot of food for me, and don’t you see how fat I am? . . . So please eat it.’ That was for almost 18 months, the same situation!” (interviews A., May 24, 2003; October 10, 2003).

Armando and Jose were helped by their common knowledge of Spanish and their mutual understanding that, although Armando was an undocumented newcomer and Jose was a native-born citizen, they shared the insecurities that came with racialization as Hispanic. But, in many accounts, sociabilities emerged between individuals who did not share language, racialization, or gender. While commonalities of practice brought people together, our respondents’ descriptions of their workplaces were not those of a “community of practice” (Amin 2012, 39). Rather, they described significant affective and supportive interpersonal relationships, often forged within precarious employment situations.

For example, Emrah, the refugee who first found work through someone he met on the street where he lived, next worked in a local electronics factory owned by a multinational conglomerate. The refugee resettlement agency required him to take the position without training, even though he worked alongside “people from Vietnam, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Ukraine, Russia, Romania, and Americans” and could speak to none of them (interview E., February 6, 2002). However, Emrah was able to find a place for himself through a new friend. “From the beginning my closest friend at work was an American woman, Linda, of about forty-five. I worked with her for about three
years. She . . . helped me from when I first came by explaining things to me. When I started I spoke Bosnian and she spoke English but somehow we understood each other and she would explain what the supervisor wanted.” What Linda did not explain, and both Emrah and Linda experienced together, was the precariousness of earning a living through industrial work in twenty-first-century Manchester—a precarity that was part of the multiscalar restructuring of disempowered city. Emrah and Linda shared experiences of reduced hours, layoffs, and persistent rumors of factory closure, which came to pass several years later.

Not all factories offered conditions that encouraged these kinds of supportive relations, and at some workplaces open racism greeted the newcomers. At the beginning of our research, a meat processing plant, which was one of the larger employers in Manchester until it closed, began to employ increasing numbers of refugees and immigrants. During this period, managers at the processing plant began to delegate the most difficult jobs to Sudanese refugees, and, according to many workers encouraged or at least tolerated racial slurs against them. With the support of a local immigrants’ rights coalition, the local union, previously quiescent about defending workers’ rights, began to challenge the health and safety conditions in the plant. It also initiated an active membership recruitment. As part of the union drive, some workers, both non-migrants and migrants of various backgrounds, joined together to support the union and to discuss racism at the factory.

As our research began, we noted the effects from the dot-com crash in 2000, which decimated the “new economy” high-tech industries recently established in the region. These were the industries that urban developers in Manchester and around the world had heralded as the new economy that would revitalize cities and justify new waves of public investment in city center redevelopment. This dramatic downturn affected Manchester’s migrant professionals and their networks and had myriad ramifications for displacement and emplacement. For example, Hubert and Helene’s friend Marcel, who borrowed on his credit card to help them fly to Manchester and to whom they had looked for financial and emotional support, was laid off from his technology firm, which then closed permanently. Unable to find other permanent professional employment in Manchester, Marcel finally left the city.

Similarly, as a result of the high-tech downturn around the millennium, Rajesh and Nagamalla found themselves opening a restaurant and living within an entirely different social network of emplacement than during their first years in the city. Rajesh had been sent by his family in India to study at the local private university and then became a permanent resident working for a
computer programming company. However, after he was laid off, he opened an Indian restaurant with his Pakistani friend, Nagamalla. Nagamalla had worked at a technology firm for more than three years, had bought a house and a car, and had settled into a middle-class life, only to find himself unemployed when his technology firm folded (field notes, April 4, 2003). The restaurant the two friends founded provided employment not only for both partners but also for several workers, including Raul, the dishwasher.

A carpenter from Uruguay who came to Manchester on a visitor’s visa in search of greater prosperity, Raul formed a strong friendship with Nagamalla. Soon after, the partners fired Raul because he lacked legal permission to work and because, in the wake of the September 11, 2001, US global war on terrorism, the Muslim partners were afraid that their business would face additional scrutiny. Raul moved on to work in a Chinese restaurant, but he stayed close friends with Nagamalla (interview R., May 21, 2003). Migrants such as Emrah, who had official refugee status, and Armando and Raul, who were undocumented workers, were able to forge workplace sociabilities. In their workplaces, newcomers with varying legal statuses, languages, and religions found, in Armando’s words, “at least one great friend” (interviews A., May 24, 2003; October 10, 2003).

Newcomers also forged workplace sociabilities of emplacement with managers or employers, forming social connections that were sometimes life-altering. For example, Tuan, one of the first Vietnamese refugees to settle in Manchester, asked John, a white engineer and a native of New Hampshire, if he would sponsor Tuan’s family’s application for resettlement. Impressed by Tuan’s drive and job commitment, John and his family cosponsored Tuan’s parents, several siblings, and their nuclear families. Tuan obtained a college degree, found a better job, bought a house, and became a leader at the local Buddhist temple. Over the years, he and his extended family continued to include John in family celebrations. Then John lost his engineering job through neoliberal corporate restructuring and confronted the fact that Manchester offered limited opportunities for professionals or entrepreneurs. He tried running a small business but was unsuccessful. At a Buddhist dinner, Tuan’s extended family offered John a Christmas card that contained warm wishes and hundreds of dollars (field notes, 2003).

Similarly, friendships between the Indian and Pakistani restaurant owners and Raul, the dishwasher, cut across divides between employer and worker, legal statuses, cultural and religious backgrounds, and languages and lasted beyond their common employment. Raul told us, “I have good friendships with the people from the restaurant. They’ve felt like a family to me, they’ve
never made me feel bad, I always feel comfortable with them. . . . I’ve been to visit Nagamalla’s family, a birthday or something. They always invite me. When they have a get together in his house, he always invites me. I think they’re very good people” (interview R., May 21, 2003).

While many of these sociabilities had as their context the mutual precarity of Manchester’s transforming economy, in some cases other forms of social dislocation, such as aging or disability, formed the context of the relationship. Mijo, a young Bosnian refugee, formed a long-term relationship with the elderly veterinarian who had employed him as an assistant and who “became a good friend.” Mijo recalled that “at first he seemed totally different from me. He was a businessman, materialistic, patriotic Republican but he wanted to learn more. I think I changed him.” Increasingly isolated as he approached retirement, the veterinarian had never left the United States until he traveled to Bosnia and became part of Mijo’s transnational kinship networks (interview M., January 28, 2002).

Pierre, a college-educated refugee from Rwanda, managed to gain a US college education by caring for Albert, who was severely disabled. Serving as the low-wage caretaker for severely disabled people was one of the jobs available to new migrants in Manchester. Albert’s parents came to be among the people Pierre felt closest to in Manchester. He reported, “If I ever have a problem, I call them” (interview P., March 14, 2002). While Albert’s parents provided advice and support, Pierre gave them confidence that their son was being cared for with respect—a respect that was evident during the interview we conducted in the apartment Pierre shared with Albert. As in many of the sociabilities we explored, although the relationship was unequal in terms of social, economic, and cultural capital, both sides found sources of satisfaction. Both also, although unequally, brought to their interactions their experiences of feeling out of place. Albert’s parents’ openness to Pierre was mediated by their disabled and stigmatized son’s social positioning.

Social service jobs such as caretaking became increasingly frequent forms of employment in the fifteen years of our research. The new economy that the urban regeneration of the city center and surrounding neighborhoods brought to Manchester involved “an expanding service sector,” which, as Manchester’s Office of Economic Development (City of Manchester 2009) conceded, “generally provide[d] lower wage jobs.” “These are suitable for entry part-time employees seeking supplementary income, but cannot generally support a livable household income” (City of Manchester 2009). Health and human services emerged among the largest employers. The employment trajectories of Hubert and Helene and of their children reflect this his-
tory. Although he was a former banker and she was a teacher, both husband and wife initially found employment in a small textile factory in the greater Manchester area. This factory, owned by a multinational conglomerate that did most of its production in China, closed and then reopened, employing for a time Hubert and Helene’s eldest daughter. By 2015, Hubert had worked for several years as a low-paid human services worker, and Helene worked as a hospital cleaner. Their college-educated sons could find only managerial jobs in fast-food restaurants.

Many of the industries that stayed on in the greater Manchester region were tied to the “defense” industry. New Hampshire, including Manchester, had a concentration of military production facilities, but they featured rapid employment fluctuations, with hirings followed by layoffs (Coughlin 2010). The defense industry highlights the need for multiscalar analyses of the conjunctural forces within which Manchester residents experienced precarity and displacement that engendered sociabilities of emplacement. The various factors that constituted the ephemerality of armament-related workplaces included the growth of the US and European engagement in Afghanistan and Iraq after September 11, 2001, and the related massive increase of foreign and domestic surveillance industries. Beginning in 2011, US federal austerity programs, which heralded a “defense industry downturn,” exacerbated the restructuring of this industry in a massive way and contributed to loss of employment. In 2015, Manchester reported a loss of industrial jobs, down 1.3 percent from the previous year (US Bureau of Labor Statistics 2016). However, the following year, employment in the defense industry expanded once again.

**SOCIABILITIES INITIATED IN INSTITUTIONAL SPACES**

Manchester’s disempowered positioning was exacerbated by regeneration accompanied by tax abatements for local industries and new high-end residences, leaving the city with even fewer resources than before for maintaining vital city services, including education, health, and transportation. The severity of the situation became well known in 2015 after two major credit agencies downgraded city bonds, making borrowing more expensive (Fitch 2014; Moody’s 2015). But those who worked in health and human services were aware of the city’s economic precarity well before this disclosure because funds for these services, never ample, were further reduced. Meanwhile, social service organizations that provided support for initial migrant settlement or self-organization, also never well-funded, were reduced at best
to token funding, although political leaders in Manchester maintained their migrant-friendly narrative through 2009 (Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce 2009). As we note in chapter 1, in the following years, the city became divided on the question of refugees. During the same period, federal funding continued its decades-long downward trajectory, with reduced funding for housing and support for the poor. Moreover, public funds were channeled to private investors and service providers, which prioritized profit-making activities.

The lack of public funding for ethnic organizations in Manchester even during the decades of the 1970s and 1980s, when such activities received public support in cities such as New York and Boston, and Manchester’s continued disempowered positioning produced a different configuration of migrant organizing than in other more powerfully positioned locations of settlement. In Manchester, some ethnic or panethnic organizations have been short-lived or have transformed over time into multiservice corporate entities in which professionals administer short-term grants that reflect ever-changing priorities. As we note in chapter 1, the most enduring migrant organization, the Latin American Center, was transformed over the years into a multiservice agency within a consolidated broad-based nonprofit corporation, Southern New Hampshire Services, serving residents in sixty-five towns and three cities in Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties (Southern New Hampshire Services 2016). In discussing how they found a place for themselves in Manchester, our respondents, except for an occasional mention of the Latin American Center—especially their English classes—generally did not speak about the few existing, if rather transient, ethnic or panethnic organizations.9

However, our respondents mentioned other kinds of organizational activities that provided migrant newcomers with the possibility of forming relationships based on domains of commonality other than culture. They spoke of an array of city institutions that provided some services to the poor, including migrants: a refugee resettlement agency, a multiservice center, Catholic parishes and mainstream Protestant churches, schools, a library, and public housing. However, generally these institutions served as spaces of encounter rather than agents of integration that either provided assistance in emplacement or “bridged differences.” Exceptions to this pattern were born-again Christian churches, Seventh-day Adventist Churches, and the multi-ethnic mosque that provided not only organizational platforms for network building but also direct mechanisms of support and emplacement. We discuss religious emplacement in chapter 4. Newcomers generally used these institutional spaces to form informal interpersonal connections.
Some of the local people whom our respondents met in institutional spaces were volunteers; others were paid staff and clients. Although begun in these institutions, the relationships that ensued extended far beyond institutional mission statements or the professional obligations of staff members or what these institutions expected from volunteers. This finding about the role of these individuals in forming sociabilities of emplacement with newcomers highlights the need for researchers to distinguish between institutionally organized processes of settlement and institutional sites that offer initial spaces of encounter through which individuals may endeavor to find their place in a city.

For example, Leila, an Iraqi refugee, met Fran in the office of the local public housing authority where Fran worked. A native of the city, Fran not only assisted Leila in obtaining access to Manchester’s very limited amount of public housing but also provided her with emotional support, networks to other institutions, and ongoing friendship, none of which was in Fran’s job description. Fran brought to the relationship her own sense of Manchester’s inadequacy in providing opportunities for her own professional skills, her broader social and political horizons, and her aspirations for social justice (field notes, March 6, 2003).

Armando, the undocumented worker from Colombia, walked into a public library looking for support and met Tom. Tom, a middle-level manager forced to retire early because of corporate restructuring, found solace in the public library, as did other similarly displaced local people. Armando explained how he met Tom: “One day I request for help in the library and the librarian tells me that ‘the person sitting over there is looking . . . for a person who needs help.’ And I present myself and Tom and I start to be really really friends. He was protecting me, teaching me, showing me the new life of the US. . . . So, he was one of the important points in my life in the US. He sometimes calls me, ‘Hey, what are you doing now? . . . I received a beautiful and unique bottle of wine and I want to enjoy one glass with you.’ We are friends now for, say, almost 12 years” (interviews A., May 24, 2003; October 10, 2003).

Devout Catholics, Hubert and Helene met Nina at a Catholic church, but their relationship was not organized around the church or shared religious beliefs but reflected their shared commitments to social justice. Local parishes offered an African mass, and for a short period Helene sang in the choir organized for that mass. Their parish organized a one-on-one campaign to link nonimmigrant parishioners to new migrants, but its publicity depicted local people as culturally competent and migrants merely as recipients of their good will, rather than as individuals. This program failed to recruit Hubert, He-
lene, or many other migrants into the parish organization, despite migrants’ need for services and their search for networks of support. Instead Hubert befriended Pastor Robert, a born-again Protestant pastor, after visiting his church. While Robert and Hubert maintained their religious differences, over the years Pastor Robert provided Hubert’s family with material assistance and advice as part of an ongoing sociability built on mutual respect.

While we have been highlighting sociabilities initiated in institutional spaces, though not as part of the institutions’ organized activities, other institutions, including local political parties and organizations linked to social movements, provided individual migrants with opportunities to constitute sociabilities of emplacement. As we indicate in chapter 1, in Manchester as in Halle, migrants could become activists within local political parties and form close relationships, including sociabilities of emplacement, based on a shared outlook and political aspirations. For example, when Saggy Tahir, an Indian-born migrant from Pakistan and chair of the Manchester Republican Committee, hosted an annual barbeque in his backyard, with New Hampshire’s governor, state senators, the county sheriff, and aspiring mayoral and city council candidates as guests, he was forging personal sociabilities of emplacement as well as political solidarities (Manchester Republican Committee Newsletter 2003).

At the same time, sociabilities of emplacement were forged by migrants who participated over the years in various progressive organizations that were combatting racism and attacks on migrants. For example, chanting “No Human Being Is Illegal,” Marcel, the migrant who facilitated Hubert and Helene’s arrival in Manchester, participated in a demonstration in 2005 against using local police forces to arrest undocumented migrants. Marcel had become a member of the local immigrant rights organization and forged personal ties with some of its members. Despite his own increasingly desperate struggles to find work, he maintained ties that were not only political but sociabilities based on common commitments to social justice (field notes 2005).

Analytical Conclusions

The sociabilities we trace in various locations in the city were forged within insecure, rapidly changing settings of urban regeneration constituted by multiscalar actors within regional, national, and multinational networks of power. Increasingly, these regeneration processes impoverished the city, amplifying economic disparities, reducing economic opportunities, and dispos-
sensing and displacing migrants and non-migrants alike. The dispossessed included individuals of various class positions.

This chapter has offered the opportunity to rethink debates about the nature of society and sociability as it is lived in specific cities, sites, and moments of time. In such a reexamination, it is important to set aside all communitarian approaches to society and social life that envision bounded communities as the building blocks of society, whether they be neighborhoods, organizations, cities, nation-states, religions, or cultural groups. Much of the angst about deteriorating national social fabrics and the supposed threats migrants pose to social cohesion are fueled by these assumptions (Arapoglou 2012). Once these assumptions are set aside, the questions become, first, on what basis is social life built and, second, how, where, and within what structural processes do sociabilities and domains of commonality emerge within a world of increasing precarity? To begin a different conversation, we have examined relationships among migrant and non-migrant displacements, sociabilities of emplacement, and city-making processes.

In proposing the study of sociabilities of emplacement and domains of commonality, we want to emphasize that it is always necessary to keep in focus the construction, imposition, and naturalization of categories of racial, ethnic, and religious difference and their use in legitimating exclusion, criminalization, and hyperexploitation. These categories were certainly present in Manchester, and newcomers were well aware of their use in justifying or excusing the low wages and dangerous working conditions, high rents, and poor housing they confronted. They also faced interpersonal discrimination; Kate was only one of many respondents who described instances of racism in Manchester. Armando and Jose bonded in part because they experienced racialization as Hispanic, a category sometimes understood locally as criminal and poor. As new conjunctural forces once again reconfigure Manchester, incidents of racism and antimigrant rhetoric have increased. Leila and her children encountered intensified Islamophobia. Once at home in Manchester, they began to feel friendless. Hubert and Helene’s sons—by 2015, hardworking college graduates—encountered the police surveillance common to black youth in New Hampshire.

At the same time, within domains of commonality, migrants and non-migrants in Manchester continued to organize against injustices at home as well as abroad. Natives and migrants, including the children of some migrants whom we met in our research, have joined organizations to combat racism and anti-Islamic politics and to support the struggle for social justice. We think our research provides insights into how sociabilities of the
displaced emerge and constitute building blocks of the fluid constellations of urban social movements that seek economic and social justice (Mayer and Boudreau 2012). It is from sociabilities established by people, who construct domains of being human together despite their differences and who aspire for social justice, that struggles against the growing disparities and displacements of global capitalism can and do emerge (Susser 2012a).

We suggest that shared sensibilities, which underlie the daily sociabilities explored in this chapter, help explain the sudden outpouring of support that greeted refugees who defied barbed wire and guards on the eastern border of the European Union and began to walk into Europe in the fall of 2015. Press reports documented the wave of support for the newcomers but had difficulty explaining how public opinion seemed to change overnight from xenophobia to welcome (Kermani 2015). Based on the discussions we had in German and Austrian cities at the time, we conclude that the people who greeted the refugees seemed to have been motivated by a commonality, an identification based on shared aspirations for safety, justice, and family life. The ranks of young and old, workers and professionals, social movement activists and those who had never joined a political movement literally embraced the newcomers and showered them with gifts. Halle/Saale and its surrounding villages were among many places that prepared to welcome refugees (field notes, 2015).

Unable to explain the depth and breadth of welcome given to the refugees in Europe, the press quickly returned to a xenophobic status quo, reporting, for example, that “migrant attacks reveal dark side of Germany” (Hill 2016). Certainly, in the emerging conjuncture, nationalist political parties with antimigrant platforms are gaining in strength throughout Europe and have claimed the US presidency and congressional majority. In many cities in the United States and in Europe, including Germany, attacks on migrants have increased significantly (Hill 2016). At the same time, volunteer networks and programs to welcome refugees, including the ones we observed in action in Halle, continued to function. Gallup public opinion polling in the United States in 2016 revealed that 76 percent of Republicans and 84 percent of the population as a whole favored paths to citizenship for undocumented immigrants and that two-thirds opposed deporting them (Jones 2016). Various polls also revealed that these sentiments were linked to experiences of daily sociability rather than to hospitality to strangers. Transatlantic Trends (2014), a survey conducted in the United States and eleven European countries, including Germany, reported that “majorities in both the United States (69 percent) and Europe (58 percent) said that they had at least a few friends who were born in other countries.”