In the storefront church, on a street replete with weatherworn buildings, some of them empty, almost all the congregants were white. Their clothing and their battered faces bore witness to struggles with unemployment, alcoholism, and precarious lives. Godsword and his wife, Elizabeth, both refugees from Nigeria, sat off to the side, not as guests but as leaders of the congregation. They were dressed in their Sunday best, he in a suit and tie and she in a good dress and churchgoing hat. A white minister conducted most of the service, accompanied by a small group of musicians, one of whom was from Ghana and had a Harvard degree and a good job. When it was time for the sermon, Godsword preached to his fellow congregants, calling on them to step forward and pray that their bodies be purged of all evil spirits so that believers could be healed. Many did so, and at his touch they silently fell to the floor in a state of trance (field notes, March 4, 2003).

Nina and several students had gone to the storefront church assuming that because Godsword was a refugee from Nigeria, the members of his home church would be African immigrants. While Manchester had few migrants of Nigerian background in 2001, the year our research team first visited that church, there were enough immigrants and refugees from Africa to form a congregation with an African identity. In fact, a local Catholic parish had recently initiated an African mass. Most literature on migrants’ congregations at the time portrayed them as ethnoreligious organizations (Warner 1998). However, as soon as we walked in the door of Godsword’s home church, we realized that we had to set aside this ethnic lens in order to discover what this congregation could tell us about relationships between migrants and non-migrants and processes of dispossession and emplacement.

Over the next few years, Godsword formed an umbrella organization that united his home church with more than twenty congregations in the greater
Manchester area in a Resurrection Crusade to “take the city for Jesus.” The Resurrection Crusade, whose central leadership comprised Godsword, a few non-migrants, and migrants from several different countries, was part of a multiscalar social field that stretched from Manchester to Texas, through various other US cities, and on to Israel, London, England, and Port Harcourt, Nigeria. It linked congregants to the Bush White House and to US imperial war making (Resurrection Crusade 2004; Glick Schiller 2005b). As we learned more about the reach and vision of those who joined the Crusade, we began to approach this practice of born-again Christianity as a pathway to social citizenship for the dispossessed, migrants and non-migrants alike.

In Halle in 2001, Nina began to participate in prayer meetings at the Miracle Healing Church. Over the next fifteen years, under the leadership of Pastor Joshua, a migrant from Nigeria, the church brought increasing numbers of non-migrants and migrants together to claim the city in the name of Jesus. To further their city-claiming project, Pastor Joshua connected his congregants to a multiscalar social field that extended into other German cities and across many national borders and linked the Miracle Healing Church to the same “world ministry” admired by Pastor Godsword in Manchester. This ministry wages “spiritual attacks against [the] forces of darkness” by “building God’s victorious army” (Cerullo 2002, 2016).

In chapters 1, 2, and 3, we describe the multiscalar neoliberal restructurings and urban regeneration of Halle and Manchester and the intertwined multiple dispossessions and displacements of migrant and non-migrant residents of those cities. In this chapter, we examine the relationship between the determination of born-again church members and organizations to reclaim their disempowered cities for Jesus and the restructuring processes that were transforming their lives. The chapter situates our analysis of claim-making and related religious practices of born-again Christian congregations in these cities within debates over the nature and potency of social citizenship (Isin and Nielsen 2008).

Our focus is not on the entire belief system of what many scholars of religion characterize as Pentecostalism² (Robbins 2004) but on the territorialized narratives, forms of sociability, and struggles for empowerment of its congregation members and networks. Hence, our examination of this form of Christianity incorporates a multiscalar analysis that adds concepts of place, power, and historical conjuncture to Ruth Marshall’s (2014, S352) call to think comparatively “about . . . [Pentecostal Christianity’s] social and political effects across a range of very different contexts as well as the ways, if any, in
which these Christians can be understood as forming a global community.” Marshall writes: “One of the things that makes Pentecostals and charismatics distinctive and so successful is their development of an extremely robust paradigm for thinking globally, which is to say ‘global spiritual warfare.’ Intimately associated with the project of global evangelism, it is increasingly enacted through the growing phenomenon of reverse mission.”

There is now an important body of scholarship that deploys the concept of social citizenship to examine claim-making practices of people who, either through legal means or through constructions of gendered, religious, racialized, or class-based difference, are excluded from the body politic (Çağlar 2015; Haney López 1998; Isin 2008; Lister 1997; Marshall 1964; Shafir 1998). Generally, discussions of social citizenship examine how those who are excluded use forms of discourse and social relations, organizations, and movements of inclusion to establish themselves as social and political actors. Most of that research focuses on classic domains of claim making in spheres of political action, including ethnic politics or secular social movements (Nuijten 2013). This chapter explores a less frequently queried site of political claim making, namely, religious congregations taking as their charter of citizenship the biblical promise that the Lord will guide a wandering people to a new land, promising them “ye shall possess it and dwell therein.”

Religiously based claims to membership and belonging made by migrants and natives in disempowered cities shed new light on political energies generated by those stigmatized as different—racially, culturally, religiously, or because of their poverty. Even as city leaders and promoters framed these congregations as sites of cultural and religious difference, born-again congregation members told a different story through their sociabilities, solidarities, and moral economy. In Halle and Manchester, members of these born-again churches responded to various experiences of stigmatization and dispossession through acts and narratives of social citizenship, contesting disempowerment by political authorities by affirming that “there is no power except for God.”

**Social Citizenship Defined and Expanded**

The word “citizen” is now generally understood to mean a full member of a modern state who has all possible legal rights, including the right to vote, to hold political office, and to claim public benefits. Citizens of states also have certain responsibilities that vary from country to country (Bauböck 1994; Shafir 1998). However, the clear-cut textbook-style definition gets very muddy...
in practice: in different nation-states, people practice and conceive of citizenship somewhat differently.

Conventional liberal understandings of citizenship focus on the rights of the nation-states to grant or deny membership and its accompanying rights and obligations. These approaches formulate citizenship as a legal relation between the individual subject and the nation-state, which grants membership and belonging to a political community. This community is envisaged as the nation that limits membership to those granted rights and responsibilities. As scholars of citizenship have noted, not all people who are legal citizens receive the same treatment from the state, nor can they all claim the same rights. Formal membership status is neither necessary nor sufficient to guarantee and generate an array of civic and socioeconomic rights.

There are often categories of people who are legal citizens according to the laws of a state yet face various forms of exclusion and denial of civil rights because they are not considered to be truly part of the nation. Those categorized and racialized as not belonging to the ethnoreligious nation are placed outside the legitimate body politic (Hamilton and Hamilton 1997; Haney López 1998; Lister 1997; Marshall 1964; Yuval-Davis 1997). As the past and present struggles for women’s rights, gay and transgender rights, or welfare rights have indicated, full civil and property rights, including the protections of family law, may also be denied to people who are racialized as members of the dominant population but who contest normative definitions of gender, sexuality, or dominant middle-class values. These kinds of exclusions operate within systems of law and within civil society.

In a range of countries at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, struggles arose to contest categories of difference that denied legal citizens their civil rights and expanded the definition of national culture to include cultural and religious diversity. These movements deployed concepts of cultural citizenship and cultural rights to validate as equal members of the state those marked as culturally different from the dominant national culture. As defined by Rosaldo and Flores (1997, 57), cultural citizenship refers to “the right to be different with respect to the norms of the dominant national community, without compromising one’s right to belong.” This approach to citizenship was a product of struggles against assimilationist policies that limited full members in a polity to those who conformed to dominant cultural practice and values. Advocates of cultural citizenship sought to ensure that the multiple cultural heritages contained within a single nation-state would be recognized and respected; they wanted the practice
of cultural difference to be accompanied by the assurance of equal opportunity (Glick Schiller 2005a).

Therefore, the concept of cultural citizenship focused on multiple identities and the diversity of cultural practices and norms. Advocates of cultural citizenship did not address how persons who are not legally citizens or not recognized as citizens participate in the common social, economic, and political life of a specific locality and nation-state and claim rights in these multiple quotidian domains. Their incorporative forms of participation and the claims that they generate move beyond the politics of difference and the cosmology of identity politics. These individuals contribute to shaping institutional practices and ideas about the state and governance within nation-states. To address their practices and claims, scholars have begun to speak of social citizenship, which foregrounds belonging and participation.

The concept of social citizenship shifted discussions of citizenship and belonging from legal arrangements to enactments (Isin 2002, 2008). Arguing for an approach to citizenship that was practice-centered, Clarke et al. (2014, 12) move beyond the concept of citizenship “as a legal/juridical and political status as corpus of rights and obligations and responsibilities.” This scholarship arose and reflected a certain historical conjuncture as the trajectories of neoliberal capitalist agendas and their emphases on individualism, fluidity, and mobility made inroads in public discourse and forms of political struggle in Euro-American terrains. In the context of increasing access to social and civic rights in Europe from the 1970s to the 1990s, Soysal (1994) emphasizes that although migrants and their descendants lacked formal membership in the host nation, human rights regimes and their own claim-making practices give migrants various social, economic, civil, and cultural rights. In their quest to understand the social dynamics of participation in social and political processes of state making, and aware of the limitation of the formal status of membership, many scholars of citizenship began to speak of the practices and performance of citizenship rights, rather than merely the formal status of membership. Social citizens substantively assert rights to citizenship through social practices rather than through law. When people claim to belong to a state by collectively organizing to protect themselves against discrimination, when they receive rights and benefits from a state, or when they contribute to its development and the lives of its people through practices of political claim making, they are said to be social citizens.

This approach to citizenship, which is concerned with the moral and performative dimensions of membership beyond the domain of legal rights, de-
fines the meaning and practices of participation and belonging as it is displayed within the public sphere (Holston and Appadurai 1999). Rather than a static view of citizenship inscribed into formal laws, which portrays rights as possessions, the concept of social citizenship offers a processual, contextual, and relational understanding of citizenship, emphasizing its “unfinished” nature (Balibar 2003). Social citizenship differs from legal citizenship because of the misalignment between formal citizenship and the actual exercise of rights, benefits, privileges, and voice.

Social citizenship practices emerge from social relationships. Often social citizenship is discussed in relation to social rights and benefits that facilitate the participation of citizens and noncitizens in a polity. As we note in our discussion of sociability in chapter 3, the term “social” stemmed from concepts of fellowship and companionship. Isin and his colleagues (Isin et al. 2008, 12; Brodie 2008) argue for a concept of social citizenship built on this understanding. In this sense, social citizenship refers to “the dense fabric of relations that constitute humans as social beings who coexist with their fellow beings in and through conflict and cooperation that undergird norms, laws and customs” (Isin 2008, 282). This important point of entry addresses sociability that binds people together beyond their legal status in a nation-state or locality.

When the excluded, the undocumented, the refugees, or the poor claim or demand their rights as valid members of the society through informal, unofficial, and/or illegal venues, they are practicing what is called “insurgent citizenship” (Holsten 2008; Varsanyi 2006). Isin and Nielsen (2008, 5–6) refer to such insurgencies as “acts of citizenship.” This concept allows us to capture the moments when subjects constitute themselves as those making claims, asserting rights, and imposing obligations beyond the ones granted them by law (2008, 5–6). According to Isin and Nielsen, acts of citizenship “contest” habitus and citizenship practices by grounding their legitimacy and entitlements not in existing legal and social frames but in unfamiliar or new grounds. They introduce “rupture” to the given order. By instantiating a crack in the institutionalized order of things, claimants become part of contentious politics (Çağlar 2015, 2016a).

However, tracing the course of the initial access and more recent denial of rights to migrants who are not legal citizens reveals not only the discrepancy between formal and substantive citizenship rights but also how the relationship between the formal and substantive is related to contingencies of social forces and modes of capital accumulation within a given conjuncture. Several decades after Soysal (1994) and Sassen’s initial statements about
“post-national” citizenship (Sassen 2002b), their arguments appear dated, whether they were theorized from the spaces of Europe or from the “global city.” The weaknesses of those conceptualizations of social citizenship highlight the need to situate discussions of citizenship within changing trajectories of power at different conjunctural moments. Over time and within the contingencies of different localities, multiscalar displacement and emplacement processes have been transforming access to formal or substantive rights within and beyond nation-states. As the intensive accumulation by dispossession and neoliberal restructuring have begun to take their toll around the globe, and as new restrictions on the legal rights of noncitizens are increasingly widespread in many regions of the world, both the limitations and the political possibilities opened by the practices of social citizenship are coming more clearly into view.

At the same time, contemporary conjunctural transformations have made it more apparent that citizenship creates, and is created by, its relationship to those excluded from its domain of privilege within the power geometry of a given historical and political context. The presence and the practices of the excluded and the modes of their exclusion are central to the constitution and the transformations of formal citizenship (Isin 2002; Balibar 2003; Sassen 1998; De Genova 2013). People who fall into the category of excluded—the undocumented, refugees, and migrants—come to the fore as major constituents of citizenship (Isin 2002; Holston 2008; Varsanyi 2006; Rajaram and Arendas 2013; Çağlar and Mehling 2012).

The concept of social citizenship complements this relational and conjunctural approach by drawing attention to the complex processual and contentious inroads into rights and belonging that practices of social citizenship may initiate. The processes of social citizenship challenge the binary of exclusion and inclusion, which restricts rights and membership to those who hold legal status. Responding to an understanding of citizenship in which margins are essential to constituting the whole, Clarke et al. (2014, 49) call for a “recentering of citizenship around spaces, sites and practices that are often described as marginal.” They argue that citizenship is defined at its margins, because inclusion of the excluded leads to a rearrangement of the existing structures and a disruption of taken-for-granted assumptions upon which the hegemonic understanding of citizenship is based.

In this broader understanding of citizenship, the emphasis is on people’s everyday acts of citizenship, on the formation of their subjectivities, and on their political agency through their claim-making processes within a given historical and political context (Neveu 2005; Nuijten 2013). This processual
perspective allows us to see how the insurgency of such practices has transformative capacity. This analysis identifies processes by which claim making and social practices lead to the granting of rights to the excluded, resulting in the formation of new categories, laws, and political subjects—in short, in the remaking of citizenship (Clarke et al. 2014, 171).

However, the social citizenship perspective, with its emphasis on emplacement and belonging through everyday life, has important weaknesses, especially when it neglects an analysis of institutions of power, including the power of states, and fails to address changing configurations of power over time. It is true that without active social citizenship, formal, legally protected rights may exist only on paper, may be abrogated in practice, or may be rescinded. However, when activists and scholars emphasize practices and related claims at the expense of attention to the translation of claims into formal legal rights, claimants are left vulnerable and ultimately unprotected (Varsanyi 2006).

Scholars of social citizenship also have tended to canonize certain sites such as plazas or public parks as inherently productive of acts of social citizenship. Sites of claim making can in fact be variable, and in which sites people chose to act performatively reflects contingencies of time and place and the alignment of conjunctural forces, tensions, and possibilities. Therefore, researchers must identify claim-making sites based on empirical research, not on a priori categorization (Çağlar 2016a). These sites might range from religious organizations to dance associations. Any site may offer possibilities for social citizenship that function beyond formal citizenship venues (Hamidi 2003). As Clarke et al. (2014, 5) aptly underline, “citizenship always takes specific forms that are outcomes of sets of processes and are related to specific political projects, particular social contexts and distinctive cultural configurations.”

The enactment of social citizenship brings together multiple sources of notions of rights, entitlements, claims, and political practices. These sources do not reflect the citizenship rights, notions, or practices of a single nation-state. Instead, those who enact social citizenship often draw from the citizenship practices of multiple states as well as their personal transborder networks and multiple embeddings in far-ranging transnational social fields. They bring together experiences of human rights regimes as they are differentially implemented in various states and regions and in globe-spanning social media narratives and debates about rights and belonging.

In this chapter, we turn to social citizenship claims based on global born-again Christianity. To explore the tensions and possibilities opened through
social citizenship practices, we situate these claims within particular places, at particular historical conjunctures, and within multiscalar networks of power. While increasing attention has been paid to transnational networks of Christians and their transborder projects and identities, scholars of religion and migration have had less to say about how religious belief and practices can foster social citizenship (Levitt 2003; van Dijk 2011; von Vasquez and Marquardt 2003). Yet, based on what they see as their God-given rights, migrants moving within a transnational social field endeavor to act upon the institutional, legal, and societal processes of the state and locality in which they have settled to claim place-based rights and identities.

Building Born-Again Organizations

In Halle, we participated in two different born-again churches initiated by refugees from Africa who saw themselves as Christians claiming the land in the name of Jesus. The first, the Miracle Healing Church, begun by African asylum seekers in 1996, started to grow in 2001 after Pastor Joshua became pastor. Originally from eastern Nigeria, Joshua had a well-paying factory job in western Germany at the time he assumed leadership of the congregation. He was fluent in German as well as English and had permanent residence through his marriage to a white German woman from Leipzig. By 2003, the church had enough money from tithes and Sunday offerings to lease a small, one-story industrial building. Pastor Joshua led bilingual English and German prayer and healing services from this church, and this unpresupposing structure became the headquarters for his growing transnational ministry. By 2005, the Miracle Healing Church had approximately 150 members. Twenty percent of the congregation was white German. Most African members were Nigerian, but other West African countries were also represented. Over the years, a growing number of the migrant members learned to speak some German and obtained permanent legal status by marrying Germans. German partners, especially women, became church members and attended services with their children. Increasingly, white Germans from the region around Halle who were not married to members also joined the church.

After a schism reduced its membership, a core of activists rebuilt the ministry. These activists included migrants from Africa, local non-migrants, and young white Germans from western Germany who migrated specifically to work with Pastor Joshua. The reconstituted congregation reconstructed the church’s website and gave its ministry an active Facebook presence. By 2015, the approximately seventy-five congregants worshipping on a warm sum-
mer Sunday included almost as many white Germans as migrants. Over the years, Pastor Joshua inserted the Miracle Healing Church within a wide, intricate web of Pentecostal prayer and healing networks and their texts, music, and ritual practices. Visiting pastors circulated within a social field that connected Germany, Europe, Africa, Asia, and the United States.

The L’espirit de Signeur congregation, led by Pastor Mpenza, numbered about thirty members when we began our research in 2001. Its congregation remained primarily African and did not grow over the years. During the first five years of our research, most core members were young men from the Congo region and other parts of Francophonic Africa or Angola. However, several women from these regions and a few white German partners of African migrants participated in the choir or other church activities. Worship was in French, with translation sometimes into Lingalla, a Bantu language of the eastern Congo region, parts of Angola, and the Central African Republic. Initially, only a few African members spoke passable German, although this changed over time.

Pastor Mpenza and his wife had been granted refugee status with permanent residence, but most members were asylum seekers with only temporary rights to stay. For a number of years, the congregation struggled to maintain itself, as people central to the group lost their final appeal for asylum and fled to western Germany or France in the face of imminent deportation. After

FIG 4.1 Halle residents pray for healing as part of their Christian missionizing in Halle. Photograph by Nina Glick Schiller.
years of transient membership, and although the congregation remained primarily migrants from Francophonic or Lusophonic Africa, its core members eventually obtained rights to live in Halle as partners of German citizens, as parents of children born in Germany, or as students. Pastor Mpenza had led a church before migrating to Germany and arrived as part of a Pentecostal network based in Africa. He utilized his ties to connect his congregation to born-again networks in western Germany and elsewhere in Europe.

The asylum seekers who initially founded both born-again churches in Halle were quite poor, since German laws initially forbade them from working. Even those with legal rights to work had trouble finding formal employment. As we indicate in chapters 1 and 2, unemployment in the city was high and a legal preference was given to Germans and EU citizens. Over time, those migrants who stayed earned a subsistence income from temporary employment outside of Halle or through informal trade in imported goods such as cosmetics, clothing, and hair products. Several opened businesses near the city center, including the Beautiful Dream Gifts, whose rise and fall are described in chapter 2. By 2015, the socioeconomic composition of the Miracle Healing congregation had broadened to include educated Germans with white-collar jobs and a handful of well-paid professional researchers of African background who worked in Halle’s prestigious science institutes.

In Manchester, we participated in various healing conferences and prayer breakfasts led by Pastor Godsword of the Resurrection Crusade, met with the Crusade’s core members, and attended several services within its networked churches. Arriving from Ogoniland in Nigeria as an English-speaking refugee already embedded in Pentecostal networks that linked Nigeria, the United Kingdom, and the United States, Pastor Godsword created a religious organization that united a multitude of independent, born-again congregations in a campaign to bring the word of God to the people of Manchester. At its height, more than twenty congregations in the Greater Manchester area participated in the Crusade. Most of these congregations were predominantly non-migrant white. The Crusade included two congregations that prayed in Spanish and one African American congregation, but all churches participating in the Crusade espoused a born-again Christian, rather than an ethnic or racial identity.

From 2002 to 2005, migrants from all over the world increasingly joined the churches that made up the Crusade. The number of migrants in its core group also increased. By 2004, about 20 percent of the participants in conferences, prayer breakfasts, and prayer events sponsored by the Crusade were migrants of African, Caribbean, Latin American, and Asian origin. The Cru-
sade was more than an organizational nexus. It had its own individual activists, including people of migrant background, racialized minorities, and non-migrants. These believers drew their family, friends, and coworkers into an expanding global field of Christian activity with multiple connections to different ministries and religious networks in the United States, Europe, Africa, the Philippines, and Latin America.

Migrants in member churches and the core of the Crusade ranged from factory workers to professionals, but most held working-class jobs. Non-migrants in the activist core included a factory foreman and an office worker. Similarly non-migrant members in church networks varied widely in occupation and income. They ranged from the unemployed and retired to owners of small businesses whose prosperity was linked to the condition of the local economy.

In 2005, Godsword and the Crusade initiated the Regional Prayer Center, renting space in a small office building in the regenerated city center. The Regional Prayer Center began to host visiting pastors, Sunday Bible study, and weekly women’s groups cosponsored by the Crusade’s member churches. However, the Prayer Center was less successful than the Crusade in attracting support, perhaps because it seemed to resemble a new church and competed for funds and activists with its member congregations.

In the wake of the 2008 subprime mortgage crisis and major recession, a new wave of dispossession afflicted the Manchester city-region. Members of the Crusade and its constituent congregations lost homes, jobs, and confidence. The Prayer Center closed, and the Crusade ceased activities in Manchester. Godsword had quit his job for full-time Christian organizing when the Crusade began and was among the many migrants in Manchester who had bought an old dilapidated house with a subprime mortgage. He continued his activities within his multiscalar born-again Christian social field but moved the base of his proselytizing and healing conferences to Ogoniland, Nigeria.

**Urban Regeneration, Religious Difference, and Subordinated Emplacement**

As we saw in chapters 1, 2, and 3, leaders in Halle and Manchester began efforts to re-empower and globally reposition their respective cities by projecting an image of their city as culturally diverse and open to the world. Embracing this image and its promise of urban renewal and development, they initiated regeneration projects, and political officials, city planners, and heads of cultural, religious, and social institutions welcomed migrants as members
of the urban community. In 2000, this welcome was inclusive: it extended to legal residents, students, refugees or asylum seekers, and the undocumented. However, in their representations and positioning of migrants, city leaders subordinated them. In these representations of migrants, even as they enveloped migrants in a narrative of inclusion, city leaders positioned migrants in ways that failed to acknowledge their multiple forms of city making. Those who designed, articulated, and led Manchester’s regeneration projects failed to acknowledge migrants’ multiple forms of city making even as they welcomed migrants as belonging to the city. Disregarding migrants’ city-making activities and capacities, they embraced the globe-spanning mantra that only investment capitalists and global talent could revitalize a city and usher in a new era of prosperity. Migrants were reduced to the embodiments of cultural and religious diversity that were necessary to attract the desired agents of urban regeneration.

Given this mind-set, official and publicly funded institutions in both Halle and Manchester included born-again Christian organizations in their listings of local organizations that embodied cultural diversity. For example, in 2003, an Africa Week in Halle program, sponsored by the city’s Office of Culture and Office of Foreigners of Halle and by a range of local institutions and civil and religious NGOs, listed an African Worship Service hosted by Pastor Mpenza and L’espirit de Signeur congregation. Eine-Welt-Haus, an organization to promote intercultural understanding funded by the city government as well as by Saxony-Anhalt, the EU, and political foundations, included both the Miracle Healing Church and L’espirit de Signeur in a listing of the city’s multicultural activities. Approaching the Resurrection Crusade with a similar mind-set, the mayor of Manchester initially called it an organization that highlighted the “colorful mosaic” that the twenty-first century brought to the city. In a letter of support for a Wind and Fire Prayer Conference organized by the Crusade, he wrote, “We celebrate the diversity of Manchester and embrace the fact that people from all over the world come to our wonderful city” (Baines 2004).

As we document in chapters 1 and 3, despite their policy of welcoming migrants, officials in Halle and Manchester provided few resources and services for migrants’ settlement and support. As tax revenues became increasingly constrained, officials prioritized investing public funds in urban regeneration, although they did provide born-again religious organizations that were viewed as migrant organizations with access to regenerated spaces. These allocations not only situated what city leaders saw as cultural diversity within revitalized spaces but also enlisted migrants as placeholders, ensuring that
underutilized rebuilt spaces were filled until they generated higher market values. It is interesting to note that, in both cities, religious organizations begun by migrants were also provided with virtual space in the form of public airwaves where the city’s religious diversity was highlighted.

As part of his institution’s “multicultural integration consultancy,” the head of the Bauhof, a youth training center supported by the Evangelical Church, allowed the Miracle Healing Church to hold prayer services in a building restored with German federal state funding. L’espirit de Signeur was given space to pray in a regenerated factory specifically designated as a meeting center for foreigners and Germans. This center and a neighboring park served to anchor prospective development in Riebeckviertel, a historic industrial area near the central railroad station. City planners designated the area for new economy industries, which planners envisioned rising from the rubble of early industrial- and socialist-era workplaces but which had not yet arrived (City of Halle 2004). However, for most of the decade after the millennium, the meeting center’s regenerated space continued to stand amid abandoned factory buildings.

While the Resurrection Crusade in Manchester was not given office space, it was provided with public space within the regenerated city center to lead celebrations during the National Day of Prayer. On that occasion in 2005, the mayor provided the Crusade with the Aldermanic Chambers of Manchester City Hall so that pastors and intercessors could pray for the city. The historic city hall building was completely restored in 1998 as one of the first steps in revitalizing the main street of the city center. The Crusade was also given access to a public park in the city center dedicated to war veterans. Several hundred people, including military veterans, participated in a “major prayer rally” heard over city loudspeakers.

Although they accepted and welcomed these various forms of public support, leaders and members of the Miracle Healing Church, L’espirit de Signeur, and the Resurrection Crusade understood their relationship to the cities in which they were located very differently than did city leaders. Born-again Christian migrants created a counternarrative and set of practices that grounded their claims to rights, belonging, and city making on Christian theology and global Pentecostal Christian doctrine. In formulating their claims, migrants joined with non-migrants who also sought recognition, rights, and citizenship outside of and beyond the legitimacy of government officials and institutions. Below, we discuss three different aspects of how migrants and non-migrants who were members of these born-again organiza-
tions narrated their feelings of being disempowered and set aside and their quest for emplacement and re-empowerment.

“In the Name of Jesus”: Born-Again Multiscalar Social Citizenship

CLAIMING THE LAND

Migrant and non-migrant leaders and members of each organization claimed rights to land, access to power, and moral authority in the name of Jesus. According to Pastor Mpenza, of the L’espirit de Signeur Church, who came to Germany as a refugee from the Congo, the Bible’s message was clear: “Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours” (Deut. 11:24).

These organizations deployed born-again Christian discourses and doctrines to set aside categories of native and foreigner, black and white, and seek instead domains of commonality in their shared commitment to bring the word of God to inhabitants of the city. Therefore, they did not build their churches around ethnic terms, national identities, or cultural identities. Speaking to a prayer conference in Manchester, Pastor Godsword said, “No longer is it about black or white issues in America. It is not about racism. It’s about bringing the word of God” (field notes, March 22, 2004). When Pastor Mpenza explained his presence in Germany as well as his insistence that his church be understood as Christian, not Congolese, he said:

I have told you about my origin. I have come from Congo where I met my Lord, where I worked for the Lord. And now I am here in Germany where I had the feeling that the inhabitants were in need of the same message. So I’ve clearly said that this church is not a Congolese church. I’ve clearly said it is a church of Jesus. In other words, it is for the Germans, for all nationalities; I can also say, in this church we have Germans, we have Angolans, we have Ivories, we have people from Togo, we have Burundians, we have all possible nationalities. (Interview M., 2003)

According to believers, their rights to the land and its fruits came with responsibilities. All congregation members took the stance of missionaries tasked with claiming the land for the Lord and winning its inhabitants for Jesus. As Pastor Joshua of the Miracle Healing Church emphasized, “We consider it our duty to fulfill the commandment of our risen Lord and Master Jesus Christ as it is written in Matthew 28:19–20, ‘Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of
the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have com-
mmanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen’” (field notes 2016).

Similarly referring to what “the Lord told me,” Godsword, leader of the
Resurrection Crusade and its prayer network in Manchester, New Hamp-
shire, stated that his mission was to “bring change” to the city and make it a
“place of God.” Positioning himself as a messenger of the word of Jesus, he
explained that his Crusade had grown because “God brought people around
me” so that “the Kingdom of God will come to the City” (interview, April 30,
2004).

While all three pastors and the core members of their organizations
shared an understanding of their evangelizing mission shaped by a global
and centuries-old project of Christian proselytization, their specific methods
reflected vistas of dispossession, displacement, and restructuring in the city
where they were located. Their missionizing also reflected how Christianity
was perceived locally and nationally and the personal talents and resources
they could muster. Therefore, the three organizations differed in the size of
their congregations, the composition of their membership, the extent and
composition of their networks, and their means of evangelization.

When members of L’espirit de Signeur learned that their choir was in de-
mand at public occasions such as summer folk festivals or the annual Inter-
cultural Week celebration, they began to participate in these activities. As a
result, during their first ten years, the church and choir developed weak but
multiple ties to various local cultural and political institutions. To the pas-
tor and his congregation, choir performances in Halle “took place within the
frame of evangelization. There is evangelization by means of language, and
there is evangelization by means of music” (interview PM., 2003). Given this
congregation’s meager resources and limited German language skills, church
members sought to use music to bring the people of Halle, both migrant and
non-migrant, to God.

With a pastor and key members who spoke German, and with core mem-
biers established as legal residents by 2004, Pastor Joshua and the Miracle
Healing Church congregants increasingly evangelized by organizing healing
services beyond the space of their own building. In 2005, the Miracle Heal-
ing Church led a five-day healing conference at a hockey rink in Halle that
attracted several hundred people, two-thirds of them German. With assis-
tance from his congregants, Pastor Joshua also began to hold healing services
for German congregations in neighboring cities. The church produced vid-
etapes of these services and sold them through their website and at church
services. In 2005, their website featured Pastor Joshua praying with a young blond white woman and a caption proclaiming that the church was “the place of miracles, signs, and wonders. Here . . . the sick get healed, the blind see, and many are delivered from bondage of sin” (field notes 2005). The goal of these healing services was to exorcise the evil spirits of sickness from the bodies of the sick and from the city and to defeat the Devil, so that God could rule the city and its people.

As did migrants in the born-again churches in Halle, the migrants who built the Resurrection Crusade in Manchester claimed to be spiritual intercessors whose God-given mission was to rid the city, state, and country from evil spirits and claim it in the name of Jesus. Godsword brought in a wide range of pastors from the region, the country, and internationally to hold healing ceremonies. His Prayer Center trained “prayer intercessors” in “strategic or city level spiritual warfare” against the Devil, who assigns his “territorial spirits . . . to rule geographical territories and social networks” (Smith 1999, 23).

In both Halle and Manchester, these evangelizing activities legitimated these born-again organizations’ claims that their members not only belonged to the city but were its spiritual leaders. By defining the current state of the world as a battle between God and demonic forces, migrants and non-migrants in these born-again organizations took on the role of global “spiritual warriors” for Jesus.

In their literature and on their websites, the global evangelizing networks associated with the religious organizations we studied spoke of the need to wage spiritual warfare to root out the evil within each locality. Interestingly, both the US Prayer Center, the powerful right-wing Texas-based network with which the Crusade was affiliated, and the Organization of Free Churches (Bund freikirchlicher Pfingstgemeinden), to which both L’Esprit de Signeur and the Miracle Healing Church belonged, specifically encouraged each congregation to claim the territory in which they were located. By emphasizing a Christian universalism that divided the world into the saved and the unsaved—namely, those on the side of God and those on the side of the Devil—rather than ethnic particularism or a stigmatized local identity, migrants and non-migrants who joined this religious movement could become incorporated as local and global actors on their own terms.

In both Manchester and Halle, migrants, especially those racialized as nonwhite, felt highly visible because of their small numbers. Migrants who joined born-again churches found a setting that did not highlight their public differentiation and brought them together with non-migrants as the saved.
Non-migrants in Halle could shed the stigmatized regional identity of being from the east in a unified Germany. In Halle and Manchester, non-migrants faced urban regeneration that served the needs of “new economy workers” and left members of the white working class and an increasingly precarious middle class feeling like “strangers in their own land.” They gained a political voice, cultural legitimacy, and social citizenship as they organized to put “God in command.”

**POWER: PLACING JESUS IN COMMAND OF THE STATE**

In all three born-again organizations, prayers, sermons, written text, websites, individual testimonies, and our interviews with congregants contained frequent references to the term “power.” In 2005, the Miracle Healing Church’s website explained the source of healing miracles: “There is Power in God’s Word!” In a letter to the people of Manchester from the Resurrection Crusade, Godsword made it clear that “only the power of prayer can change lives in our city, state and America” (Miracle Healing Church 2005).

In invoking the concept of power, members of these born-again organizations challenged political leaders to subordinate their authority to the word of God. Through much of the twentieth century, Pentecostal Christians had tended “to shy away from ‘hard’ political acts that they consider[ed] immoral, such as working for parties, criticizing public officials, or running for office” (Robbins 2004). This changed at the end of the twentieth century, when many Pentecostals took a more activist and critical stance toward secular government. Distrusting existing governments and political leaders, organizations such as the Christian Coalition, composed of well-funded nationalist right-wing pastors and political operatives, began to speak of “putting God in command” of governments and politicians and calling for “the Lord and his anointed to subdue all nations.”

To asylum seekers in Halle, the state was unreadable and mercurial. It granted one person asylum while another seeming to have more valid claims faced deportation. To counter the insecurities of their tenure, pastors in both churches preached that migrants had God on their side and that God held all power in the world. Pastor Joshua reminded migrants of Daniel, “who was in a strange land like you and me and never gave up. He only paid attention to what God said. It will come to pass. . . . Nothing will be impossible” (field notes, June 2003).

In her testimony to the congregation of the Miracle Healing Church, Ev-
Elyn, who became the owner of Beautiful Dream Gifts (see chapter 2), shared her confidence that God was in charge. Striding up to the front of the congregation, she said:

I have found a German man who wants to marry me. . . . The problem is the paper. I have been told that I have to send to Nigeria for a paper. But there has been a two-month strike of public workers there and no one is filling out any papers. . . . I went to speak to the lady in the office [of the Germany immigration authority] about the strike. The woman refused to listen and said that the marriage could not happen without the paper. . . . I told the lady that “I believed in God and I did not need the paper.” She said, “Who is this God?” I said, “He is all I need and not you or your paper,” and I left. . . . Because I know there is no power except for God (field notes, November 2, 2001).

Many non-migrants who joined the Miracle Healing Church, such as the ones we interviewed who sought healing at a 2005 healing conference held at the ice hockey arena, had already attended churches in the villages surrounding Halle. Ranging in age from teenagers to pensioners, they came seeking moral support and empowerment that they felt they could not find elsewhere. Pastor Joshua and the spiritual warriors of the Miracle Healing Church prayed that “the door of power” would be opened to them at the conference (field notes, May 12–16, 2005). Almost all the non-migrants, who included teachers, counselors, and the unemployed, had more economic resources and legal rights than the migrants at the conference. However, they brought to the conference their own histories of precariousness and dispossession. Their lives were marked by the disruption of local certainties that accompanied the Wende. German political leaders had assured Halle’s population that unification and local urban restructuring would yield a prosperous and secure future. As these promises became increasingly discredited, many began to distrust established political authority and sought new sources of transformative power.

By 2013, efforts to restructure Halle as a center of science and knowledge by recruiting “foreign scientists” had changed the composition of the Miracle Healing Church as more students, researchers, and professionals came to the city from other parts of Germany and around the world. The changing composition of the congregation was reflected in the contents of their prayers. Rather than pray for “papers” that would allow them to marry or settle, those who testified more often spoke of the precarious economy and their fears
of businesses failures and layoffs. Within the continuing disempowerment of Halle, both migrants and non-migrants in the congregation continued to link their search for security and prosperity to the power of God.

Both the Miracle Healing Church and the Crusade specifically called out congregants and individuals to ensure that God took charge. At a healing conference in Manchester, Alice Smith, a white American preacher from Texas, joined Godsword on the pulpit to pray for the “spirit of God to take the mayor so he could turn over the city to God” (field notes, 2004).

The Resurrection Crusade called for “America to Pray for America’s 2004 elections.” “God is very jealous over the nation of America and deeply interested in her forthcoming election. . . . America is pregnant with her destiny. . . . We as her midwives must help her . . . not to have a stillbirth but to deliver a glorious male child.” “Key Prayer Points” for the election included the following directives: “Unseat all wicked rulers in America and enthrone the righteous. . . . Pray that God’s will and counsel will prevail. . . . We need great men and women after His heart to occupy every position from the least to the greatest. . . . Pray for President Bush’s protection [George W. Bush was running for re-election]” (Resurrection Crusade 2004). In 2005, the Miracle Healing Church in Halle issued a flyer calling on the “Jesus Army” to pray for “the influence of the spirit of God upon the coming German elections” (Miracle Healing Church, 2005).

The political dynamics in Manchester and in the United States that empowered members of the Resurrection Crusade, including those who had arrived as migrants within a multiscalar social field of power, seem at first very different than those that confronted the two born-again churches in Halle. In Manchester, political and business leaders were receptive to public displays of religious fervor. In this setting, the Crusade built local networks that linked their members to city- and state-level Republican and Democratic politicians. The New Hampshire governor in 2004, a conservative Republican and strong Bush supporter, personally attended a Resurrection Crusade prayer breakfast. Robert Baines, the Democratic mayor of Manchester, not only attended the breakfasts from 2003 to 2005 but also developed an ongoing relationship with the Crusade. Initially, Baines had approached the Crusade as an immigrant church, but he soon took a prayerful stance and publicly acknowledged the power of God. Although he was a Catholic, he testified in 2005 to those assembled at the annual prayer breakfast that his granddaughter had been miraculously healed after members of the Crusade had prayed for her (field notes, April 30, 2005).

The two born-again organizations that we followed in Halle could not use
the salience of Christian legitimacy in Germany as an entry point into local politics. Most people in the former West Germany held official membership in a recognized church and paid taxes collected by the state to support Church activities. However, many saw born-again churches as sects rather than legitimate congregations. Furthermore, in the former socialist East Germany, most people did not belong to any church.

Although Pastor Mpenza’s church and its choir came in contact with local politicians and officials at public events, church members as invited guests were never in a position to set the agenda of the meeting. Given this situation, Miracle Healing Church members generally declined to participate in these events. In the face of their distance from local political power in Halle, members of born-again organizations turned to a multiscalar social field—a network of networks linked to powerful institutions and political leaders—as a means of challenging the locus of power. The Resurrection Crusade also drew on its relationships within a multiscalar Christian social field. These ties validated not only members’ faith but also their claims as social citizens to assume political authority.

Our ethnography revealed that congregation members were connected to individuals, including powerful political leaders, and to social and political institutions through the global Pentecostal social movement. For example, when they held their citywide healing conference in Halle in 2005, the Miracle Healing Church responded to a call originating at the pan-European Pentecostal conference in Berlin in 2003 to bring religious revival to Germany. Several members of the Miracle Healing Church congregation had attended the Berlin conference (field notes, June 17, 2003). In organizing their healing conference two years later, they drew on a repertoire of knowledge about Pentecostal revival and healing protocols popularized by the globe-spanning networks and intertwined websites to which they were linked.

Through the arrival of visiting pastors, each local organization’s connections to these broader networks became visible to local congregants. An Indian pastor based in western Germany visited the Miracle Healing Church and convinced congregants to support his missionary work in India by sending funds on a regular basis. Through a global Mennonite ministry linked to Mennonite missionaries in Halle who helped organize the 2005 healing conference, Joshua himself joined the preaching circuit and made visits to India and Korea. The Miracle Healing Church also participated in the Morris Cerullo World Evangelism organization and sent funds to Cerullo’s efforts to convert Jews in Israel to born-again Christianity. Cerullo’s ministry placed the church in a multiscalar social field connected to political leaders.
of many countries, whom Cerullo knew personally. By 2014, Pastor Mpenza had joined this network, proclaiming his ties to the Cerullo ministry on his Facebook page.

Godsword was also a great fan of Morris Cerullo. He had attended one of Cerullo’s conferences, and he filled the Crusade’s bookshelves with Cerullo’s books. The Cerullo ministry was only one of multiple Pentecostal networks to which the Crusade was linked through its own networks and those of the twenty local churches affiliated with the Crusade. Its member churches varied in size and in institutional and denominational affiliations, but each had their own national and transnational networks. The range and diversity of the Crusades’ networks were on display at “Power Night,” organized in 2005. Among the speakers were pastors from churches with small networks of five congregations (three in New Hampshire, and one each in Maine, Kenya, and India) and others with more extensive networks, such as the Revival Church of the Nations, with twenty-nine congregations in Massachusetts, two churches in Portugal, and websites in Portuguese and English (Power Night Flyer 2005, in files of N. Glick Schiller).

Moreover, the US Prayer Center, which was formative in the political stance and claim making of the Crusade, was connected to various forms of institutional power that extended into the Bush White House. In 2005, the US Prayer Center recruited worldwide under the slogan “Disciplining the Nations” and boasted a membership that included four thousand pastors. These disciples were encouraged to identify with the United States, even as they espoused a Christian identity (US Prayer Center website 2004). In a sermon on the “power of networking,” Godsword portrayed President Bush as someone who speaks directly with the Lord and as “God’s right hand” (field notes, April 30, 2004).

The right-wing political organization Focus on the Family, which had taken over leadership of the National Day of Prayer celebrations, was an additional and even more powerful network within the Crusade’s multiscalar social field. By linking his local political contacts, including the mayor of Manchester to Focus on the Family, Godsword enmeshed city officials in the implementation of the values and narrative of highly political right-wing evangelical Christian organizations, the National Day of Prayer Task Force, and Focus on the Family. According to the National Day of Prayer organizers, “several million people participate every year in this call to prayer for our nation, its leaders and citizens” (National Day of Prayer Task Force 2015). Focus on the Family claimed that its daily radio program was broadcast in more than a dozen languages and on more than seven thousand stations worldwide.
and was reportedly heard daily by more than 220 million people in 164 countries (Amazon 2016).

Thus, the Crusade’s network became part of a larger public–private social field that enmeshed city officials in the implementation of values and a narrative crafted by a set of political operatives with corporate ties who operated through extensive born-again Christian networks. Rather than being outside of the political life of the city, this social field was part of powerful corporately funded state and national political processes. In this social field, city officials who controlled access to public space had merged with migrants and non-migrants who claimed to belong to the city as representatives of Jesus, actors in powerful US political, private religious networks, and corporately funded operatives, lobbyists, and political action committees. Private religious actors such as Focus on the Family, together with the Resurrection Crusade, began to contribute to public political discourse about moral values as well as to ideas about how and when to pray and what to include in public prayer.

CLAIMING THE MORAL HIGH GROUND

In Halle and Manchester, congregants spoke to us about their concerns for religious unity, and stronger families and churches. The morality preached and modeled by members of each of these born-again organizations reflected moral values developed within a nongovernmental highly politicized Christian social field that sought to shape public moral economies throughout the world. However, their efforts to seize the moral high ground and invocations of Christian morality to assert social citizenship varied in different localities. These variations, we suggest, reflected the confluence of local historical circumstances and the relative positionality of each city, including its multiscalar reach and the degree and types of displacement and dispossession processes, which reconstitute the locality.

While marriage and the family were celebrated throughout the multiscalar social field of born-again Christians, these social values resonated in eastern German contexts, where young couples often didn’t get married. Members of the Miracle Healing Church entered into contestations over whose authority should define public morality by making marriage and the family a central ethos of the congregation. As marriages between black Africans and white Germans became more commonplace, attending prayer meetings of the born-again congregations became a form of courting. Migrants who were church members often involved their partners in church services to demon-
strate their own good character and to convince their German partners of the necessity of getting married.

During these services, potential German spouses could see that, while they might find their partner’s religious behavior strange, the congregation was part of a broader and powerful movement that had presence and legitimacy, if not in Halle, then globally. Partners also learned that heterosexual marriage was necessary to be a church member in this movement. The desire of their African partner to marry became not a simple utilitarian effort to obtain a passport but a promise to both partners of health, prosperity, and fulfillment, with the assurance of divine assistance. In these marriages, migrants not only preached and practiced born-again Christian morality, which condemned homosexuality and abortion, but also shaped the citizenship practices and beliefs of non-migrant residents. Once married, migrants often found their spouses’ family networks welcoming. Although the families of German spouses were often poor, they could provide forms of direct assistance such as childcare and local knowledge about accessing governmental offices and benefits. This local knowledge enhanced the ability of migrants as social citizens to claim rights, participate, and move toward legal residence.

In Manchester, Christian marriage was the norm, but born-again believers, whether migrant or non-migrant, viewed their shared values of heterosexuality and heterosexual marriage, patriarchal authority, and the condemnation of abortion as under threat from the larger society. Daily life activities that joined migrants and non-migrants were built on domains of commonality and around a shared fundamentalist biblical reading of Christian values as well as the everyday activities of marriage, family, and child-rearing. The migrant and non-migrant activists who served as the core members of the Crusade developed sociabilities of emplacement, a concept we explore in chapter 3. They worked together to organize prayer meetings, conferences, and breakfasts; helped people in need; and acted as prayer “intercessors” for the city and country. The Crusade’s local networks connected migrants to people who could and did provide resources: supervisors who helped migrants find employment, middle-class housewives who furnished apartments for newcomers or provided clothing and furniture for newborn babies, and public officials who provided prestige, social acceptance, and access to public resources. The Crusade’s activities established and expanded networks of trust that encompassed both migrants and non-migrants. Within the limited opportunity structure of greater Manchester and in the face of multiple dispossessive processes, local people who were not Crusade activists but who attended their own church as well as Crusade prayer breakfasts, conferences,
and days of prayer found themselves part of the Crusade’s multiscalar networks of power and the social and political capital they contained.

This is not to say that our analysis of born-again organizations in Halle and Manchester ascribes pragmatic goals to the social citizenship practices of these congregants. Believers saw each concrete manifestation of political and social power as imbricated with the power of God and the presence of Jesus. They saw their local practices as constituted within God’s globe-spanning power. Moreover, in the context of the ongoing disempowering of Halle and Manchester and the social and economic displacements that were part of daily life for so many residents, born-again Christian networks became sources of hope.

Scholars who debate the distinction between formal and substantive citizenship by focusing solely on relations between the individual and the state miss a highly significant yet little-noticed aspect of social citizenship. They ignore the transversal relationships forged between many migrants and non-migrants that entail substantive ties to “fellow” citizens (Offe 1994, 1999; Çağlar 2004). Christianity, as a set of practices, networks, and ideology, provided the basis and discourses for such horizontal networks. In this way, born-again Christianity forged multiple ties of solidarity in and beyond Halle and Manchester. By joining with migrants, non-migrants active in the born-again churches found new possibilities of forging ties locally and transnationally around their shared aspiration for a new Christian public morality and spirituality.

**Multiscalar Analysis and Multiple Spheres of Emplacement**

Although in this chapter we highlight how migrants joined non-migrants in emplacement within multiscalar religious networks through which they made social citizenship claims, our respondents participated in social networks that linked them to multiple spheres of life. For example, Evelyn, an active member of the Miracle Healing Church over several years, first enters this book in chapter 2 when she and her husband opened the Beautiful Dream Gifts in Halle. Initially from Lagos, Nigeria, Evelyn’s business plan was to open a shop that offered new consumer options to sophisticated new economy workers. These were the very people whom Halle’s city leaders, urban developers, and German and EU funders had in mind when they invested structural funds and scarce public funds in revitalizing storefronts and infrastructure in the city center and surrounding neighborhoods. Therefore, Evelyn’s small business activities situated her in multiscalar networks of eco-
nomically and politically powerful institutions that connected massive flows of public capital, banks, multinational construction companies, and construction workers from western Germany, all of whom benefited from urban restructuring. However, Evelyn’s gains from this set of networks were minimal: access to an initially inexpensive storefront rental and a government-funded, formulaic training program to provide new entrepreneurs, including migrants, with retail skills. On the other hand, Evelyn benefited from her supply chain, which involved her in a range of other multiscalar networks that accessed individuals and corporations of different degrees of power: family members purchasing craft items in Nigeria; wholesalers in Europe, big and small; and producers of goods, including so-called African crafts manufactured in China.

Though only peripherally involved in Halle’s political networks and public welcoming narratives at one point Evelyn came in contact with Karamba Diaby, as we mention in chapter 1, the migrant from Senegal who became one of the first people of African background elected to the German parliament. Hoping to find new ways to market her imported goods, Evelyn and her German husband found themselves in the midst of a multicultural fair organized by Diaby and sponsored by the Heinrich Böll Foundation (linked to the German Green Party). However, although Evelyn’s contacts with Diaby were minimal, through her social citizenship claims as a longtime activist of the Miracle Healing Church, she entered into a far-reaching political field. As treasurer of the Miracle Healing Church, Evelyn facilitated the congregation’s network to the Morris Cerullo World Evangelism organization, which linked her not only to multiple world leaders but also to Godsword, the pastor in Manchester, New Hampshire, and to his multiscalar networks.

Godsword, organizer of the Resurrection Crusade in Manchester, New Hampshire, was also a member of the Cerullo network and of many other multiscalar born-again Christian networks that connected migrants and non-migrants to powerful political actors in the City of Manchester, the State of New Hampshire, and the US government as well as in Europe and Nigeria. In addition to his simultaneous insertion in both religious and political multiscalar social fields, Godsword participated in processes of urban regeneration in Manchester through his personal network. His position and personal connections facilitated his access to capital to purchase a house despite his lack of formal employment or savings. When we traced his multiscalar networks to Manchester’s subprime mortgage brokers, we found him linked through mutual acquaintances to Carlos Gonzalez. As we note in chapter 1, Gonzalez arrived in Manchester with transnational political
networks stretching back to the Dominican Republic and the US Embassy there. He became a mortgage broker connected to networks of financial capital through the US public–private mortgage-lending corporation Fannie Mae, an important actor in the subprime mortgage bubble in Manchester and nationally. As a member of the local Republican Party and eventually a New Hampshire legislator, Gonzalez hobnobbed with many state-level Republicans who knew Godsword.

Conjunctures, Contradictions, and Born-Again Social Citizenship Theory

The Christian social citizenship claims explored in this chapter reflect and resonate with the political project of the leadership of the United States between 2000 and 2008, when most of our ethnographic research in the three born-again organizations was conducted. Only by keeping in mind the prominence and power of these networks can we assess the significance of local congregants’ social citizenship practices. They made it possible for participants in born-again Christian networks, whether migrant or non-migrant, to be part of a potent political and moral project that stretched from congregation members who were asylum seekers to the US president. They provided venues to access power via electoral processes, as we have seen in the case of Manchester; assisted members in acquiring status as legal permanent residents, as pastors, or through spousal rights; challenged local public morality by insisting on the necessity of marriage; and expanded members’ social capital through networks based in different localities.

Forms of Pentecostal Christianity grew throughout the world in the twenty-first century, and believers became increasingly engaged directly in questions of politics and citizenship. The processes of flexible capital accumulation and its multiple disposessive forces, coupled with the specific regional and local forms of implementing neoliberal “reforms,” have generated both a reduction of the security of social welfare programs and a generalized anxiety about “the direction of our country” and our world. Increasing numbers of the dispossessed found answers, new forms of social support, and a new sense of empowerment in global Christianity.

Many of the members of the born-again Christian organizations we came to know, joined not only to improve their individual spiritual and material well-being but also because of their aspirations for a world of social and economic justice. In the three organizations in which we worked, these aspirations led most members to endorse the explicit anti-racist stand of their pastors in public statements. Members claimed unity and equality on the ba-
sis of their common project: spiritual warfare against the Devil in which the born-again of all nations and backgrounds stood together on the side of God. Yet their beliefs entwined them within imperial social fields that fostered and profited from global warring and neoliberal dispossession. It is important to note that there is no single born-again movement but only a series of overlapping organizations, each with its own priorities. However, the social fields in which the organizations and their members were embedded served to support US actions around the world.

Connections with US foreign policy, which brought war, dispossession, and displacement in its wake, were both ideological and organizational. Key US foreign policy makers and the president of the United States at the time were members of the born-again globe-spanning social field described in this chapter. Focus on the Family and its related organization, the Family Research Council, became mainstream players in the Republican Party and in the White House. Their ability to turn out the vote was made clear by the Republican congressional victories in 1994 and directly contributed to George W. Bush’s ability to take the White House in 2000 and 2004.

Key to linking US imperial power with a more global born-again Christianity was Christian networks’ increasing engagement in projects in Israel. Participants affirmed the world leadership of the United States as a protector of Israel. For example, Evelyn, who had testified that she needed no authority but God’s to marry her man and live legally in Germany, summarized her understanding of the God-Israel-US nexus as follows: to be “on the side of Israel is to be on the side of God. The US is on the side of Israel.” Members of this social field, through their various and disparate networks, also rallied in support of the US and European invasion and occupation of Iraq. According to Evelyn, the “United States must be doing the work of God in Iraq because it is a country with so many strong Christians and because it is a friend of Israel’s” (field notes August 20, 2003).

It is widely acknowledged that, in the past, missionaries served as ideological agents of imperial rule, legitimating the right of colonial states to transform belief systems of the colonized and impose the values, standards, laws, and interests of the colonizers. The evangelizing organizations and networks of born-again Christians among whom we worked followed a similar process globally in legitimating the exercise of imperial power. Their endorsement of imperial projects was intimately connected to their support for missionary activity elsewhere as well as to their local role as self-defined missionaries to the disempowered cities in which they worked.

The concept of changing historical conjunctures is crucial for an adequate
analysis of the role that transnational Christian social fields played in the em-placement practices we describe in this chapter. In the context of continuing and expanding US and European war making after 2008, globe-spanning Christian networks continued their efforts to influence political outcomes in the United States and worldwide, though these efforts took on a different resonance. The transformation had several dimensions. The relationships between the Obama White House (2008–16) and these social fields differed from those of George W. Bush. Under Obama, right-wing Christian organizational networks undermined the presidency while increasingly making their presence known in the US Congress and at the level of state legislatures and city politics. Born-again Christian discourses also became more firmly entrenched in various globe-spanning culture wars. Meanwhile, migrants became increasingly visible as “reverse missionaries” bringing Christian readings of apocalyptic end times to American and European landscapes of intensified accumulation by dispossession.

This missionizing not only brought about versions of Christianity that can be called fundamentalist in terms of scriptural invocations of public morality but also gave prominence to ones that had become openly Islamophobic. At the same time, growing nationalist and openly racist rhetoric targeting immigrants, whom political leaders around the world blamed for the vast inequalities wrought by contemporary forms of capital accumulation and the attrition of social welfare programs, challenged the social citizenship claims of migrants, including born-again Christians.

By noting how migrants’ social citizenship claims were challenged under changing conjunctural conditions, this chapter makes clear that struggles for social citizenship require a multiscalar conjunctural reading of city-making. This approach to city-making highlights the millennial conflation of the public and the private as well as the state and the civil society that we witnessed in Manchester and Halle. It is a reminder that, in our analysis of social citizenship, we need to be attentive to both enabling and constraining co-optive workings of the neoliberal state as it has been configured within multiple globe-spanning networks of power.

By activating the leadership of religious networks in domains that previously had been considered the province of the state, relationships between public and private and state and civil society became differently entangled. Moreover, our account of born-again Christian networks’ endorsement of the war in Iraq also illustrates how these church congregations seemed to function independently of the neoliberal state but in effect became part of a broader governmentality that included that state. Contrary to the perspective
of much of the social citizenship literature, which posits a binary relation between the formal state and the everyday politics of empowerment from below, a careful reading of the networks of the three congregations we studied indicates a different relationship. When these congregations endorsed the US-led war in Iraq in their prayers, they seemed to be acting as an independent grassroots force. However, a careful analysis of the multiscalar networks of these congregations links their perspective on the war directly to the White House and the neoconservative strategists who planned and executed the war.

As we have noted, the concept of social and urban citizenship highlights the ways in which legally or socially disempowered people come into political life by making claims to rights and power. There is an implicit assumption in much of the literature on social citizenship that such political motion contributes to struggles for social justice. Our research within born-again Christian organizations that brought migrants and non-migrants together indicates that we need to look further into the claiming of social citizenship by the dispossessed. On the one hand, we show that people who were experiencing multiple forms of dispossession and displacement forged sociabilities of emplacement through claiming rights and political voice as members of born-again Christian organizations. Moreover, these sociabilities often united people in explicitly anti-racist organizations and spoke to their aspirations for a more just world. On the other hand, we explore the limits of citizenship claims when religious practices and identities are situated within multiscalar networks linked to imperial power. Even as born-again Christians within these networks expressed their distrust of government and political leaders, they legitimated global warring, neoliberal governance, inequality, and nationalist attacks on migrants.