# Contents

1. Introduction 9
   1.1 Topic and Research Interest: How does Informality Matter in Urban Planning? 10
   1.2 Othering and Urban Planning: Urban Spaces In-Between the Self and the Other 16
   1.3 Mexico City: Fragmented Urbanization 19
   1.4 Socio-Political Inequalities and the Urban: Habitat, Property and Urban Informality 24
      1.4.1 A General Understanding of Socio-Political Inequality as Access to Goods 26
      1.4.2 Inequality and Urban Space: The Right to the City 28
      1.4.3 Performing Urban Informality in Claims to Habitat 33
   1.5 Outline of the Study 35

PART 1 – DECENTERING URBAN STUDIES: LEARNING FROM INSIGHTS IN OTHER CONTEXTS 37

2. Urbanity and Global Cities 40
   2.1 Spaces of Modernization: Rethinking Global City in Contextual Specificity 41
   2.2 De-Centering Urban Studies: Urban Studies as a Transnational Field 50
      2.2.1 From Universal to Relational Approaches to the Urban 55
      2.2.2 Spatializing Otherness: Rethink the Multitemporal Heterogeneity of Urban Informality 60
      2.2.3 The Study Object of Decentering: Emplacing Power at the Peripheries of Urban Forms 69
   2.3 Conclusions: The Double-Movement of Decentering 70

3. Heterotopia and Urban Planning 73
   3.1 Emplacement: A Relational Account to Space, Place and Body 75
   3.2 Operationalizing Emplacements: Subjectivity, Architecture and Urban Planning 86
6.4 Emplacing Privatopia: Doing Informality in Huixquilucan 239  
6.4.1 Emplacing Justification: Real Estate Developers and the Staging of Othering 244  
6.4.2 Emplacing Distinction: Homeowner Associations and the Practice of Defense 251  
6.4.3 Emplacing Privilege: Ambivalent Alliances and the Incorporation of Informality 258  
6.4.4 Urban Configurations of Informality: Emplacing Justification, Distinction and Privilege 271  
6.5 Beyond Privatopia: Othering and the Colonial Gesture of Privilege 273  
6.6 Conclusions 283  

7. From Performing Urban Informality to Decentering Urban Studies 288  
7.1 Informality as an Empty Signifier 288  
7.2 Recalling the Argumentative Steps 291  
7.3 Entangling Urban Emplacements 294  
7.3.1 Emplacements of Othering and the Heterogeneous Uses of Urban Informality in Social Interaction 295  
7.3.2 Urban Socio-Political Inequalities and the Interdependency of Urban Configurations 298  
7.3.3 Learning from the Narratives of Distinction 301  
7.4 Seeing Like the Urban: Informality Matters 304  

8. Bibliography 309  

APPENDICES 345  
Appendix 1: Habitat Social (Image) 346  
Appendix 2: List of Conducted Interviews 347  
Appendix 3: Questionnaire for Homeowner Associations’ Presidents and Other Involved Planning Actors 349  
Appendix 4: Questionnaire for Residents 351  
Appendix 5: Abbreviations 352  
Appendix 6: Abstract (short version) 354  
Danksagung 355