1. INTRODUCTION

Tap water may be scarce in some parts of Mexico City but there is definitely no lack of it in literature on the subject. Whether adverting to water stress, water crisis, water conflicts, water wars, or even water torture – a steady stream of academic reports, books, newspaper articles and all sorts of publications referring to Mexico City's water supply situation in similarly dramatic terms is constantly being fed by new releases (see Peña Ramírez 2004, Perló Cohen/González Reynoso 2005, de la Luz González 20.01.2009, Oswald Spring 2011a, Castano 22.02.2012, Hollander 05.02.2014, Watts 12.11.2015, Kimmelman 17.02.2017, to name only a few[1]). Many (though not all) of these writings seem either oddly detached from the urban, or are somehow fascinated by the extreme, the scandalous, by a 'megacity' or 'megalopolis' painted in vivid colors as an exotic monstrosity and imagined by some as the outcome of a largely uncontrollable urban growth beyond all 'reasonable' scale (see Davis 2006, Burdett/Sudjic 2007). Without any doubt, water supply in Mexico City is a formidable, controversial and, above all, immensely complex issue. The urban water system and the enormous hydraulic engineering efforts on which it depends to provide tap water for a city of roughly 22 million inhabitants (and dispose of its waste water) resemble a "paradox" (Connolly 1999: 61), local groundwater sources are overexploited, and social struggles about an ever-increasing water extraction in the region are ongoing. Within the metropolis, water distribution is all but equal, and a dry water tap is a daily reality for many of its residents. Still, it can be argued that a 'scandalizing' approach – illustrated by terms such as 'water crisis' – tends to obstruct the view on Mexico City's water questions in a dual sense.

First, both the depletion of natural resources and the production of highly differential urban living conditions are not the result of some disastrous yet natural process of urban growth. A host of research has already been undertaken in this area – in what follows, I will only mention some of the most relevant literature for the present venture. The urbanization of nature, and with it the construction and operation of large technical infrastructures such as water supply networks, is product of a certain path of capitalist development and are essential for its survival (see Smith 1984, Harvey 1985 and 1996, Santos 1996). In other words, the production of modern cities was enabled by a simultaneous production and regulation of nature particularly through urban infrastructure networks. For urban water supply in particular, the power relations engrained in modernist supply regimes and their role as enablers of capitalist urbanization is analyzed in the writings of Erik Swyngedouw

1 This is a only a small selection of academic and non-academic publications on Mexico City's water supply situation bearing these terms in their title. A profound analysis of the involved metaphors and discourses would be interesting; along with the concepts of water scarcity and water stress (as coined by Falkenmark/Lindh 1976), many of these gloomy terms were apparently borrowed from earlier publications such as Gleick (1993) and Shiva (2002).

et al. (2002), Matthew Gandy (2004), and Maria Kaika (2005), amongst others. In consequence, it seems appropriate to "move away from thinking of water as a resource that is external to social relations, towards one in which social relations are *embedded*" (Budds 2009: 420). Upon this backdrop, a lack of water at the domestic tap can be read as the result of a socially constructed water scarcity (see Mehta 2010) rather than of natural limits to the resource. As we will see later, this is probably even more evident in the essentially water-rich basin of Mexico City.

Effects of the current logic of supply are, however, directly experienced by Mexico City's residents, leading to a second aspect potentially hidden behind the narrative of a 'water crisis': the way such infrastructures influence everyday life. The urbanization of nature through infrastructures and social practices, or, in other words, the production of urban space and everyday life are clearly linked – something Henri Lefebvre set out thoroughly in his writings (see Lefebvre 1974 and 1991). When I first learned about often haphazard and erratic water supply patterns as part of people's everyday experience during previous research in one of Mexico City's *colonias populares*[2] in the borough of Iztapalapa (see Schwarz 2009), I recall being impressed by how my interview partners tended to treat them essentially as something to be taken for granted. After an initial period without any proper access to utility grids, they had eventually achieved a connection to the electricity and later the water supply network for their neighborhood. When I visited in 2008, water taps seemed to be installed in all dwellings. During our interviews, however, people mentioned rather casually that water provision was restricted to one or two days per week, and even then, water would be available for no more than a couple of hours. The way they put it, this seemed to be the natural course of things – yet it left me puzzling which role water actually played in their daily life. While reports on water fetching and other strategies imposed by a lack of piped water abound (see Sorenson *et al*. 2011), these were households that the World Health Organization (WHO) would, according to their own definition, file as having access to 'improved drinking water sources' as they dispose of a water tap in their dwelling. In addition, some of my interview partners back in 2008 emphasized that they actually experienced a deterioration of living conditions in comparison to former dwellings when moving into that Iztapalapan neighborhood. Along with reports on socially differentiated water supply and consumption patterns in Mexico City, which were usually quite general and not scaled down so much as to consider individual neighborhoods or dwellings (see Libreros Muñoz 2004, Tortajada 2006), this took me to consider the sociospatial nature of everyday water use in the domestic realm. There is, I would argue, a need to gain a better understanding of everyday experiences with water supply and of domestic practices of water use under these conditions.

2 As a product of popular urbanization (see Schteingart 1989, Azuela de la Cueva 1989, Gilbert/Varley 1991), this kind of self-built habitat serves as the main source of housing for those excluded from the formal housing market. It was the dominant mode of urbanization in Mexico City (and elsewhere) during the second half of the 20th century; in the year 2000, *colonias populares* were home to more than half of all inhabitants of the Metropolitan Region of Mexico City (ZMCM), housing some 9.2 million people in total (see Duhau/Giglia 2008: 177).

Research Question and Rationale

The present work explores links between the production of space and domestic practices of water use in Mexico City, employing the following research question: *What is the relation between urban space – as a social product always in the making – and domestic everyday practices of water use in Mexico City?* First of all, this approach draws on a relational concept of space. Urban space is, in other words, not a simple container within which social relations are spun, but it is itself a social process always in the making (see Massey 1999: 6 ff.). Space is, therefore, essentially about the social practices which constantly form and constitute it, and an ever-unfinished product of everyday practices (though it is, of course, also produced on other scales). As such everyday practices form the centerpiece of the present work, the term water use is employed deliberately, following Pierre Bourdieu's conceptualization of practices as routinized, non-intentional strategies (see Bourdieu 1977: 177 f., and chapter 2.1). In contrast to a purely (market)economic perspective embodied by the term *water consumption* – which is widely employed for instance in research involved in modelling residential water demand (see Worthington/ Hoffman 2008) and, unsurprisingly, in studies on consumers and consumption (see Warde 2005, Halkier *et al*. 2011) – the present work is mainly interested in people's everyday practices involving water. Reducing water use to quantifiable values (such as metered and consumed volumes of water) would miss the point, particularly as such approaches tend to be based on the idea of rational choice. Rather than looking at questions of water consumption, the present work hence opts for the term water use. The latter is conceptualized as a set of everyday practices involving (tap) water which are always of a social as well as spatial nature. Water use forms part of everyday life, which under capitalist conditions indeed essentially constitutes a space of consumption and social reproduction – but also one of lived experience and potential social transformation (see Lefebvre 1991: 352 ff.). The domestic sphere is thus not only of relevance as cities are usually considered one of the key water consumers along with the industrial and agricultural sectors, but also as a crucial product and site of these everyday routines. A research perspective following this line of thought is concerned with subjective experiences, perceptions and narratives involving water. Rather than striving to generate the picture of an average water consumer, it asks how water is used on the micro scale, in the home on a daily basis in order to identify social regularities and patterns of practices (see Fam *et al*. 2015: 642). For this purpose, the present work takes subjective experiences of Mexico City's inhabitants as a starting point, and employs a sociospatial approach combining Bourdieu's Theory of Practice – which provides a social contextualization of everyday practices (see Bourdieu 1977) – with a relational understanding of space.

Why locate such a study on domestic water use in Mexico City? Given the city's location in an essentially water-rich basin, it displays a surprising array of socially produced water problems, many of which are the result of a regime of large-scale technical water regulation running back centuries. Local fresh and salt water lakes have been drained ever since the early colonial period, and the very same logic of water governance continues into the 21st century (for a historical

overview, see Legorreta 2006). Today, the region is well-known for its technically highly complex trans-basin water transfers, particularly its large-scale exports of untreated waste water to neighboring basins, and a severely diminished groundwater recharge due to the massive size of urban built-up area. Amidst all this, local aquifers suffer an overexploitation, as the city's water resources are put under a pressure of 173% (see Oswald Spring 2011b: 500, Peña Ramírez 2012). In consequence, Mexico City suffers continuous soil subsidence, groundwater contamination, and periodic flooding in some areas; it provides an example of environmental problems which are also experienced in other urban areas in Mexico and elsewhere (see Peña Ramírez/López López 2004: 160). But perhaps more importantly for the present study, there are strong indications that access to Mexico City's tap water is both socially stratified and spatially differentiated (see Constantino Toto *et al*. 2010: 250, Consejo de Evaluación del Desarrollo Social del Distrito Federal (CEDS) 2010: 94). Water supply problems in the largest Mexican city are in fact a recurrent issue in public discourse, and (local) press reports on the topic invariably show pictures of water tankers dispensing the liquid to plastic barrels lined up in the streets. Yet the image of the water tanker is somehow misleading – at least when it comes to the Federal District[3], which was chosen as the focus of the present work as it is provided by one sole water utility, the *Sistema de Aguas de la Ciudad de México* (SACM), and represents a more or less homogenous entity in terms of water policies[4]. In the Federal District, domestic water connections are by now an almost universal feature: less than 3% of all inhabited dwellings within its jurisdiction had no water tap installed in 2010 (see Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI) 2010). In consequence, supply by water tankers is by now mainly a substitute during temporary supply disruptions locally known as *cortes de agua*, which

3 Rather than covering the entire metropolis, the present study is focused on the situation in the Federal District, which with its 8.8 million inhabitants is home to roughly half of Mexico City's population; the other half lives in the surrounding Estado de México.

4 Narrowing down the scope of the present work to the Federal District is mainly motivated by the strong political division between the capital district and the surrounding Estado de México – each with its own regulatory framework regarding water supply (along with the federal policies implemented by the *Comisión Nacional del Agua* (CONAGUA), the federal water agency). The water supply networks serving the Federal District and those serving the adjoining urban municipalities, for instance, are not physically interconnected in any way. Most likely, this is an indirect result of longstanding political tensions between these two entities dating back to at least the 1950s, and thus predating the strongest period of industrialization and rapid urban expansion of Mexico City. With the *Sistema de Aguas de la Ciudad de México* (SACM), there is, moreover, a single water utility serving the Federal District. SACM is in public ownership as a decentralized institution under the head of the Federal District's environmental ministry. However, a partial privatization began in 1994 with an outsourcing of some of SACM's tasks via the granting of concessions to four private joint ventures. In a first step, concessions were granted for ten years, and then renewed subsequently in 2004 and 2014. These 'unbundled' tasks initially included metering, billing and the repair of leakages, and were extended to the operation and maintenance of the secondary water network (and hence part of water distribution) in the latest concession round, which indicates an even more increased opening to private capital under the slogan of 'decentralization' in the future (see Pradilla Cobos 1994, CEDS 2010: 125 f., Romero Lankao 2011).

are scheduled by the federal water agency CONAGUA and affect large parts of the metropolis several times per year. On a day-to-day basis, however, the main issue in the Federal District is not the absence of a domestic tap but questions of water pressure and steadiness of supply, along with reservations over tap water quality. According to official census data from 2010, as much as 18% of all dwellings connected to the Federal District's public water network were not supplied permanently (see INEGI 2010). Non-permanent supply is mostly a matter of rationing schemes imposed by the water utility (see Sistema de Aguas de la Ciudad de México (SACM) 2013) and shows a clear spatial bias as it spares the centrally located boroughs[5]. In this sense, the modern infrastructural ideal, which sought to advance 'social progress' and homogenize space through universal, hierarchically organized infrastructural networks (see Graham/Marvin 2001: 40 ff.) has never been fulfilled for each and every one living in Mexico City, particularly when it comes to water. This observation undoubtedly applies to a majority of cities in the so-called Global South and highlights long-standing theoretical shortcomings of this paradigm, which is already subject to a much-needed reconsideration (see Furlong 2010 and 2014). With domestic taps failing to fulfill their promise, or doing so only erratically, it can be assumed that water plays a particular role in the everyday life of the Federal District's residents, in particular when it comes to securing water availability for daily practices in the home. More details on the Federal District's landscape of water supply, including the characteristics of supply in terms of water quantity and quality are provided in chapter 4.1; later chapters illustrate how everyday practices of water use form part of this landscape.

State of Research

Large technical infrastructures facilitating 'modern' urban life and improving living conditions in today's cities have become a common research topic in several of the academic fields bearing the 'urban' in name – be it geography, planning or urban studies. This is hardly a surprise, given the changes all kinds of utility grids, from telecommunications and electric power to sewage and water, have undergone in the context of neoliberal reforms over the last decades (see for instance Bakker 2003). In what follows, I will provide a brief overview on the existing literature concerned with urban water supply and water use, discussing in how far these approaches treat questions of space and spatiality. The literature roughly falls into three domains: a socio-geographical perspective focusing on water supply regimes and urbanization processes on the meso scale, an economic perspective concerned with quantifying and modelling water demand, and a qualitative, practice-centered perspective.

First, relations between water infrastructures and processes of urban development are tackled from a socio-geographical perspective specifically for the Mexico City context by a number of authors (see Peña Ramírez 2004 and 2012, Legorreta

5 The Federal District is subdivided in 16 administrative boroughs *(delegaciones)*, which are partially responsible for duties held by municipalities elsewhere in the country (water supply not being amongst them in the Federal District).

2006, Barkin 2006, Fuerte Celis 2013, as well as Ward 1998). The works of José Castro in particular link social contestations around Mexico City's water to questions of citizenship and power (see Castro 2004, 2006 and 2007). Others have analyzed the neoliberalization of the Mexican water sector (see Pradilla Cobos 1994, Wilder/Romero Lankao 2006, de Alba *et al*. 2006, Montero Contreras 2009), though not necessarily from a spatial perspective. More in general, an entire section of urban geography is dedicated to the links between spatial development and technical infrastructures as well as the power relations engrained in these supply regimes, with literature on the urbanization of nature cited above as a point of departure. With respect to water networks in particular, the works of Timothy Moss (2000), Karen Bakker (2003), Erik Swyngedouw (2004), Maria Kaika (2005) and Kathryn Furlong (2006) should be mentioned as examples for this approach. And Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin, with their seminal 2001 book *Splintering urbanism*, drew attention to the inherent social logic of networked urban infrastructures (including water), and their interdependency with processes of urban development, particularly under conditions of neoliberal restructuration and global transformation (see Graham/Marvin 2001). Infrastructural unbundling and urban fragmentation should be studied as parallel, interconnected processes – this claim has been highly influential and inspired a critical debate which makes reference to different case studies around the world[6]. Urban water networks and their relevance for processes of urban differentiation and segregation are a centerpiece of this critical debate (see *Geoforum* 39 (2008)[7], Moss 2008, Naumann 2009). The analysis in Keller Easterling's 2014 *Extrastatecraft* extends this path with respect to other emergent infrastructural elements of globalization and their politics (see Easterling 2014). The entire body of literature in this field is characterized by a clear geographical approach drawing strongly on a relational understanding of space. Its main contribution to geographical thought lies in its ability to analyze cities and their (water) infrastructures as dynamic, integrated sociotechnical processes rather than treating each of them as separate entities. Primarily concerned with the spatiality of infrastructural unbundling from a supply perspective, empirical research in this realm is usually located on the meso scale, choosing the infrastructural networks of entire cities or regions as their objects of inquiry. The present work seeks to complement this body of work by shifting attention to practices of water use on the micro scale. Infrastructural conditions form an integral part of this sociospatial approach, keeping processes of potential 'unbundling'

6 Yet to my knowledge, so far there are no studies involving a Splintering Urbanism perspective for the Mexico City context. As regards water, one can only speculate whether this is related to the relatively low-profile character of water infrastructure unbundling in the Federal District, which the local government has been careful not to tag as privatization, – or simply to an absence of the modern infrastructural ideal of universal water supply to begin with.

7 The 2008 special issue of Geoforum (Volume 39, Issue 6) contains empirical explorations of the Splintering Urbanism approach (see Botton/Gouvello 2008, Jaglin 2008, Kooy/Bakker 2008, MacKillop/Boudreau 2008, Pflieger/Matthieussent 2008). Product of an international workshop in 2005, these contributions coincide in voicing a strong critique on Graham and Marvin's assumed universality of the modern infrastructural ideal (see Coutard 2008).

in Mexico City in mind without assuming a general applicability of the modern infrastructural ideal to begin with.

Second, turning to publications concerned with water use on the micro scale (rather than supply) it can be stated that domestic water use was so far largely an object of economic inquiry with respect to levels of consumption, willingness to pay, and the modelling of future demand. Numerous studies are dedicated to quantifying household water consumption through indicator-based modelling feeding on surveys or statistical data (see Morales Novelo/Rodríguez Tapia 2007 and Adler 2011 for the Mexico City context, and for an overview: Nieswiadomy 1992, Worthington/Hoffman 2008). In this context, social status is often treated as one of many indicators influencing on domestic demand. As a result, urban water consumption is usually thought to be socially differentiated in some way or the other (see Anand 2007, Kenney *et al*. 2008). Dwelling-specific indicators and water-consuming household devices are also considered at times, as well as certain types of water use assumed to have a strong influence on consumption levels, for instance car washing (see Mylopoulos *et al*. 2004). However, these studies tend to treat some selected elements of urban space as static parameters (if not ignoring spatiality altogether), and are usually not interested in gaining an understanding of water-using practices itself but only in quantifying consumption.

Third, there is a body of literature dedicated to water use as a social practice. The work of Elizabeth Shove and colleagues was paramount in shifting attention to the consumption side, giving rise to the field of social practice theory (see Shove/Pantzar 2005; Shove *et al*. 2012). This focus on sustainable consumption and the role of infrastructures (see Southerton *et al*. 2004) broadened the perspective in water research, complementing the body of works related to the Splintering Urbanism paradigm and others centered on socio-technical systems and water governance from a perspective of supply. Hereby, social practice theory contributed a great deal to an understanding of the emergence, evolution and transformation of social practices, including those related to domestic water consumption. Certain sets of water-using practices such as showering (see Hand *et al*. 2005, Berker 2013), or the irrigation of private gardens under drought conditions (see Chappells *et al*. 2011) were analyzed from this perspective. Yet in these studies, urban space often seems to feature in passing. Apparently, it may alternatively (and at times simultaneously) represent a resource for practices, their stage, and/or their product (see Shove *et al*. 2012: 130).

The micro level of the home – as a site of gendered carework – is a central element of research dedicated to questions of water and gender (often in combination with questions of poverty or class), which are concerned with the reproduction of social inequalities through a limited access to water (see Bennett 1995, Cleaver 1998, Crow/Sultana 2002, Bapat/Agarwal 2003, Dugard/Mohlakoana 2009) – though space is usually not a core issue of these studies. Contributions from cultural studies on water use are also numerous, for instance in the anthropological and ethnological field (see Stoffer 1966, Böhme 1988, Bergua Amores 2008; and for an overview on more recent water-related anthropological research, Orlove/Caton 2010), or with

respect to water use and health (see White *et al*. 1972) – but again, these works are usually not directly concerned with spatial questions.

The focus on practices eventually leads us to Bourdieu-inspired research on water questions, which are of particular relevance to the present work which rests in part on his praxeological approach. Most do not address the household level but study the reproduction and transformation of social practices on a meso scale in processes of societal transition. Agricultural practices and their impact on or relation to land use and water resources are a common topic, analyzed for instance in the context of post-socialist societies (see Orderud/Polickova-Dobiasova 2010: 205, Eichholz *et al*. 2012), with respect to local responses to the neoliberalization of the agrarian sector and its impact on Mexican *ejidos*[8] (see Wilshusen 2010), or under conditions of climate change (see Beilin *et al*. 2012). The praxeological approach was also employed to tackle questions of urban water governance; more precisely decentralized water supply solutions in La Paz (see Eichholz 2012). These works coincide with other practice-centered approaches introduced earlier as they typically treat space as either a static, non-relational matter framing social developments, or as their expression – which is unsurprising given the rather abstract and two-dimensional conceptualization of space in Bourdieu's writings (see 2.4.1). In this linear interpretation, these practices are not understood as something that itself shapes or interacts with urban space. The same accounts for another study on showering as a 'symbolic' practice (see Jensen 2008), one of the few publications dedicated explicitly to domestic water use that directly draws upon Bourdieu's Theory of Practice. The work of Louise Askew and Pauline McGuirk comes closest to a relational understanding of space in that it explores the irrigation of suburban gardens in Australia as a practice seeking to accumulate cultural capital and thus as a tool of social distinction (see Askew/McGuirk 2004). Though not explicitly Bourdieu-based, there is also the inspiring work by Jeff Wiltse on how social distinction along the categories of race and class was negotiated in the realms of public and private swimming pools in post-WWII cities in the United States (see Wiltse 2007). As for literature on domestic water use in Mexico City in particular, again there are, to my knowledge, only few academic publications approaching the issue from a spatial perspective on the micro level – Enrique Ayala Alonso for example discusses the strive for social distinction and modernization represented in early 19th century bourgeois dwellings in Mexico City and the installation of the first private bathrooms (see Ayala Alonso 2010: 53 ff.). From an equally historical

8 In close resemblance to other contemporary forms of collective land use such as the Soviet *kolkhoz*, the agricultural collectives of the Mexican *ejido* were essentially a territorialization of demands for land reform by parts of the revolutionary movement. Expropriating land from huge haciendas, around 28,000 ejidos – under public ownership, but with partly private, partly collective usufruct – were established during and after the government of Lazaro Cardenas in 1930s, re-inventing pre-Columbian forms of collective land use. Afterwards, this ejidal land played an ambiguous role in Mexico City's urbanization as it turned into a prime source for (irregular) industrial and urban construction during the era of import-substituting industrialization, from the 1950s onwards. Whereas most of these land use changes contradicted formal plans, a 1992 reform of ejido laws led to a drastic change of land use regulations, allowing for a further commodification of communal land (see Cymet 1992, Salazar Cruz 2014a).

perspective, Sharon Bailey Glasco analyzes water use in public bathhouses during the colonial period (see Bailey Glasco 2010: 91 ff.). But as already mentioned, a vast majority of the literature is concerned with supply questions and the interaction between processes of infrastructural and urban development on a city-wide scale or beyond.

Aims of Research

Generally speaking, little research in the field of urban geography has so far been dedicated to everyday practices of domestic water use from a sociospatial perspective. The present work develops a sociospatial approach that aims to take us beyond earlier works by shifting attention from the meso scale to everyday practices of water use on the micro scale, employing a qualitative, subject-centered perspective. For this purpose, it drafts a research design based on existing and new empirical methods able to grasp everyday practices of water use in their past and present spatiality. Following calls for a down-scaling of research on domestic water use (see Fam *et al*. 2015), it aims to complement the existing geographical literature on urban water infrastructures, supply regimes and power relations by re-introducing everyday practices. It thus strives to contribute to a more empirically grounded water research, which nevertheless keeps the social fault lines along which differential urban water supply is organized in mind.

There have long been calls to link Bourdieu's approach to social practice with a concept of relational space (see Painter 2000: 258), or more in general, to employ time and space as core elements in a conceptualization of social practice and social structuration (see Thrift 1996: 71). According to both geographical (see Haferburg 2007: 342) and sociological literature (see Schroer 2006: 176), there is a need to further clarify in particular the relation between habitat and habitus drawn from Bourdieu's praxeological approach. As already mentioned, the here proposed sociospatial approach to everyday practices draws upon a combination of the Bourdieuian Theory of Practice with the concept of relational space. I would argue that it is precisely such a perspective that will allow us to conceptualize tap water as something which "captures and embodies processes that are simultaneously material, discursive and symbolic" (Swyngedouw 2004: 28).

For the present purpose, this theoretical approach is to be operationalized through a research design able to capture everyday practices of water use in both their past and current spatiality. It draws upon fieldwork-based qualitative empirical methods which seem apt for such an explorative venture. These are, first and foremost, individual in-depth interviews, based on a semi-structured interview guideline and conducted at the interviewee's home to allow for a simultaneous participatory observation, and focus group discussions. Through the newly developed tool of habitat biographies capturing people's past dwelling experiences, the interviews also adopt a historical perspective. An explorative though theory-informed approach, putting an emphasis on understanding relations between everyday practices and spatiality, seems appropriate in that there is, at least to my knowledge, no prior

research on domestic water use in Mexico City which would explicitly study these links. Exploring the demanding character of water and water use in Mexico City therefore is a matter of studying the differences made by limitations in domestic water supply and hereby "exposing the arbitrariness of the taken for granted" (Bourdieu 1977: 169). The present study strives to do so from a sociospatial perspective, with a focus on the everyday practices and experiences of those living in Mexico's largest metropolis.

Structure of this Book

The present study is organized as follows: chapter 2 is dedicated to the theoretical framework, linking the Theory of Production of Space with the habitus approach, and defining some key concepts. The following chapter introduces the research design and the employed empirical methods, before chapter 4 provides an overview on the water supply situation in the Federal District in general and in the boroughs of Iztapalapa and Cuauhtémoc in particular, and introduces the twelve studied neighborhoods. Turning to the empirical findings, chapter 5 covers the domestic practices of drinking (5.1), hygiene and cleaning (5.2) and storing water (5.3) as well as the imagined landscapes of supply (5.4), with a focus on the current socio-spatial setting. With reference to people's past experiences with water supply limitations, different types of habitat biographies are developed in chapter 6, and the following chapter sets them in relation to selected water-using practices to explore the influence of past experiences on current practices. Chapter 8 offers a reflection on the findings and research strategy of the present work as well as an outlook to future studies, before chapter 9 proceeds to reflect the conceptual approach linking habitus and habitat, and the potential of the empirical instrument of habitat biographies, followed by some concluding remarks in chapter 10.