

## Rethinking space: an outsider's view of the spatial turn

Santa Arias

Published online: 6 February 2010  
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2010

**Abstract** Geographical concerns with space and place have escaped the confines of the discipline of geography. Many humanities scholars now invoke such conceptions as a means to integrate diverse sources of information and to understand how broad social processes play out unevenly in different locations. The social production of spatiality thus offers a rich opportunity to facilitate interdisciplinary dialogues between different schools of critical theory. Following a brief assessment of the spatial turn in history, history of science, and political philosophy, this paper explores its implications for literary and cultural studies. It invokes a detailed case study of late 18th century Lima, Peru to explicate the dynamics of colonialism, the construction of racial identities, and different power/knowledge configurations within a particular locale. Space in this example appears as both matter and meaning, i.e., as simultaneously tangible and intangible, as a set of social circumstances and physical landscapes and as a constellation of discourses that simultaneously reflected, constituted, and at times undermined, the hegemonic social order. The intent is to demonstrate how multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarship can be facilitated by paying attention to the unique of circumstances that define places within given historical moments. As seen in

this example from literary colonial studies, other disciplines, therefore, can both draw from and contribute to poststructuralist interpretations of space as a negotiated set of situated practices.

**Keywords** Historical geography · Post-structuralism · Lima · Coloniality · Spatiality · Interdisciplinarity

I am a Latin Americanist trained in the field of literary and cultural studies. In 1996, I began a paradigm shift after reading Edward Soja's *Postmodern Geographies* (1989), a text that, by rethinking modernity and bringing Henri Lefebvre to the study of Los Angeles, had a powerful impact on the spatial turn in the United States. Critical geographers such as David Harvey, Denis Cosgrove, Doreen Massey, and Derek Gregory, among many others, started a renaissance and renewal of the study of space and spatiality in the humanities and the social sciences. Recent scholarship in these fields has reinvigorated their inquiries by engaging spatial praxis across time and, by doing so, contributed to the interdisciplinary perspective that has transformed the methodology, pedagogy, research and university agendas in many countries. Beyond the literal and metaphorical use of key concepts from human geography (e.g., "space," "place," and "mapping") to address the spatiality of culture and society, "the spatial turn is much more substantive, involving a reworking of the very notion

---

S. Arias (✉)  
University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS, USA  
e-mail: sarias@ku.edu

and significance of spatiality to offer a perspective in which space is every bit as important as time in the unfolding of human affairs, a view in which geography is not relegated to an afterthought of social relations, but is intimately involved in their construction” (Warf and Arias 2008). Here I want to argue that the study of material and discursive forms of space and spatiality generates a common ground or place of encounters across the disciplines by providing a stronger basis of comparative studies where scholars can study cultures critically.<sup>1</sup> At a moment when cultural studies and interdisciplinary approaches are at the forefront of so many agendas, the analysis of space and spatiality has strengthened scholarship, built bridges, stimulated debates, and provided a more effective and holistic engagement with issues of social and political relevance.

Soja’s notion of a socio-spatial dialectic is central to the understanding of space as a social product rooted in practices, disciplinary power and ideology. His work combines a keen reassessment of critical geography that demonstrates that the social sciences and the humanities have much in common. Scholars from both camps read key figures of social thought, particularly poststructuralist thinkers. Soja’s spatial hermeneutic points to a revision of the historicist approaches that dominated academic training until the 1980s: “So unbudgeably has been this historicism of theoretical consciousness that it has tended to occlude a comparable critical sensibility to the spatiality of social life, a practical theoretical consciousness that sees the life world of being creatively located not only in the making of history but also in the construction of human geographies, the social production of space and the restless formation and reformation of geographical landscapes: social being actively emplaced in space *and* time in an explicitly historical *and* geographical contextualization” (1989,10–11). It is precisely against this historicist framework that I want to outline some key considerations of this renewed interest in space in recent research by humanities and social sciences scholars. I conclude by providing an example from my own research in the field of colonial studies.

<sup>1</sup> As defined by Soja (1985) rethinking Lefebvre’s *The Production of Space* (1991), spatiality connotes “socially produced space, the created forms and relationships of a broadly defined human geography.”

## Critical theory and interdisciplinarity

A point of convergence between disciplines in the humanities and social sciences has been provided by critical theory, particularly the ideas of the Frankfurt School, French poststructuralists, and many other philosophers who have sought to show the multiple meanings of space and the play of social relations across geographic surfaces as they pertain to language, identity, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, and power. Without doubt, critical theory has become the backbone of the cross-disciplinary dialogue that has enriched, diversified, and provided a theoretical apparatus to academic scholarship. At the forefront of interdisciplinary research are the complexities, silences, and problematic relationship between interpreters (i.e., readers, artists, viewers), texts, and the worlds they represent. With the works of Lefebvre, Foucault, Lacan, and Derrida, as interpreted by critical human geographers, the entrance of spatiality into other fields has allowed for “lateral mappings” that resulted, in my view, of a more nuanced understanding of the relationships of history and geography.<sup>2</sup> Spatiality is interdisciplinary by nature and it has impacted other disciplines beyond history, such as religion, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, education, media studies, and literature and cultural studies, to name just a few. Critical geographers have provided the tools to challenge historicist approaches that view space as a given entity, inert and naturalized, in order to engage in an interpretative human geography. Jonathan Murdoch (2006) outlines the important influence of poststructuralism in geography in order to understand its focus on power and social relations and networks and spatial entanglements: “It is a way of shifting spatial imaginaries so that new forms of geographical practice come into being. From a post-structuralist perspective, no longer should geographical practitioners be detached from heterogeneity...they should be

<sup>2</sup> An important contribution about geography’s vital role in the human and social sciences is Benko and Strohmayr’s *Space and Social Theory: Interpreting Modernity and Postmodernity* (1997) which frames its essays around the spatial contributions of theorists such as Foucault, Lacan, Hegel and Lefebvre who have contributed to the understanding of spatial aspects of postmodernism.

subsumed within the complexities and multiplicities of various kinds” (197).

In the last two decades, the spatiality of social life, past and present, has been addressed in a number of works that view geography as a central element of analysis (Baker 2003; Falkheimer and Jansson 2006; Gieryn 2000; Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003; Gulson and Symes 2007; Corrigan, 2008). The views of space within and among disciplines, of course, are far from homogeneous: there is an enormous diversity in how scholars of different disciplines, working from within widely different intellectual traditions, relying on varying assumptions about ontology and epistemology, and foregrounding radically different parts of human activity, approach the significance of the spatial. Space thus comes to have multiple, sometimes contradictory, layers of meaning: the spatial turn speaks with more than one voice. Some fields, such as economists and many political scientists, seem either to dismiss space altogether or invoke anachronistic concepts of absolute space, reminiscent of a bygone era in which time was valued but location was not, as if social life unfolded on the head of a pin.

Historians traditionally have treated space in purely empirical, and empiricist, terms. For such scholars, geography will never be relevant or interesting inasmuch as they treat spatiality as simply given, i.e., as an inert, frozen set of relations devoid of social origins and social implications. The notable exception, of course, was the Annales School, led by Braudel, in its relentless examination of spatiality throughout the long cycles of history. Nevertheless, this is a field that is rapidly opening up to the spatial turn. In particular, we must consider the challenges posed by Atlantic and Transpacific studies, and urban history, in particular. These subfields moved away from the temporal or chronological basis of history to a view of history as place-based. Philip Ethington, who views himself as an interdisciplinary historian of cities, in a recent essay proposes the idea of a cartography of history: “Histories representing the past represent the places (*topoi*) of human action. History is not an account of ‘change over time,’ as the cliché goes, but rather, change through space. Knowledge of the past, therefore, is literally cartographic: a mapping of the places of history indexed to the coordinates of spacetime” (2007, 466).

The history of science has also been influenced by the spatial turn and the relational perspective of space that dominates poststructuralist geography. The works of geographers such as David Livingstone (1995, 2003) and Charles Withers (2002) have provided an important geo-historical framework for the study of the history of science during the Enlightenment. More studies abound on its situated nature, we must think of the relevance of museums, zoos, gardens, laboratories at different moments in history, and the reception and circulation of scientific knowledge, thus contributing to the historical geography of science.<sup>3</sup>

Yet to a surprising degree, some scholars in fields such as philosophy, anthropology, cultural studies, art history, literary criticism, even religious studies, have followed geography in the understanding that space is a social product, i.e., that it is made, not given, and constantly reproduced and transformed in daily life. If geographers have provided a framework, scholars in other disciplines have also facilitated the rethinking of the spatiality of society, history, culture and identity.

In philosophy, the works of Jeff Malpas and Edward Casey are paradigmatic of how scholars outside of geography can contribute to the understanding of space and place. In Malpas’s book *Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography*, he explores how “subjectivity is necessarily embedded in place” (1999, 176). “Place” as a spatiotemporal region is “an open and yet bounded realm within which the things of the world can appear and within which events can ‘take place’” (33). For him, it is social activity that bounds, interconnects, and organizes “place”. On the other hand, Casey has concentrated on issues of space, time and history to address the significance of place, differentiated from “space”, “site”, and “location.” In *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (1993), now in its third printing, he claims that the concept of place is necessary to any phenomenological study of experience. Other books by him (2002, 2005) take on landscape painting and cartography. For example, *Representing Place* (2002) demonstrates how “place” in landscape paintings and

<sup>3</sup> Excellent overviews by Finnegan (2008) and Naylor (2005) point to the diversity of approaches and challenges presented by the concern on the spaces of science.

maps articulate the centrality of subjectivity and the body at the level of the visual.

Viewing geography as a product—or better yet, a process, as into “geo-graph”—speaks directly to how it is wrapped up in relations of power, discourse, and ideology. As geographers came to understand space and place as situated social practices produced and reproduced in the rhythms of everyday life, so too did the importance of spatiality dawn on practitioners outside of the discipline. Colonial studies, my own area of research and teaching, points to a historical period and to a plurality of discourses that represent the experience of living under an imperial power. The field has its own academic history as it used to be studied in different disciplines independently, but in the 1990s became a multidisciplinary field that engages seriously with other disciplines, particularly literature, history, anthropology and art history. Some of the most relevant work in colonial studies has been borrowed and negotiated ideas and approaches from many disciplines in order to understand the long lasting impacts of the social, political and cultural conditions in colonial Latin America, a period generally recognized as lasting between 1492 and the independence of the colonies from Spain in the early 19th century.<sup>4</sup> In the last decade, colonial scholars, influenced by the works of postcolonial thinkers such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak and Latin American intellectuals such as Walter Dignolo, Enrique Dussel and Aníbal Quijano, have made a concerted effort to look at the experience of colonialism as an uninterrupted set of practices that conditions many forms of neocolonialism and internal colonialism that persist today thorough the hemisphere.

It is clear that in order to study the colonial subject, the methods of one discipline are not sufficient to account for the many forms in which coloniality has been experienced, represented, and resisted. Cross-disciplinary deployments have been crucial to fully understand its implications. Mabel Moraña, Enrique Dussel and Carlos Jauregui explain in the introduction to *Coloniality at Large* that the study of *coloniality* entails “the challenge of thinking

across (frontiers, disciplines, territories, classes, ethnicities, epistemes, temporalities) in order to visualize the overarching structure of power that has impacted all aspects of the social and political experience in Latin America since the beginning of the colonial era” (2008, 17). Such a statement clearly frames the study of colonialism in a critical hermeneutic in which spatial processes go hand by hand with socio-historical ones.

### **Case study: eighteenth-century spatial reconfigurations of Lima**

On both sides of the Atlantic during the eighteenth century, territorial space was affirmed as a core symbol of political power and patriotic identity. It is important to understand that the relationships between space, knowledge, and power worked in a number of ways during this period. As Foucault clearly stated, “it is somewhat arbitrary to try to dissociate the effective practice of freedom by people, the practice of social relations, and the spatial distributions in which they find themselves. If they are separated, they become impossible to understand” (Foucault 1984, 246). As pointed out before, space must be understood as a social and discursive practice, and as a product of interrelations rather than a self-contained, bounded, homogeneous entity. On a commentary on Foucault and geography, Michael Coleman and John Agnew explain that power does not get exercised over “undifferentiated blocks of subjects fixed in absolute spaces” (2007, 321); it is not confined to a single community or place, but is exerted in many locations through networks. By examining spatialities of power, postcolonial theorists and critical geographers draw attention to how all spatial representations and interrelations are deeply political “because they are the covert medium and disguised expression of asymmetrical relations of power” (Keith and Pile 1993, 38). Here, I seek to problematize the representations of territory and spatial operations of viceregal Lima by Spanish and Creole intellectuals on both sides of the Atlantic. The historical context is the late eighteenth century, when the Bourbon reforms were put into place, a period that demonstrates how these spatialities of power formed core elements of governmentality and identity construction.

<sup>4</sup> Examples of this type of multidisciplinary approach from my own field of colonial literary studies in the works of José Rabasa (1993, 2000), Ralph Bauer (2003), Mariselle Meléndez (1999), Gustavo Verdesio (2001), Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel (2008), Carlos A. Jáuregui (2008), among many others.

The raw material for Enlightenment colonialism is the space that is produced and transformed for the development of profitable political economies and national imaginaries (both Spanish and Spanish American). The patriotic ideology depended on the one hand on the representation of border disputes, and the construction of public monuments, buildings and fortifications that were representative of imperial institutions, order and citizenship. On the other hand, the production, use and representation of space was instrumental in the projection of social conditions, marginalized communities and colonial political processes. In the case of Lima, the spatiality of colonialism is not only manifested in the cartography, but in its visual art, historical writing, and literature.

A key literary text of the Latin American Enlightenment, the satirical poem *Lima por dentro y fuera* [Lima inside out] (1798) by Esteban Terralla y Landa (?-1797), demonstrates different sentiments, agendas, and contingencies that influenced the way urban space was perceived, represented and transformed by Spanish immigrants who had lost their influence, status, and possessions. The poem, as it describes the streets of the Ciudad de los Reyes [Lima or City of Kings], also mounts a fierce critique of the failure of the Spanish empire to effectively administrate their most precious jewel in South America. The critique of disgruntled Spanish immigrants to Peru echoes the voices of many Creoles also dissatisfied with Spanish administration.

In his journey throughout the city, the poetic voice of *Lima por dentro y fuera* tries to persuade a fellow Spaniard residing in Mexico not to move to Lima. The title points to the spatiality and deceit of a city whose core is anything but controlled, clean, and magnificent. Typical women of Lima such as *tapadas*, *mistureras*, and *mestizas*<sup>5</sup> were the subjects of much satirical literature of the period. In this poem, blacks, Mestizos, members of the castas, and women

<sup>5</sup> *Tapadas limeñas* refers to the covered women during the colonial period who wore a shroud wrapped around part of the body, face, and head. Women could only show one eye. The *mistureras* describe flower vendors, mostly black or Indian women; and *Mestizas* are the mixed blood women of Spanish and indigenous heritage.

who were not supposed to go out to public spaces, are profiled in order to show the lack of containment of these marginal subjects:

Que vas viendo por la calle  
 Pocos blancos, muchos prietos,  
 Siendo los prietos el blanco  
 De la estimación, y aprecio.  
 Que los negros son los amos,  
 Y los blancos son los negros,  
 Y que habrá de llegar día  
 Que sean, esclavos aquellos.  
 Que estilan capas bordadas  
 Con riquísimos sombreros,  
 La mejor media de seda,  
 Tisú, lama, y terciopelo.  
 Que en esta clase de gente  
 Está el principal comercio,  
 Porque el mayor mecanismo  
 Es de mayor privilegio.  
 (1798, 42–43)

[What you are seeing on the streets,  
 A few Whites, and many Blacks  
 The Blacks the target being  
 Of admiration and esteem.  
 That the Blacks the masters are,  
 And the Whites turned into Blacks,  
 And the day it will arrive,  
 When those who don embroidered capes  
 With richly valued hats  
 And stockings of but finest silk  
 Tissue, *lamé*, and velvet,  
 The slaves they will become.  
 That it is in this sort of people  
 Where the principal trade is to be found,  
 Because the more manual a labor  
 The higher its entitlement.] (Translated by María Willstedt)

According to the poetic voice, these colonial subjects clothed themselves in fancy trimmed outfits, misleading others with their attire about their social class. Vanity, corruption, the fluidity of race and ethnicity dominate and confuse the visitors. Throughout all of this, the spatiality of Lima is emblematic of the breakdown of social order and, by implication, the downfall of the Spanish empire.

*Lima por dentro y fuera* illustrates a metaphorical map of the capital that represents a different social reality that viceroys and secular bureaucrats tried to erase. It must be made clear that the poem is not a

source of liberal ideology or a statement on how to improve the seat of power and Spanish rule. The poem participates in the darker side of the Enlightenment, where powerful empires dominated and transformed less fortunate societies. The poet's view of space goes against the grain of imperial vision when it shows disruptive elements of the city that was supposed to embody rationality and hierarchy. Opposing the view of Creoles and Spanish immigrants, Royal officials led the material reorganization and modernization of viceregal Lima to make it a showcase of order and progress, i.e., as a product of Enlightenment thought. Nonetheless, a distinct baroque reality that survived in the spatial narratives comprised a human geography of religious, deviant and marginal spaces spun off by the chaos, poverty, and decadence of a dysfunctional colonial society. This is the reality reproduced in some of the literary works of the period, such as this poem.

We could argue that *Lima por dentro y por fuera* is a form of counter discourse that provides an alternative human geography of colonial Lima. It moves away from the celebratory histories or epic poetry that also dominated the period to offer a detailed description and interpretation of the urban space surveyed by the two travelers. It demonstrates the complexities of the social order where race, gender and ethnicity contribute to spatial difference and so to the transformation and decadence of the most important urban center of South America. All of these social processes account for the political, commercial and social decline of the City of Kings. As Raquel Chang-Rodríguez (2008, 380) points out, Terralla y Landa inverts the literary *topoi* of *laudes civitatum*: instead of praising the beauties and virtues of the city, he undermines them.

These same tensions created by heterogeneity and difference were embodied in the representation of the urban centers of the Americas, and framed the cartography and geographical discourse deployed in historical writing, and other forms of Enlightenment knowledge. If we have a Spanish corpus produced by authors who did not shy away from revealing a negative and bleak vision of Peru, we also can count on a body of knowledge that exalted Lima's exceptionalism. The celebration of Peru and its metropolitan core is better seen in the geographical narratives and its city plans, which provide evidence of how key

regions of the Americas were reconfigured and symbolically projected to the rest of world.<sup>6</sup>

Spanish royal institutions, with their newly trained cartographers and engineers, placed cartography at the center of their agenda. Within the context of Spain's decline and sharp criticism by other European nations, its intellectuals looked back at its early colonial history to bring to the fore the early Spanish "triumphal conquest" of the so-called "New World". In addition to reinstating its glorious past, at a utilitarian level it was imperative to have a detailed inventory of the wealth of its territories. With a vast collection and elaboration of maps, atlases and geohistories, the Bourbon court revealed its anxieties about geographical knowledge and the need to represent the splendor of its cities that embodied order and *civitas*. Therefore, these bodies of knowledge included detailed regional and chorographical observations of urban centers that represented the magnitude of its empire.

The Spanish emperor Charles III (1716 –1788) supported the efforts of the Royal Academy of History, ordered the elaboration of a new history of the Americas to be led by its official cosmographer, Juan Bautista Muñoz, and also founded the geographical cabinet for the use of the office of the Spanish "Secretary of State," whose main task was the gathering of maps and charts, many of which were elaborated in France and England.<sup>7</sup> Projects undertaken by Spanish and Creole intellectuals, such as geographical dictionaries, encyclopedias, atlases, and cartographical collections, demonstrate the centrality and fusion of history and geography in the project of the Hispanic Enlightenment. Spain redefined its relationship with its viceroyalties with new administrative reforms that supported the expansion, profit, and protection of trade and commerce. A

<sup>6</sup> Geographical narratives and cartography of the period legitimated an imperial vision; however, it also contributed to the emergence of dissident Creole voices. We cannot forget that Creole representations and narratives that captured a sense of place also utilized indigenous knowledge about the land. One of the best examples is the *Carta de la Audiencia de Quito* by the Creole from Riobamba, Pedro Vicente Maldonado. See Saifer's discussions on Maldonado (2008).

<sup>7</sup> The cabinet was abandoned with the crisis of the French invasion of 1808, until 1844 when it was revived. Its collection is kept at the National Library in Madrid. See López Gómez and Manso Porto 2006, 189.

detailed account of Spain's histories during the Enlightenment shows how its historiography was transformed from the history of heroes and great deeds to the history of its spaces, and, thus, the history of Spain as an imperial power.

Descriptions of eighteenth-century Lima and its inhabitants abound in travel journals, official and unofficial documents, and as seen here, in the literary discourse of the period. The multiple discursive constructions of Lima show how politicized an urban center can be. Geo-historians of the period, such as Cosme Bueno, royal engineers such as Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa, or the many European travelers who visited the city, demonstrate in their writings that place-making is a multivocal, empowering, historically specific practice. In the case of Lima, its representation by European cabinet cartographers was largely determined by the impacts of the Bourbon reforms and the 1746 earthquake that destroyed the city.

Important initiatives of honorary members of the Royal Academy of History and officials at the House of Trade (1493–1790) supported the Spanish government's rhetorical claims to its possessions. Charles III assigned the most important cartographic and administrative duties to Tomás López de Vargas Machuca (1731–1802), who received the title of "Geógrafo de los dominios de su majestad".<sup>8</sup> These individuals working for royal institutions represented the external power behind the cartographic program during this period, which normalized Spain's territories for the Royal Court and society. In this vein, J. B. Harley (1997) makes a significant distinction between external and internal power in cartography. External power in the context of colonial Lima refers to individuals representing the Crown, state institutions, and the Church who promoted or prohibited the dissemination of cartographic knowledge, while internal power points to the actual practices and power of the mapmaker, where the "compilation, classification, formation in hierarchies and standardization of geographic data" take place (163).

In the mid-eighteenth century, several members of the Spanish intellectual elite asserted the

shortcomings of Spanish cartographers. Individuals such as Jorge Juan, Antonio de Ulloa, and D. Cenón de Somodevilla (the Marquis of Ensenada) made a concerted effort to correct this lacuna by supporting the training of a selected group of Spanish cartographers in Paris and Amsterdam.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, López was sent to Paris for training under the supervision of France's leading cartographer, Jean-Baptiste Bourguignon d'Anville (1697–1782).<sup>10</sup> In 1758, he published his *Atlas geográfico de la América septentrional y meridional*, which included 38 maps and detailed annotations of the territories. In this important atlas, the viceroyalty of Peru figures prominently with regional maps, city plans of Quito and Lima, and narrative descriptions of those urban centers for the *audiencias* in Quito, Lima, Charcas and the bishoprics of Trujillo, Guamanga, Cuzco, Arequipa, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Tucumán and Buenos Aires.

We have to understand that López was a cabinet cartographer who corrected and interpreted the toponymic knowledge of his predecessors. In addition, he corroborated cartographic delineations with geographical narratives from historical and travel accounts.

López's sources for his descriptions of Peru were clearly stated: D'Anville and Amédée-François

<sup>8</sup> He became member of key scientific societies in Spain such as the Real Academia de San Fernando (1764), Real Sociedad Bascongada de los Amigos del País, and the Real Academia de la Historia (1776).

<sup>9</sup> The idea that Spain remained at the margins of the seventeenth century scientific revolution is much debated (see Portuondo (2009), Nieto-Galán (1999), Cañizares-Esguerra (2002); García Camarero (1970); and Elliot (1989). In terms of their cartographic needs, the mapmakers and engravers from the low countries, then still under Spanish domination, filled the need for accurate mapping. On the other hand, the decline of natural science was justified by the religious intolerance that permeated much of this period because of the Spanish Inquisition's rejection of scientific endeavors (Feijoo 1986). María Portuondo (2009, 15) focuses on the role of the Black Legend, the tradition of self critique among Spanish intellectuals, and the fact that many of the scientific projects under Phillip II were considered state secrets, which most be considered when elucidating the gap between Renaissance science and the Enlightenment.

<sup>10</sup> D. Cenón de Somodevilla, Marqués de la Ensenada, exemplified this need in his treatise *Puntos de gobierno*: "no basta que se formen y levanten cartas; es necesario que haya en el reino quien las sepa abrir, haciendo venir de fuera grabadores de esta profesión, ó enviando a París artistas mozos que la aprendan." (quoted in Patier 1992, 13). See Capel's (1982) discussion on the lack of Spanish cartographers and the measures taken by the government in the second half of the eighteenth century.



**Fig. 1** Plan of Lima in Francisco de Echave y Assu's *La estrella de Lima* (1688)

Frézier (1713), and the narrative by Pedro Vicente Maldonado (1704–48), a Creole raised in Riobamba who had participated in the famous geodesic mission to Peru and during its return surveyed the Amazon with La Condamine. For the urban plans, López depended on the descriptions by Jorge Juan, Antonio de Ulloa, the travelogue by Louis Feuillée, and earlier city plans by Frezier. Frezier had simplified the plan that appeared in Francisco de Echave y Assu's *La estrella de Lima convertida en sol* (1688).<sup>11</sup> Map by map, the visual representation of Lima was transformed, adapted, and fit to different ideologies and administrative projects during the eighteenth century. For the Jesuit Echave y Assu, Lima came to represent a star, and as Richard Kagan has explained, with its enhanced *cuadras* “the plan offered an idealized image that reflected the Creole conception of Lima as a Western paradise” (172). The Flemish engraver, Joseph Milder, decorated the map with exotic animals (llamas, toucans, armadillos, pumas) that, in conjunction with the images of Rosa de Santa María, S. Ivan Evangelista, Francisco de Solano and the sixteenth century archbishop of Lima, Toribio Alonso Mongrovejo, framed and celebrated the city as an

ideal and heavenly place for religion and order (Fig. 1).

During the eighteenth century, the plans of Lima erased all symbols of religion to offer a more secular perspective; under the growing secularizing forces of expanding colonial capital, to be useful the map increasingly had to be precise and legible rather than inspirational. Frezier, and Ulloa's plans contributed to the image that López created to celebrate a city that was extensively rebuilt, with wide streets, plazas, and elaborate churches after the devastating earthquake of 1746. All of these plans accounted for the city's extended walls, buildings, gardens, churches, monasteries, and squares.

López's city plan follows closely the original delineations by Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa and their predecessors. However, he fills the hinterlands with a lengthy inscription of names of places that are the products of two and a half centuries of colonialism (Fig. 2). With the extensive legend, López's plan falls within the category of what Christian Jacob calls a written map, “inscribed in an elegant hand, on which the drawing is erased under the flood of words, and in which the line delimits zones in the text where writing invades geographical forms” (2006, 190–191). In comparison to other city plans, in López's Lima, writing dominates with its inventory of public

<sup>11</sup> Echave's representation was based on the 1685's Koninick plan (Kagan 2000, 171).



**Fig. 2** Plan of Lima, Tomás López, *Atlas geográfico de América septentrional y meridional* (1758)



places that appear at first glance to be objective. But when we look closely, his representation is more like a rank of places that starts with the *palacio del virrey* [viceregal palace], follows with the cathedral and *casa de gobierno* [house of government], and subsequently the hospitals, *beaterios* and *parroquias* [parishes]. The lower ranking places are found across the river, the area designated for the poor. Number 65 is assigned to “Los Peynes” a paseo, in which as Ruth Hills explains, “members of the different *castas* and *estados* interacted in ways that the social hierarchy condemned” (2005, 54).

The plan orders information, and visually normalizes the city. The slums were not even noted, including even the area of El Cercado or the many poor neighborhoods that were part of the view of an idealized city. As J.B. Harley reminds us, the silences in maps are crucial as we unveil their hidden political messages (1988, 290). In this case, more than simply an inventory of places, the city plan is a construct that

legitimizes the reality of empire (282). We have to remember that a major role of the Spanish Royal Academy of History during the eighteenth century was the censorship of newly produced histories and maps. If the maps did not represent the empire’s boundaries, or helped to promote civic pride in a manner conducive to imperial interests, they ran the risk of suppression.

The celebratory narrative included in López’s atlas attempts to offer a comprehensive examination of the city’s social and spatial totality:

Lima o la ciudad de los reyes es la metropolitana, capital del reino del Peru, y de su audiencia, la residencia del virrey, cabeza de un arzobispado, erigido en 1546 con una Universidad. Esta situada en un valle del mismo nombre cerca del mar. Es la mejor de todas quantas hay en este vasto continente de la America Meridional. Se divide esta ciudad en varios cuarteles,

o barrios: sus calles son anchas, y derechas: tiene 20 barrios entre el oriente y Occidente: 14 de Septentrion a Medio-dia, y por esta parte atraviesa un río sobre el cual hai un Puente edificado por el exmo. Marques de Montes Claros, quando era Virrey de este Reyno. Los edificios que merecen mayor atención son el Palacio del Virrey, la Santa Iglesia Cathedral mui parecida a la de Sevilla, el Palacio de la Santa Inquisition, y otros diferentes particulares que exceden a los de Europa. La Universidad está en la Plazuela de la Inquisición, su edificio es superior: hai una gran multitud de estudiantes, cuios progresos son singulares. (1758)

[Lima, or the City of Kings is the metropolitan one, capital of the viceroyalty of Peru and of its *audiencia*, the viceroy's residence. It is the head of the archbishopric, established in 1546 with a university. It is situated in the valley with the same name, close to the ocean. It is the city of many on this vast continent of Meridional America. It is divided into neighborhoods. Buildings that are worth of mentioning are the Viceroy's Palace, the Cathedral, similar to the one in Seville, the Palace of the Inquisition and others that exceed in size the ones in Europe. The University is located in the Square of the Inquisition. Its building is superior and there are a great number of students.] (The translation is mine)

The narrative reflects the ideals of order, beauty and the intelligence of Lima's youth. It is clear and unadorned rhetoric, reiterating at the level of language the simple and undecorated visual style of the plan. In comparison with the plan by Echave de Assu, it underpins a rhetoric of practicality and authority based on a secular, not spiritual, order. As Denis Cosgrove has stated, the map of the city "served to regulate and coordinate its continued existence" (2008, 169); it is also "a creative intervention in urban space, shaping both the physical city and the urban life experience and performed there" (171). López's city plan is part of an atlas created to represent the Spanish possessions as a whole.

While a student in Paris, he produced his *Atlas geographico de la América septentrional y meridional*, available a year later in Madrid. This detailed

atlas dedicated to Fernando IV "por su humilde vasallo" (for his humble servant) encompassed those cities, villages, towns and rivers that he considered "dignos de memoria" (worthy of memory). That was his warning to those seeking inferior or "nameless" places in his work. By the late eighteenth century, López's maps were known and celebrated by historians and geographers in Britain and France. He was not renowned for mapping new regions, but for correcting what was already known. His historical cartography of North and South America and the Caribbean Islands was compared to the work of prominent British cartographers such as Kitchin, Jeffreys, and even those of his own teacher, D'Anville.<sup>12</sup> Spanish editors of colonial texts that required maps commissioned them to López; some eighteenth century editions of colonial texts, such as Antonio de Solís *Historia de la conquista de México* and Alonso de Ercilla's *La araucana*, included his maps.

The insistence on mapping regions during this period stresses the interrelations and dependency of history and geography in the eighteenth century: history making had to be geographical and geographical narratives had to be historical. In order to fully appreciate Spain and Spanish America's geography, a full account of how they gained those territories became necessary, and seeking original sources both in history and cartography was a major imperative. The inventory of López's library points to his use of European and Creole sources equally.<sup>13</sup> It exemplifies the depth and wide-ranging historical and scientific knowledge mastered in order to engage in the practice of what he understood as "exact and legible" cartography. It also illustrates the central place geography occupied and the relevance of any timely, novel information about the Americas. His use of Creole sources, particularly the information and maps by Pedro Vicente de Maldonado, points to the

<sup>12</sup> The published translation in English of Miguel Costanso's *History Journal of the expeditions by sea and land to the north of California in 1763-70* used the map of the California coast engraved by López (Winsor 1889, 212). Another interesting reference that points towards his recognition in England is the reference made by Justin Windsor, who points to the work of Tomás López when he describes the advances of the mapping of Mexico City in the eighteenth century (1889, 200).

<sup>13</sup> Felicidad Patier's published the inventory of López's library in order to establish it among the most important Spanish collections in the eighteenth century.

common objections that both groups had against European thinkers and travelers who denigrated Spain and its possessions across the Atlantic.

Urban design was a central aspect of colonial practice that “provided one of the means to establish military control, regulate activities, separate populations, and establish a comprehensive order, on both an aesthetic and political level” (Rabinow 2003, 353). The inclusion of urban spaces in historical atlases and accounts reflected centralized control and order in the mapping of governmentality. City landscapes and plans were full of ideology; the plans of Lima were designed to be expressions of balance and control. Furthermore, they were metonymic of the imperial imaginary and were representative of the success of their civilizing mission, commercial activity, and enforcement of Bourbon institutions. Colonial urban planning demonstrated Spanish cultural superiority to its European counterparts and to its subjugated indigenous populations.

## Conclusions

As seen in this analysis of the spatiality of Lima in the eighteenth century, the study of space and place has allowed scholars in the humanities to “georeference” their subject of analysis and to make lateral connections that account for myriad social, political, cultural processes. In this sense, the study of space must be viewed as a window into interdisciplinarity and its many approaches. Literature and politics are not strangers to each other and literary critics have been reading outside the text for quite some time. And it should not be forgotten that spatial considerations have been included in humanities scholarship during the twentieth century. Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that the shift in theoretical focus that critical theory from various disciplines has allowed has sustained theoretically informed interpretations of social phenomena in time and space.

Spatiality as a form of social theory thus forced the recognition of space and place as both the contingent condition and the outcome of human activity, as a weaving dance of intentional actions and unintended consequences. Positioned between matter and meaning, human geographies are now widely recognized as critically important to understanding the human condition much as time and historical context have long

been known to be. Doreen Massey (2005) has concisely articulated some of the poststructuralist contours of space, i.e., as a field of differences always under construction. It is precisely this recognition that has fueled the spatial turn, and likewise facilitated a creative engagement concerning spatiality across the disciplines. This transformation amounts to far more than mere academic faddishness: it is a recognition of the rising ontological significance of spatiality in an age of intense globalization and time–space compression, when place and location matter hugely to national identities, when the effects of actions spiral out through networks that are planetary in scope. As a result, long confined to the sidelines of academic thought, space and spatiality have come to lie at the fore of series of cross-disciplinary perspectives. Globalization, spaces of flows, actor-networks, poststructuralist encounters, identity theories, gender relations, queer theories, postcolonialism, cyberspace, hybridity, all of these—to one extent or another, in varying ways—incorporate some variant of geography as humanly created, as filled with uneven relations of power, as implicated in the constitution of self and other. No wonder that terms such as “location,” “mapping,” “landscapes,” and “migration” have penetrated the lexicons of some many fields! Any trip to the book exhibits of the Modern Languages Association or the American Historical Association will confirm the popularity of geographical topics. “Positionality” in a social, spatial, and personal sense has become *de rigueur* for empirical attempts to understand the production of meaning. Moreover, this line of thought points to how geography has become the meeting ground for diverse points of view ensconced in different fields of study. Interdisciplinary encounters over space share, whatever their differences may be, an understanding that geographies are forever coming into being, always unfinished, that space both reflects and in turn affects the constitution of social relations, that social forces and processes (e.g., globalization) always and inevitably unfold in markedly different ways in different places. For example, even as the diverse set of processes that we understand as globalization fold and distort space in surprising ways, filling it with wormholes and collapsing relational distances, so too have those same processes been shaped by the dynamics of individual locales.

Yet the spatial turn is hardly confined to the domain of ontology. Real as the dramatic recent

changes of capitalism have been for the lives of billions of people, and as dramatic as those alterations are for the world's geographies, distributions, places, and locations, equally important are their epistemological repercussions. Bluntly, it has become increasingly apparent that space shapes not simply *what* we know, but *how* we know it. In this light, spatiality enters into our understanding of how the world works, our individual and collective identity, and our means for producing and interpreting knowledge. Elevating space in this sense from the ontological to the epistemological poses significant challenges to how scholarly information is constructed, claims to “truth” (whatever that may be) are interpreted, and the priorities of academic work. It is no accident that the spatial turn has been accompanied by a sustained interest in matters of culture, language, and identity, for the two transformations are hopeless lost up in each other. Critical social theory, for example, has come to accept as a matter of course that discourses arise from and in turn constitute temporal and spatial relations. Bringing the poststructural arsenal of interpretive understandings to bear on concrete empirical analyses invariably calls for an appreciation of context—the when and where of social life—not as mere backdrop to the unfolding of meaning, but as central to its manufacture. In this light, human subjectivity and consciousness can never be understood independently of their historical and geographical circumstances: the world of ideas, identity, discourses, language, and meaning—in short, the domain of the humanities—has thus become drenched in understandings of place and location. Power, knowledge, and space, a trinity irrevocably sutured together by Foucault, thus lie at the core of state-of-the-art scholarship in cultural and literary studies.

## References

- Baker, A. R. H. (2003). *Geography and history: bridging the divide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bauer, R. (2003). *The cultural geography of colonial American literatures: Empire, travel, modernity. Cambridge studies in American literature and culture*, [136]. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Benko, G., & Strohmayr, U. (1997). *Space and social theory: interpreting modernity and postmodernity*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Cañizares-Esguerra, J. (2002). *How to write the history of the New World: histories, epistemologies, and identities in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Capel Sáez, H. (1982). *Geografía y matemáticas en la España del siglo XVIII*. Barcelona: Oikos-Tau.
- Casey, E. S. (1993). *Getting back into place: toward a renewed understanding of the place-world*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Casey, E. S. (2002). *Representing place: landscape painting and maps*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Casey, E. S. (2005). *Earth-mapping: artists reshaping landscape*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Chang-Rodríguez, R. (2008). “Aquí, ninfas del sur, venid ligeras”: voces poéticas virreinales. Madrid: Iberoamericana.
- Coleman, M., & Agnew, J. A. (2007). The problem with empire. In J. W. Crampton & S. Elden (Eds.), *Space, knowledge and power: Foucault and geography* (pp. 317–339). Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.
- Corrigan, J. (2008). Spatiality and religion. In B. Warf & S. Arias (Eds.), *The spatial turn: interdisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 157–172). London: Routledge.
- Cosgrove, D. E. (2008). *Geography and vision: seeing, imagining and representing the world*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Echave y Assu, F.d. (1688). *La estrella de Lima convertida en sol*. Antwerp: Juan Baptista Verdussen.
- Elliott, J. H. (1989). *Spain and its world, 1500–1700: selected essays*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Ethington, P. J. (2007). Placing the past: ‘groundwork’ for a spatial theory of history. *Rethinking History*, 11(4), 465–493.
- Falkheimer, J., & Jansson, A. (2006). *Geographies of communication: the spatial turn in media studies*. Goteborg: Nordicom.
- Feijoo, B. J., & Stiffoni, G. (1986). *Teatro crítico universal, o, Discursos varios en todo género de materias, para desengaño de errores comunes. Clásicos Castalia, 147*. Madrid: Castalia.
- Finnegan, D. A. (2008). The spatial turn: geographical approaches in the history of science. *Journal of the History of Biology*, 41(2), 369–388.
- Foucault, M. (1984). The order of discourse. In M. Shapiro (Ed.), *Language and politics* (pp. 108–138). Oxford: Blackwell.
- García Camarero, E. (1970). *La polémica de la ciencia española*. Madrid: Aguilar.
- Gieryn, T. F. (2000). A space for place in sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26(1), 463–496.
- Gulson, K. N., & Symes, C. (Eds.). (2007). *Spatial theories of education: policy and geography matters*. New York: Routledge.
- Harley, J. B. (1988). Maps, knowledge and power. In D. Cosgrove & S. Daniels (Eds.), *The iconography of landscape* (pp. 277–312). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Harley, J. B. (1997). Power and legitimation in the English geographical atlases of the eighteenth century. In J. A. Wolter & R. E. Grim (Eds.), *Images of the world: the atlas through history* (pp. 161–204). New York: McGraw-Hill.

- Hill, R. (2005). *Hierarchy, commerce and fraud in Bourbon Spanish America: a postal inspector's exposé*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Jacob, C. (2006). *The sovereign map: theoretical approaches in cartography throughout history*. Translated by T. Conley & edited by E. H. Dahl. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Jáuregui, C. A. (2008). *Canibalia: Canibalismo, calibanismo, antropofagia cultural y consumo en América Latina*. Madrid: Iberoamericana.
- Kagan, R. L., & Marias, F. (2000). *Urban images of the Hispanic world, 1493–1793*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Keith, M., & Pile, S. (1993). Introduction: the place of politics. In M. Keith & S. Pile (Eds.), *Place and the politics of identity* (pp. 22–40). London: Routledge.
- Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The production of space*. Translated by D. Nicholson-Smith. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Livingstone, D. N. (1995). The spaces of knowledge: contributions towards a historical geography of science. *Environment and Planning D*, 13(1), 5–34.
- Livingstone, D. N. (2003). *Putting science in its place: geographies of scientific knowledge*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- López de Vargas Machuca, T. (1758). *Atlas geográfico de la América septentrional y meridional*. Madrid: Se hallará en casa de Antonio Sanz.
- López Gómez, A., & Manso Porto, C. (2006). *Cartografía del siglo XVIII: Tomás López en la real academia de la historia*. Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia.
- Low, S. M., & Lawrence-Zúñiga, D. (2003). *The anthropology of space and place: locating culture*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Malpas, J. E. (1999). *Place and experience: a philosophical topography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Martínez-San Miguel, Y. (2008). *From lack to excess: "minor" readings of Latin American colonial discourse*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press.
- Massey, D. (2005). *For space*. London: Sage.
- Meléndez, M. (1999). *Raza, género e hibridez en el Lazarillo de ciegos caminantes*. North Carolina studies in the Romance languages and literatures, no. 264. Chapel Hill: U.N.C. Dept. of Romance Languages.
- Moraña, M., Dussel, E. D. & Jauregui, C. A. (2008). Colonialism and its replicants. In M. Moraña, E. Dussel & C. Jauregui (Eds.), *Colonialism at Large: Latin America and the postcolonial debate* (pp. 1–20). Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press.
- Murdoch, J. (2006). *Post-structuralist geography: a guide to relational space*. London: Sage.
- Naylor, S. (2005). Introduction: historical geographies of science—places, contexts, cartographies. *The British Journal for the History of Science*, 38(1), 1–12.
- Nieto-Galán, A. (1999). The images of science in modern Spain. In K. Gavroglu (Ed.), *The sciences in the European periphery during the Enlightenment* (pp. 73–92). Dordrecht: Kluwer Publications.
- Patier, F. (1992). *La biblioteca de Tomás López: seguida de la relación de los mapas impresos, con sus cobres, y de los libros del caudal de venta que quedaron a su fallecimiento en Madrid en 1802*. Madrid: El Museo Universal.
- Portuondo, M. M. (2009). *Secret science: Spanish cosmography and the New World*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
- Rabasa, J. (1993). *Inventing America Spanish historiography and the formation of Eurocentrism Oklahoma project for discourse and theory* (Vol. 11). Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Rabasa, J. (2000). *Writing violence on the northern frontier: The historiography of sixteenth century New Mexico and Florida and the legacy of conquest*. Latin America otherwise. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Rabinow, P. (2003). Ordinance, discipline, regulation: some reflections on urbanism. In S. M. Low & D. Lawrence-Zúñiga (Eds.), *The anthropology of space and place* (pp. 353–362). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Saifer, N. (2008). *Measuring the New World: enlightenment science and South America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Soja, E. W. (1989). *Postmodern geographies: the reassertion of space in critical social theory*. London: Verso.
- Terralla y Landa, E. (1798). *Lima por dentro y fuera*. Madrid: Imprenta del Villalpando.
- Verdesio, G. (2001). *Forgotten conquests: Rereading New World history from the margins*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Warf, B., & Arias, S. (Eds.). (2008). *The spatial turn: interdisciplinary perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- Winsor, J. (1889). *Narrative and critical history of America*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company.
- Withers, C. W. J. (2002). The geography of scientific knowledge. In N. Rupke (Ed.), *Göttingen and the development of the natural sciences* (pp. 9–18). Göttingen: Wallstein.