
Introduction

STORIES OF RESURGENCE AND COLONIALITY

SCENE I—FROM TERROR TO PEACEFUL REVOLUTION

*In 2017, PromPerú posted an ad in the New York Times promoting Peru's culinary revolution and showcasing the country's fourth generation of chefs, the so-called Generación con Causa (Generation with Cause).¹ This ad, produced by T Brand Studio, tells the story of Peru's transformation from a place of terror and economic insecurity to a peaceful and culturally vibrant global culinary destination.² It begins by introducing the most recent generation of chefs, young people in their late twenties and early thirties for whom, the ad states, "cooking is more than just a profession, it is a social revolution." The word *causa* in Spanish means "cause," but in Peru it is also the name of a traditional coastal dish made of mashed potatoes; *ají* (Peruvian yellow pepper); lime; and a mix of vegetables, seafood, or chicken. Interspersed among colorful photographs of Peruvian cuisine and Native products and shots of coastal Lima and young chefs, and anchored by the socially conscious work of the *Generación con Causa*, the text tells the story of a remarkable gastronomic revolution.*

This narrative emphasizes the role of chefs as central historical actors in moving Peru away from "chaos" and refashioning the country into a peaceful, modern, cosmopolitan, and socially conscious nation. It weaves through the first generation of chefs, described as the "first ones to honor Peruvian food" and as "pioneers fighting for our dreams in much more difficult times" who "built the conditions . . . [for] what we did later." It then turns to the second generation, including chef Gastón Acurio, who "made Peruvians fall in love again with their country." The third generation is represented by Mitsuharu Tsumura, the owner of Maido, a Japanese Peruvian fusion restaurant, and Virgilio Martínez, owner of Central and Mil; all three restaurants are considered among the best in the

world.”³ They are described as elevating Peruvian cuisine to the next level: “The new Peruvian message of food is biodiversity and the unknown. . . . It’s not pisco sours, ceviches, and great tasty food anymore. It’s at another level” (quoting Martínez).⁴ Having presented these three previous generations as paving the way, the ad returns to the particularities that distinguish the fourth and latest generation of chefs and Peruvian food today: a concern for social and environmental causes, such as tackling food waste, hunger, obesity, and deforestation. Keeping its well-educated global audience in mind, the ad foregrounds concepts and key terms familiar in high-end culinary circles, such as sustainability, biodiversity, hyper-locality, and authenticity.

SCENE II—THE BEAUTY QUEEN AND OPEN PIT MINING

The video begins with a smiling beauty queen waving joyfully at the camera. Incongruously, the camera moves from her to a view of the huge Raúl Rojas open pit mine, a void so big it can be seen from space and that has quite literally swallowed much of the city of Cerro de Pasco, Peru. As the big brass sounds of an Andean procession play, a voice-over tells the viewer: “Participate in the election of the Open Pit Mine Raúl Rojas as one of the wonders of Peru,” much as Peruvians were asked to vote to make Machu Picchu one of the wonders of the world.⁵ This “promotional video” from 2010 encourages tourists to come to Cerro de Pasco and enjoy such activities as “acid rain walks” and “extreme sports” that take place twice a day during the 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. explosive detonations. The website at which one can view this video introduces viewers to the person behind this audacious idea: La Última Reyna (sic), the “Last Queen of Cerro de Pasco,” Elizabeth Lino: “I am Miss Cerro de Pasco, the last queen, and from this place I will introduce you to my city and my proposal to declare the Raúl Rojas Open Pit Mine a World Wonder and a National Cultural and Historic Landscape.”⁶

In addition to the video, Lino’s website provides historical background and links to legal documents, including the text of Peruvian Law 29293, which proposes literally moving the city of Cerro de Pasco somewhere else, given how much of the city has been devastated by mining.⁷ Importantly, the historical landscape Lino spells out reminds us of the city’s history of Indigenous presence and dispossession, the centrality of mining to its foundation, and the legacies of labor struggles and environmental degradation. Just as important, Lino reminds us that in the early twentieth century, Cerro de Pasco occupied a privileged place in the nation. It was once Peru’s second largest city, a place where European dignitaries

*strolled the streets and that later contributed to the fortunes of American families with the last names Morgan and Vanderbilt. As the wealth of outsiders grew, so the pit grew larger, swallowing the houses and neighborhoods of local residents.*⁸ *Lino, a performance artist who grew up in Cerro de Pasco, explains that this pit devoured her house. She notes that this project was motivated by “the pain that came from seeing the disappearance of this space in which I was born and raised. Put simply, one day you come back and realize that this is not normal, although you had thought it was before. When I was a child, I really thought that all the cities in the world had a giant hole in the middle.”*⁹

These two texts—the *New York Times* advertisement and Lino’s video—could be read as two distinct performances of Peru’s history and future: one hegemonic and officially sanctioned, the other subaltern and unauthorized. The first involves the glossy, high-end, global marketing of Peru’s gastronomic revolution, a revolution that, as the story goes, transformed the country from a place of violence to one unified through its cultural and culinary history. The second, Lino’s grassroots, radical performance, calls attention to modernity’s extractive and destructive force and to the power of art in making such violence visible. Most significantly for our purposes, Lino’s performance disrupts the celebratory claims of Peru’s culinary revolution and calls attention instead to the revolution’s extractive and appropriative dimensions.

As hegemonic discourses celebrate a nation on the way up, Lino refocuses our attention on those sites most distant from (or made invisible by) these celebratory narratives. Significantly, Lino locates the beginning of her project in 2009. As Peru was making headlines for its culinary excellence and economic resurgence, Lino responded to a 2009 Peruvian law that could have emerged from the fiction of Kafka or Borges, declaring that her city would have to move because of the tremendous damage that centuries of mining had done to it. As Cerro de Pasco’s days became numbered, Lino declared herself the “last” queen of the city and promised to hand over her sash and tiara to a new “sovereign” once the new city was built. Like other beauty queens, she is a public figure, ubiquitous at inaugurations and parades and often accompanying politicians as they declare the achievements of the nation. However, as Olga Rodríguez-Ulloa notes insightfully, *La Ultima Reyna* explores the “paradox of mining that goes back to the time of colonial splendour, to prosperity and opulence that nevertheless left misery and contamination in the communities with which it coexists. She is a character that materially embodies her own demise as a representative, head, and body of a territory destroyed.”¹⁰



FIGURE 1. *Marca País*. Reproduced with permission from Elizabeth Lino.

La Última Reyna, however, is not simply acting. As she tells Peruvian literary critic Victor Vich: “What I am doing is not representation, it is not theater.”¹¹ As Vich writes, Lino “converts her body into an image functional to global capitalism, she . . . fuses herself, obscenely, with the optimistic discourse of contemporary marketing.”¹² At a time when there seems to be no space free of the workings of capitalism, Vich suggests that Lino’s strategy is not to reject the selling of the nation but to “overidentify” with it. This act of overidentification becomes a new form of “symbolic disobedience” that highlights the obscenity that Vich argues is always present in stories of success.¹³ In one of the more telling visuals of the Última Reyna’s website, Lino superimposes the spiraling Marca Perú logo over the remarkably similar curves of the Raúl Rojas mining pit. The point could not be clearer: Peru, our brand is extraction.

It is worthwhile to consider the paradoxical yet profound theoretical power of Lino’s intervention. Through her performance art, she helps call attention to something that does not seem to be hidden: a giant hole in the earth that has literally consumed her home and city. The original narrative of national success, namely the long-standing notion that mining has been the foundation of Peruvian modernity, has managed to obscure the deep ecological and social harm that mining has done to so many parts of the country.¹⁴ By inviting her fellow citizens and even the world to look closely at Cerro de Pasco, Lino asks people to see what they should have seen all along: that stories of success are at the same time stories of destruction. Inspired by Lino’s art, I suggest that we might also take a close look at the gastronomic boom and ask what this story of success is hiding in plain sight.

My aim in this book is not to tell *the* story of Peru's spectacular gastro-nomic revolution, but rather to offer a critical engagement with some of the many gastropolitical stories and performances that produce and reflect contemporary manifestations of capital, culture, and coloniality in Peru.¹⁵ In thinking with these narratives, I explore what I call the Peruvian gastro-political complex, a network of bodies, institutions, economic relations, knowledge production, and discourses that represents both a hegemonic project and a terrain of struggle wherein alternative stories and political projects can emerge through the cracks and fissures.

BACKSTORIES: LOVE, VIOLENCE, AND COLONIALITY

A central goal of this book is to call into question the cruel optimism that is carried by the term *postconflict*, a designation often given to Peru since the military defeat of Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) and other leftist insurgencies by the state.¹⁶ *Postconflict* is found in many places, and I wager that in most, as in Peru, it is more aspirational than accurate.

Officially, the war between the Peruvian state and the Shining Path (and MRTA, the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru) led to approximately seventy thousand deaths, at least 75 percent of which were of Indigenous peoples.¹⁷ This does not include the countless people who were detained, tortured, displaced, and disappeared. The Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación, or CVR) was tasked with investigating the acts, causes, and implications of this period of violence, officially limited to the twenty years between 1980 (the year the Shining Path declared war against the state) and 2000 (the supposed end of authoritarianism). In its report, the CVR emphasized the impact of the colonial legacies of marginalization and inequality that made Sendero Luminoso possible, and which had to be addressed if Peru was to avoid more violence. Commissioners determined that Sendero was responsible for approximately 54 percent of deaths during this period of violence, while state forces (including military and police forces) were responsible for approximately 37 percent of deaths. This assessment, as well as the commissioners' critical narration of the colonial context in which this conflict unfolded (which implicated sitting presidents), meant that the report fell largely on deaf ears.

To this day, the CVR and the commissioners' report remain controversial, and the politics of memory in Peru are fiercely debated. Discussions over

who can count as a “victim” of the violence, who deserves reparations, and who was responsible for the forced sterilization of thousands of Indigenous women and men, for example, continue alongside new corruption scandals at the highest levels of government. My point here is that by reducing conflict and violence to one catastrophic chapter of Peru’s history, as horrendous as it was, the postconflict label imposes a periodization that renders almost invisible the many other catastrophes of colonial, structural, and symbolic violence that remain all too present. Here, it is worth remembering the late Patrick Wolfe’s oft-cited observation that conquest is a structure, not an event.¹⁸ Lino, too, points to this moment of branding, marketing, and consuming the nation not as an extraordinary moment of success, but rather as only one moment in a history of extraction and dispossession. In other words, we might shift our gaze and see the gastronomic revolution not as a project taking place at a particular postconflict moment (an event), but rather as reflective of the workings of a very old structure of coloniality and power.

To return to gastropolitics and get a sense of how this postconflict sleight of hand can work spectacularly well, let us start with one of the more effective means of neoliberal mystification: the TED talk. In Gastón Acurio’s popular TED talk on love and cooking, delivered in New York City in 2018, he makes the seductive argument that cooking at home can change the world.¹⁹ He begins with a love story. The children of Cantonese and Italian families fall in love in the streets of the port city of Callao, Peru. Their families are against their love, so the young couple move far away to make their new home. Romance gives way to disagreement in the kitchen; soy sauce and Parmesan cheese come into conflict. Over time, however, conflict yields to creativity. Old flavors from different worlds mix in new recipes. This, Acurio tells us, is how Peruvian cuisine was born, a product of “500 years of beautiful fusion” and of romantic and harmonious encounters among diverse peoples.²⁰

For Acurio, this story—of colonial encounters reframed as tales of love, of differences giving way to not just tolerance but unity—is the story of Peru. Tellingly, he begins his TED talk by positioning himself as a product of such encounters: “I am Limeño, son of all the bloods, as you can see [gestures to his face].²¹ My mother, daughter of the coast, aristocratic and viceregal, and my father, a son of the Andes, the Incas, from Cuzco. In my home, the Andes and the coast, historically confrontational, were united thanks to love, as happened to most people from Lima, descendants of the most diverse backgrounds: Africans with Amazonians, Japanese with Andeans, Chinese with

Italians.” Here, the sexual violence of colonial encounters is presented as a story of impossible, defiant love. We see this quite explicitly in the tasting menu from spring 2018 for Astrid & Gastón, Acurio’s signature restaurant in Lima. The menu, titled “Lima Love,” tells the story of contemporary Peru, of a nation “celebrating without fear, thankful for being Limeños, children of all the bloods. Of Andeans with coastal peoples . . . of people from Spain with Africans. Impossible loves that our parents knew how to defend and flower.” The first dish on the menu is called *La cama indecente, la del amor prohibido* (The indecent bed, the one of forbidden love). In this formulation, love does not just erase violence. As we shall see, it serves as a powerful affective strategy that *enacts* violence on those bodies that don’t conform to the borders of the newly drawn nation and its authorized subjects.²²

Race and sex haunt Peru’s gastronomic revolution. The commonplace descriptions of beautiful fusion, of the love between “races” that flourishes against all odds and, importantly, produces a uniquely Peruvian cuisine, culture, and subject, is nothing more than a rearticulation of mestizaje, that contested national ideology of inclusion prevalent throughout Latin America. As Peter Wade writes, since colonial times, and especially post-independence in the first half of the nineteenth century, “mixture has been seen in most of [Latin America] as constituting the essence of the nation.”²³ Multiple scholars have written about the varying configurations, politics, and implications of mestizaje across the region, and in Peru more specifically.²⁴ What many scholars have emphasized is that the logic of mestizaje has been about state-sanctioned exclusions. Even in the poetic renderings of inclusion, like Vasconcelos’s famous idea of a “cosmic race” that upended the Atlantic consensus on White supremacy and racial purity, the project of mestizaje was nation-building homogeneity. If you were not “mixed” enough (i.e., were too Indian or Black), then you were not a proper national subject. As Ronald Stutzman aptly put it for the case of Ecuador, mestizaje was the “all-inclusive ideology of exclusion.”²⁵ In Peru, mestizaje took on even more pessimistic tones, as for many it still carried the baggage of degeneration.²⁶ Acurio explicitly addresses this, noting that his formulation of mixture and fusion contrasts with older, pejorative understandings of what it meant to be mestizo. Today, he argues, as cultural diversity is embraced by the world, so too must Peru celebrate its diversity. It is significant, though, that often this is coded as cultural and culinary difference. Even though race is mentioned (*todas las razas*), it is a refrain that in fact works to erase race and racial difference; rather, this mixture of races, again, leads to a singular Peruvian subject.

It is worth underlining something about *mestizaje* that should be obvious but is often passed over in silence: it is inextricably about sex and sexual violence. The tale of conquest, as Andrew Canessa usefully reminds us, was often told as a story of sexual adventure.²⁷ Amerigo Vespucci's fame had less to do with his cartographic skill than with his accounts of "libidinous" and "lascivious" Native women. In a famous letter in 1504, Vespucci wrote the following about the Native people whom he allegedly encountered during his "first voyage" (which historians doubt ever happened):

They do not practice matrimony among them, each man taking as many women as he likes, and when he is tired of a woman he repudiates her without either injury to himself or shame to the woman, for in this matter the woman has the same liberty as the man. They are not very jealous, but lascivious beyond measure, the women much more so than the men. I do not further refer to their contrivances for satisfying their inordinate desires, so that I may not offend against modesty. They are very prolific in bearing children, and in their pregnancy they are not excused any work whatever. The parturition is so easy, and accompanied by so little pain, that they are up and about the next day.²⁸

Vespucci's letters, riddled with exaggeration and lies, were widely circulated in Europe, and they fueled the sexual imagination of conquest. This becomes especially clear in an engraving by Theodor Galle depicting Vespucci's "discovery" of America.²⁹ Canessa describes this famous image in the following way:

European Amerigo Vespucci, erect and holding the tools of rational science (an astrolabe) and his religion finds "America" in her hammock. She is naked but full of wonder rather than fear and appears open to his advances. Europa, the female symbol of Vespucci's continent, is nowhere to be seen in this allegorical encounter; this is not a meeting of equals. Vespucci gives the new continent a feminine version of his name. Indeed the subtitle of the caption reads: "At once he called her; thenceforth she was always aroused." America's response is ambiguous as "excitam" means to rise up as well as to arouse or to excite. It is quite clear that America is doing both.³⁰

As many have noted, the tale Canessa revisits is one that shapes colonial encounters across the Americas.³¹ Colonialism meant, among many things, that Native women were sexually accessible to White men. Well into the twentieth century, *hacendados* (landowners) practiced the *derecho de pernada*, the "right" to sexually violate a Native woman on the night of her marriage. This was justified as a "civilizing mission" that would whiten populations,

what Nancy Leys Stepan calls the ideology of “constructive miscegenation.”³² Mestizaje is never far from the sexual violence of conquest and coloniality.

Chef Acurio’s framing of mestizaje, then, is not surprising. His discourse on love, on beautiful and tolerant fusion, is an updated and perhaps more politically correct version of an older (though still common) vision of Peru as a country “integrated” and “reconciled,” one that accepts “the encounter” as violent but also, and especially, “mutually beneficial” for Peruvians.³³ In a chapter titled “Columbus’s Voyage Continues,” Alejandro Miró Quesada Cisneros, an influential lawyer and journalist from an elite Peruvian family, writes that the most significant dimension of Columbus’s “discovery” was “having united new human beings, . . . who, voluntarily or involuntarily, initiated an exchange of their advantages and riches.”³⁴ He notes that when analyzing the fruits of Columbus’s “discovery” (“which turned America into a continent with a new identity and a new destiny” and is in fact “a voyage that continues”) from the perspective of five hundred years, there is no question that “its virtues surpass its defects.”³⁵

This, again, is not surprising. Many people continue to espouse this ideology, despite its obviously problematic nature. What is worth noting is that this chapter was part of *500 Years Later: The New Face of Peru*, a book published on the occasion of the quincentenary that focused on *hermandad* (brotherhood), on coming to terms with the new Peru, and on emphasizing mestizaje (especially the “mixture” of Spanish and Indigenous peoples) as a positive melding (and erasure) of differences. All the contributors to the volume are men, and the table of contents reads like a list of members of Peru’s aristocracy (or oligarchy), with last names such as Vargas Llosa, Roca Rey, and Miró Quesada. These men are an integral part of the gastropolitical complex, either as members of Apega (the Peruvian Society of Gastronomy); as editors (and owners) of *El Comercio*, Peru’s newspaper of record; or as cultural or political elites.³⁶ Bernardo Roca Rey’s contribution to the volume includes not only a discussion of his “invention” of *cocina novoandina* (or nouveau Andean cuisine) but also a now familiar refrain about Peruvian cuisine as mestizaje.³⁷ Mestizaje, for these Peruvian elites, is a beautiful and progressive force.

The amount of work this volume does to ennoble and celebrate mestizaje is perhaps one indicator that the very idea of mestizaje is a site of contention, even as it covers its tracks. As Peruvian sociologist Gonzalo Portocarrero reminds us, “the idea of mestizaje has served to obscure conflict.” As he puts it, to deny difference “has been the republican and liberal pact. But denying a fact does not make it disappear. Differences are ignored but they are also

reproduced. . . . The dominant notions of *mestizaje* have not broken free from colonialism.”³⁸ Indeed, the pages of this book call attention to the preoccupation elite White men continue to have with the “Indian problem.” For them, Columbus’s voyage continues; in other words, the Peruvian civilizational project is not complete.

Similarly, the gastronomic revolution has not broken free from coloniality. On the surface, appearances may seem progressive: chefs, state officials, and entrepreneurs emphasize both fusion and social justice. Largely due to Peru’s background of political violence and the disproportionate impact of that violence on Indigenous bodies, gastropolitics emphasizes *both* economic and political resurgence *and* discourses of social inclusion. Gastropolitical elites often underline that the signature dimension of the current gastronomic boom has been the alliances between chefs and producers (wherein chefs buy products directly from producers at fair prices), promoted by Apega and Acurio in particular, and which, they argue, offer evidence of the inclusionary and horizontal nature of this movement.³⁹ While many Indigenous producers and their families may indeed benefit from new economic opportunities, as I discuss in the first part of this book, this focus on social inclusion (the alliance with producers in particular) is intimately linked to particular gastropolitical understandings of histories of violence and indigeneity in Peru, especially two episodes of violence to which the gastronomic revolution is responding, one explicitly (the years of terror, 1980–2000) and one implicitly (the military government and reforms of General Velasco Alvarado, 1968–75). Emerging from the aftermath of the CVR’s report on the terrible years of fear and political violence, gastropolitics seeks to exorcise the ghost of Sendero and its unquestionably ghastly violence, which invited the terrifying brutality of the state. Harder to see, perhaps, is the attempt to exorcise the ghost of the revolutionary presidency of Velasco Alvarado, whose agrarian reform represented a threat to the Peruvian elite. As I argue in chapter 1, gastropolitics in many ways tries to rehabilitate the pre-Velasco order, when Indigenous peasants “knew their place” and worked the land of others, and when landed elites were seen as a source of stability and even paternalistic care.

These histories also have much to do with elite anxieties over what some have called the “Andeanization” of Lima. While the dominant gastropolitical narrative seems to be that cuisine offers a path to reconciliation, to unity in diversity, an alternative reading of this emphasis on tolerance and reconciliation is that gastropolitics responds to the infusion of Andean Indigenous migration in Lima. Eighty percent of Lima’s population of over ten million

is made up of migrants or the children of migrants.⁴⁰ There is a long history of centralism in Peru, where Lima claims to represent the nation, a claim that gained greater demographic credibility over the course of the twentieth century as waves of migrations from the rural countryside Andeanized the coastal capital. As I discuss more fully in chapters 1 and 3, gastropolitics enables a nostalgic vision of Lima, known at its founding as the “City of Kings” and remembered/imagined as emblematic of colonial grandeur. Peruvians often conflate Velasco’s rule (particularly his agrarian reform) and the war with Sendero Luminoso with the waves of Andean migration into the capital city. While the military coup that overthrew Velasco tried to undo much of his revolution, that regime was unable to stop a social transformation already underway, as Andean people not only challenged power relations in the countryside but also literally changed the urban landscape as they moved to Lima and created new informal settlements, usually called *invasiones* or invasions.⁴¹ With this rural-to-urban migration came elite fear of angry Indians that fueled upper-class anxieties over Indians as terrorists during the most recent episode of political violence. As shown in the following chapters, twenty-first-century gastropolitical elites rely not on military violence but on practices and discourses that focus on “beautifying” and “cleansing” the city. Gourmet cuisine, gentrification, and “civilizing” others are central components of this culinary project: deploying “hygiene brigades” at culinary festivals, training young men and women from working-class backgrounds to become the labor force for high-end restaurants, and refiguring Indigenous peoples as producers, as key partners in the transformation of Peru through their labor, as long as they remain pliable subjects.

Even as they attend to these historical legacies, gastropolitical framings and stories are also fixed on the future. Narratives about Peru’s unique history of fusion, the alliances between chefs and Indigenous producers, and a new generation of chefs working toward a more socially just world almost always emphasize a future of reconciliation. However, this peaceful future is only possible if tolerance is the guiding value, an idea that at its heart is far from progressive, and hardly revolutionary. As political theorist Wendy Brown has helped us understand, this is an example of the “malady of tolerance.”⁴² That is, far from a virtue, tolerance is at best a conditional acceptance of difference, and at worst it is an enabling condition for violence. In *500 Years Later*, tolerance serves to frame the question of violence in specific ways. All of the contributions in that book note that while terrorism and violence are “awful,” we should move away from the description of violence as somehow

enabled by the division between rich and poor or by the structural divisions between oppressed and dominating classes. A truly remarkable example is a chapter on violence and modernization by Fernando De Trazegnies. After noting that these binary visions of violence are inadequate, he says “There is no doubt that our ruling classes possess these vices, but so do the ‘suffering masses’ and those who claim to represent (illegitimately) the neediest classes. There is nothing angelical or diabolical in Society. Such an absurd claim would only affirm the demonic nature of the traditional ruling classes and the angelic nature of the exploited sectors. All are simply men.”⁴³ And he goes on, making arguments that resonate strongly with familiar (and current) narratives about order and civilization: “I want to advance the notion of the permanent existence of violence throughout Peruvian history that is more basic, that consists of a diversity of manifestations and cannot be reduced to just one of them: the injustice of some social groups over others is part of our basic violence, but it does not exhaust or explain it. *Beyond all of this there is a primary form of violence that consists of a general lack of discipline indispensable for living in a civilized manner.*”⁴⁴

This statement is striking for its implicit inversion of who the victims of violence are (civilized, disciplined, elite, Peruvians), if violence is enacted by those who are not living in a civilized manner (subaltern, “undisciplined” subjects). Moreover, this last point resonates with the gastropolitical emphasis, as I note in chapter 3, on teaching Indigenous producers how to “sell correctly,” how to relate to their customers appropriately, and how to beautify themselves and present themselves as clean and healthy. Hygiene, race, and civilization have been tightly linked in the Americas for centuries. This has, of course, also been the case in Europe, as the pioneering work of Norbert Elias reveals on the crucial role the practice and pedagogy of manners and cleanliness played in the continent’s “civilizing process.”⁴⁵ However, looking forward, gastropolitical elites understand that this is a new moment, that they can harness the power of “diversity” to entice global capital to Peru and reorganize social hierarchies in ways that are in line with new modes of recognition that in fact reassert colonial domination.

The Generation with Cause does not have the same kind of elite composition or tone. Yet it retains a family resemblance to earlier calls for mestizaje and tolerance. Take the opening lines of its social manifesto, a document that speaks to the urgent problems of hunger and climate change (among others) and to the role of young chefs in solving these social issues: “Causa, emblematic Peruvian dish. A happy encounter between potatoes and chilis of