John Soluri analiza la caza de pieles de lobos marinos en el litoral patagónico a fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX. Soluri discute los variados intereses de los indígenas y los cazadores de origen europeo en estos animales patagónicos, así como los mercados internacionales y las políticas de conservación. Sin adjudicarles agencia a los lobos marinos, Soluri destaca la dificultad en obtener datos sobre su comportamiento particular durante los eventos de caza y la posibilidad de que estos mamíferos marinos activamente evitan a los cazadores. Regina Horta Duarte analiza la protección científica de los pájaros en Brasil en relación al proceso de construcción de identidad nacional. A principios del siglo XX, en el contexto de políticas de mercado de exportación de plumas de pájaros exóticos, el medioambiente brasileño sufrió un gran deterioro que fue denunciado por movimientos conservacionistas y eventualmente atenuado por nuevas legislaciones. Sin embargo, el clima político progresista del gobierno contrastaba con la realidad de las prácticas rurales en el interior. De manera muy articulada, Lauren Derby analiza los usos del chivo en referencia al dictador dominicano Rafael Trujillo. Al consumir chivo durante las fiestas del aniversario de la caída de Trujillo, los dominicanos ritualmente ingirieron al “animal” causante de tanta tragedias y humillaciones nacionales, y de esta manera se restauró el nuevo poder político. En la conclusión, Neil Whitehead analiza, entre otros temas, las cosmovisiones de muchos grupos indígenas para quienes la división naturaleza y cultura no puede ser asumida. Whitehead también indaga sobre la categoría ‘animal’ y sobre lo que esta realmente significa.

En suma, Centering Animals in Latin American History constituye un aporte significativo para el análisis de las interacciones entre animales humanos y no humanos. Los ensayos serán de sumo interés no solo para historiadores sino también para antropólogos y otros investigadores interesados en estudios culturales, socioambientales, políticos, epistemológico y éticos. El volumen detalla problemas locales y al mismo tiempo discute conexiones e implicaciones más amplias sobre cómo los humanos han conceptualizado, utilizado y manipulado animales, que serán de sumo interés también para investigadores que trabajan fuera de América Latina.

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In 1961, when she was only 25 years old, Margaret Randall left New York City, where she was enthralled by the emerging politics of Fair Play for Cuba,
and relocated to Mexico City. Mexico, she later wrote in her memoir, *To Change the World: My Years in Cuba* (2009), “seemed a welcoming venue” (page 14). Shortly thereafter, she co-founded with Sergio Mondragón (whom she would marry and thereby adopt Mexican citizenship) what became one of the era’s seminal venues for vanguard literary expression, *El Corno Emplumado/The Plumed Horn*. *El Corno* was a bilingual, quarterly publication that soon emerged as a key cultural nexus linking the Americas in solidarity with Cuba and a necessary forum to work through the humanist terrain of the revolutionary sixties.

Following the massacre at Tlatelolco, the Mexican government shut down *El Corno* (which had come out in support of the students) and sent threatening overtures to Randall. Fearing for her safety and especially that of her children, she took refuge in Cuba, a place that by 1968 had transcended its status as an island nation; it was a state of mind. Randall spent the next 11 years in Cuba, raising a family (she has four children), immersing herself in the country’s revolutionary politics, and further pursuing her own literary and artistic yearnings. In late 1980, she left Cuba for revolutionary Nicaragua, but her time there was short. “I wanted my language, my culture, a reconnection to my earliest memories,” she later wrote in *To Change the World* (page 241). In the midst of the Reagan-led counterrevolution at home, she successfully fought to regain her U.S. citizenship and return to the United States. *Che on My Mind* is Randall’s most recent effort to come to terms with the era and her place in it. “I was a part of that world,” she writes poignantly, “and it remains a part of me” (page 1).

Part biography, part memoir, and part philosophical reflection on the relationship between means and ends in political activism, *Che on My Mind* is a slim yet refreshingly self-reflective (and beautifully assembled) collection of stories, analysis, and memoir. Her focus on Che—the man, not the myth—allows Randall to critically reexamine her own moral compass, an activist’s ethic to which she has sought to hold true through the 1960s and into the present. As she notes early on, “[T]here is no single name that more profoundly exemplifies our identity, our dreams, the truths we hold to be self-evident, and the cause for which we struggle” (page 13). Che “haunts” her, she reveals, and it is the knotty, often competing tropes of the “violent” yet “erotic” Che that Randall seeks to come to terms with, both personally and historically.

On one hand, Randall deeply admires Che, a man “who combined deep commitment with the psychic, emotional, and physical components of the struggle for justice” (page 55). Yet at the same time, she struggles to reconcile her emergent identity as a feminist with Che’s warrior ethos. At the heart of this struggle is the weighty epistemological question of whether violence was—and is—a legitimate means to pursue justice. Once a fervent believer in the necessity (and moral righteousness) of armed struggle, she has found that in growing
older, “my understanding of violence deepens” (page 99). Purification through revolutionary violence, a hallmark of the Global Sixties, belongs to another era; “I no longer consider any sort of violence easily defensible” (page 100), she concludes.

Randall struggles with these essential contradictions while seeking to reclaim Che “the man” from pop (and political) culture mythologizing, and thus to return him to “his historical moment and context” (page 108). Although she never met Che, she feels a soul mate-like connection with him. And therein lies the root of her efforts to de-mythologize him and come to terms with her own emotional ties to the period. For instance, she finds in Che’s use of a “spiral shell” metaphor in one of his letters to his second wife, Aleida, evidence of his own latent, or at least potential, feminism. At another point, she notes that Che “was surrounded by strong women” and that, had he lived, he likely would have “acquired some understanding of feminism’s approach to power” (page 113). She also notes that Che was a consummate autodidact, restless in his quest for knowledge and resolutely, to the point at times of arrogance, independent in thought. Yet ultimately, it was Che’s “refusal to limit himself to an accident of birth” (page 15) that most inspires the connection Randall feels with him. For Randall, too, gave up her place of origin to join the revolution.

Although much of the factual information that Randall explores will be familiar to those who have read any of the numerous biographies on Che, her distillation of that vast repertoire is nevertheless unique. Each of sixteen “chapters” amounts to a vignette, biographical (e.g., “Che and Fidel”), thematic (e.g., “Exercising Power, Exercising Solidarity”), or philosophical (e.g., “The Question without an Answer”). Through these she reexamines certain age-old questions, such as why Che was seemingly abandoned by Fidel in Bolivia, and opens up new pathways, notably her beautifully written chapter on Che and Haydée Santamaría. Some of these chapters are only a few pages long. Each opens with a striking photograph, certain of which are widely known but others that were taken by Randall herself. It is a notably thin volume, yet meant to be read—I would think—not in a single sitting but slowly, with ample time to digest and ponder the interweaving of personal history with meditations on an era that is simultaneously growing distant and historical, yet whose connections, via the continued reproduction of Che iconography and the longevity of the Cuban revolution itself, now more place than state of mind, remain ever present.

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