

of America. Together they aim to speak “from the heart, not from the head,” offering the reader “a part of our spiritual autobiography” (viii) drawn from encounters with the border’s present inhabitants and the most tragic victims of current immigration and economic policy.

The book begins with an introduction by Presbyterian clergyman Mark Smith, who situates the present crisis in a broader historical context that examines the multinational history of demographic change and social and economic policies that have created, populated, militarized, industrialized, and criminalized the border since its 19th-century origins. This succinct and effective primer (including the creation of the US Border Patrol in the 1920s and the impact of NAFTA in the 1990s) offers important context for the testimonials that appear in the book’s main section. Each testimony aims to move the reader beyond the partisan and polemical tone that often frames the immigration crisis by drawing on each minister’s daily struggles to both reconcile political differences and meet the essential demands of human dignity for all people. Reminding readers of their common identity with the border’s victims as fellow travelers, the authors engage and articulate a common prophetic message that speaks both from and to their respective traditions. This volume is essential reading for religious congregations and communities called to reflect on and engage the present crisis.

Justin D. Poché  
College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA

*Fleshing the Spirit: Spirituality and Activism in Chicana, Latina, and Indigenous Women’s Lives.* Edited by Elisa Facio and Irene Lara. Tucson: University of Arizona, 2014. Pp. xi + 272. \$29.95.

As its title indicates, the volume weaves together the concepts of spirit(s), Spirit(s), spirituality, healing, and social activism. The book’s editors define spirituality as “a conscious, self-reflecting way of life and a way of relating to others, to ourselves and to ‘s/Spirit’” (4). In this way, the authors describe the spiritual journeys of Chicana, Latina, and indigenous women who struggled against oppressive social and religious systems to find wholeness and empowerment in indigenous and feminine images of the divine, and to continue to resist injustice.

The book is divided into four sections in the tradition of Native American spirituality associated with “the Four Directions—East, West, North, and South”—emphasizing the interconnectedness among all beings as a central component of spiritual activism (13). Part I proposes an indigenous feminist spiritual anthropology and practices that can heal the mind–body split and decolonize one’s sense of self from oppressive systems. La Virgen de Guadalupe is experienced as “the feminine energy of Tonantzin” (67). Tonantzin/Guadalupe is “a spiritual figure symbolizing the humanity and subjectivity of indigenous people and the need to work towards social justice” (53). Part II presents Tonantzin/Guadalupe, among Cihuacoatl and Tlazolteotl, as “Mother, the Mother Earth promoting the ongoing process of renewal, transformation, and the remaking

of a fluid yet grounded and whole identity” (75). The subsequent two sections provide critical reflections on finding “center spaces that are fluid” and transformative (*Neplanta*) (170), and the realization that “activism springs directly from spiritual practices” (212).

To reclaim an indigenous spirituality, the authors employ the term “Spirit(s)” in a syncretic and multivalent way to describe empowering female energies that suggest and manifest “an immanent ‘God’ or ‘Creator’ or ‘Life’” (15). Tonantzin/Guadalupe is experienced again and again as life-giving, life-nourishing, life-defending, liberating, and regenerating energy. Although the contributors do not use these terms, it becomes evident throughout the book that Tonantzin/Guadalupe functions pneumatologically. The volume shows the need for more constructive theological efforts that dive deeper into indigenous spiritualities and feminine images of the divine. Using Alicia Encino Litschi’s words, we might say that among indigenous peoples there is a “voracious appetite for feminist texts about the feminine divine” (147).

*Cecilia Titizano*  
*Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley*