at the Templo Mayor of Tenochtitlan well illustrate the power of these intensively contextual and interdisciplinary approaches. Developing a novel ethnographic perspective, Dehouve (chapter 14) explores the manner in which contemporary Tlapanecs ritually link penitential complexes to fire, and specifically the ceremonies of new fire, providing insight into the previously unexplored penitential aspect of the Aztec “new fire” ritual.

Fire and smoke are largely ephemeral, yet crucial, in rituals relating the Maya to one another and to the godly other. The exquisitely detailed and richly informed scholarship seen in this volume provides a transformative model for their interdisciplinary study. While the records of the ancient Maya are especially amenable to studying the embodiment of fire and smoke, the relevance of the volume extends across many other archaeological and historical contexts. Our knowledge of Maya temporality, humanity, and godliness is thus enriched by material residues of the smoke and flames that transformed their bodies across millennia.

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**Historical and Archaeological Perspectives on the Itzas of Petén, Guatemala.**

This volume represents the culmination of long-term research conducted by Prudence and Don Rice on the Postclassic period of the Central Petén Lakes region in the southern Maya lowlands. Although it is a lengthy encyclopedic treatise, there are plenty of rewards for readers as the volume collects all knowledge about the famed Petén Itzas, the rulers of the last Maya kingdom conquered by the Spanish in 1697. The origin of this group is one of the thorniest problems in Maya archaeology. As described below, the Petén Itza issue overlaps with the Classic Maya collapse, and the book’s trajectory begins in the Epiclassic (700–900/1050 CE).

The book is divided into six parts, with multiple chapters in each. Part I consists of three chapters that introduce cultural and environmental perspectives on the Petén Itzas. P. Rice and D. Rice’s chapter 1 provides a synopsis of the book. Hofling’s chapter 2 anchors the research in linguistics. Grouped together with Mopan and Lacandon, Itzaj is a southern Yukatekan language, which branched off from its northern sibling ca. 1250. Brenner’s chapter 3 reviews data from the various ecological projects to provide a long-term overview of the environment of and human impacts on this region.

Part II centers on the Epiclassic Itzas and the evidence of their origins, migrations, and archaeology from the troubled times when the southern Maya lowlands were undergoing collapse and transformation. Following a theoretical chapter on migration,
identities, factionalism, and the spatiality of these processes, Prudence Rice argues that the Itzas were originally from Petén, then migrated north, where one faction probably established Chichen Itza, and at some point in the Postclassic, possibly when Chichen collapsed, another faction migrated back south and reestablished itself in the Lake Petén Itza basin. This argument represents a developing consensus among Mayanists, but what is it based on? In part, it is based on new epigraphic research, such as Erik Boot’s work (Continuity and Change in Text and Image at Chichén Itzá, Yucatán, Mexico, Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2005), revealing that the earliest references to Itza’ and Kan/Chan Ek’ are found in the Petén region. In part, it is also based on the processes of the Classic Maya collapse: if the collapse involved depopulation, where did the people go? Millions could not have died, and hence, they must have migrated. Finally, the argument is based on the ethnohistorical documents from northern Yucatan, in particular the books of the Chilam Balam. These documents speak of the Itzas of northern Yucatan, as outsiders arriving from their homeland of Chak’an Putun (“savanna of the Putuns”), generally understood as the southeastern Gulf Coast. However, Rice asserts that most Postclassic Maya groups in Yucatan and in the Maya highlands claim their origins from this region. Rather than an actual place, she suggests that it is a mythological place of creation, a tollan.

Shifting to the later period of the Postclassic, part III reviews the Spanish contacts with and sequential visits to the Petén Itza from Cortes’s 1525 entrada to Ursúa’s 1697 military conquest. This part ends with a close look at Father Avendaño’s map of Lake Petén Itza and surrounding regions, placed within the larger tradition of European mapmakers during the colonial and later periods.

Part IV has three chapters on the archaeology of the Late Postclassic and contact period Petén Itza residing in Nojpeten/Tayza/modern Flores, Tayasal Peninsula, Ixlú, Nixtun-Ch’ich’, and Quezil Island. Chapter 11 details the pottery; chapter 12, the architecture; and chapter 13, the lithics (in particular, small projectile points). Distinctions in these three sets of material culture define the two major factions in the Petén Itza kingdom: the Itzas, who controlled the western lakes, and the Kowojs, who controlled the eastern lakes. For example, the Kowoj faction is identified by the Clemencia Cream Paste ware, while the Itza faction is identified by the Snail Inclusion Paste ware. Kowoj public architecture centers on the temple assemblage. In contrast, Itza architecture emphasizes the basic ceremonial group, which lacks a high temple. Lithic differences are also apparent among the Itzas and Kowojs and even between the Chakan Itzas, on the western side of Lake Peten Itza, and the Itzas of the islands and Tayasal.

In the four chapters of part V, Prudence Rice captures the history of the capital city of the Petén Itza, Nojpeten/Tayza or modern Flores, starting in the present and moving back to the first Spanish glimpses of the city, and then to the archaeology of the city. The chapter on the archaeology of Flores is especially important because she brings together disparate data from many projects, most purely rescue operations dictated by electrical or water projects. Even though Nojpeten was totally destroyed by the Spanish conquest and later construction, Rice is able to provide some preliminary conclusions.
For example, the southern part of the city may have been occupied by wealthier households, including Ajaw Kan Ek’s palace. Pottery making and butchering may have occurred in the northern sections of the island. The city was dominated by a radial main temple or castillo similar in plan to, but much smaller than, the main temples at Chich’en Itza and Mayapán. The final chapter is devoted to the styles and motifs of the decorated pottery of the Central Petén Lakes region, where the distinction between the Itzas and Kowoj is again made evident in that the Itzas preferred a banded decorative style, while the Kowoj developed a distributive (or allover) style.

The volume concludes with a chapter in part VI summarizing the main thrust of the book, that the Itza as an ethnie took form in the troubled times of the Epiclassic in Petén, then migrated north, and later returned to the Central Petén Lakes. The Itza ethnie was not monolithic, but factionalized into at least two major groups, the Itza and the Kowoj. Both of these groups can now be recognized archaeologically through their material signatures. I cannot overstate the important contributions made by this volume based on almost five decades of investigations carried out by the authors. Before the 1990s, the Petén Itzas were a poorly known group dominating the Central Petén Lakes region. Now, we can speak about factionalism, ethnies/identities, migrations, and even what Nojpeten/Tayza looked like.

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In The Oxford Handbook of the Incas, Alconini and Covey bring together perspectives from archaeologists, art historians, and historians to present current understandings of the Inca Empire and its long-term legacy. The volume is divided into eight sections, each with a capstone chapter by the editors. The first six parts are devoted to the Inca era or preceding developments. The last two examine the colonial transition and the roles current concepts about the Inca play in recent sociopolitics. Unfortunately, I cannot review all the chapters, but I highlight the novel information presented in the volume, especially the importance of ritual and mytho-history as an imperial strategy.

The Handbook does not present a single vision of the Inca polity. Some downplay the extent of Inca control over resistant subaltern communities, while most describe dramatic transformations and major impacts on subjects and how these varied depending on the province, the imperial institutions brought to bear, or the degree of local cooperation. The latter perspective is accompanied by multiple lines of archaeological