Chapters 7 and 8 outline the tangible and conceptual resources deployed by those who sought power at Roble phase Sites PVN 144, PVN 306, and Naco. The networks created in part through the strategic use of those assets linked contemporaries of different political ranks. Preeminence is greatly strengthened, however, if power differences are rooted in the past (Alcock 2000; Bloch 1977a, 1977b; Casey 1987; Hendon 2000; Schank and Abelson 1995). Insofar as rulers can fashion credible narratives linking their present prerogatives to ancient precedents, they can clothe dynamic and contingent power relations within timeless schemes that encourage acceptance of that which cannot be changed. Magnates therefore generally contend for control over social memory, the widely accepted recollection of earlier events, and the perceived relevance of those events for present circumstances (Van Dyke and Alcock 2003: 2). Such efforts take many forms. In some cases the current significance of real or imagined past actions and personages may be stressed (Casey 1987: 206; DeMarrais, Castillo, and Earle 1996; Huyssen 2003: 101; Meskell 2003; Schank and Abelson 1995). Monuments may therefore be raised to commemorate a ruler’s ancestors, or specific locales may be singled out for special treatment. In this way, physically salient constructions help “anchor the past in the
present” (Meskell 2003: 36). Alternatively, inconvenient “truths” may be purposefully forgotten by hiding signs of them from general view. Thus memorials to earlier leaders can be buried and sites tied up with specific memories reinterpreted or ignored (Casey 1987: 186–189; Joyce 2003: 116–120; Schreiber 2005: 250–251; Van Dyke and Alcock 2003: 3).

Would-be leaders, therefore, must not only forge ties with those with whom they live but also create believable connections with antecedents who populate a remembered past (Beaudry, Cook, and Mrozowski 1991; Casey 1987: 216–230). Successful co-optation of power requires, in other words, that elites place themselves at the nexus of webs that extend out horizontally in the present and back, vertically, into history. Failure to accomplish these twin goals weakens leaders’ claims to power and their ability to transmit those privileges into the future.

REACHING INTO THE PAST THROUGH ARCHITECTURE

The clearest sign that Site PVN 306’s rulers made direct claims on the past is evidenced by their preservation of architecture associated with what had been a Terminal Classic center located 3 m east of the eastern principal plaza (EPP) (see also Rice 2009 for a comparable example from the Maya lowlands). The focal point of the earlier occupation is Str. 306-105 (see figure 3.2). This stone-faced platform stood 1.9 m high during its final construction stage, measured 12.34 m north-south, and supported an extensive earthen-floored summit that covered 7.2 m north-south (the building’s east-west dimensions were not revealed). Structure 306-105 is near the exact center of a group of twenty-one surface-visible structures that together cover 7,300 m². Plazas are not obvious within most of this densely nucleated cluster; the only two such patios pivot on Str. 306-105, extending east and south of that building. Excavations in this portion of the settlement uncovered all or most of six edifices, including Str. 306-105. Four of these buildings are low platforms 0.23–0.66 m high, and one is a surface-level construction whose perimeter was defined by substantial stone foundations. All five of these edifices apparently served as residences, whereas Str. 306-105’s considerable size and lack of such built-in furniture as benches in its final version indicate that it was a focal point for community gatherings and possibly worship.

A second nucleus of Terminal Classic occupation lies 260 m west of the eastern cluster. Here, four substantial platforms (Strs. 306-1/4) bound a patio on all sides. Limited excavations on Strs. 306-1 and 306-4 revealed that they were stone-faced, earth-filled platforms standing 0.5–0.74 m high. Based on their forms and associated artifacts, these edifices were likely residences. Structure 306-54, a 0.12-m-high stone-faced terrace situated 36 m southwest
and downslope from this plaza group, was apparently raised to slow erosion below the patio’s southwest flank.

It is not clear what, if any, Terminal Classic construction existed between these two foci. An extensive, minimally 0.46-m-thick midden deposit dating to this interval was encountered beneath Str. 306-128 on the east edge of the EPP. This and scattered finds of diagnostic Terminal Classic remains in tests dug into the EPP indicate that trash relating to the period spread over a considerable area west of the eastern architectural nucleus. Settlement was not apparently continuous, however, between the east and west structure aggregates.

Site PVN 306’s Terminal Classic occupation was substantial. The presence of the monumental Str. 306-105 here sets it apart from most of the relatively small settlements dating to this span. Instead, Terminal Classic Site PVN 306 was among thirteen contemporary settlements that contained 1–13 platforms standing at least 1.5 m tall (figure 9.1). These sizable constructions imply that the sites in question were foci of political power; at least some of their residents could command the labor to raise monumental platforms (Schortman and Urban 2004b). Site PVN 306 falls toward the small end of that range, suggesting that its leaders were less powerful than some of their contemporaries in the Naco valley.

There are several striking features about the way Site PVN 306’s Terminal Classic constructions were treated during the Roble phase. First, they were left standing throughout the late prehistoric occupation of the center. There is little evidence that stones were recycled from these earlier edifices into their successors’ facades and foundations. In fact, all of the investigated buildings, save Str. 306-105, were very well preserved when excavated; Str. 306-105 had been heavily looted in recent times. Site PVN 306’s late prehistoric inhabitants, therefore, did not take advantage of the readily available supplies of building materials presented by the Terminal Classic edifices but left them largely untouched, albeit in ruined states.

Second, there are only slight hints that any of the studied buildings were used during the Roble phase. Artifacts dating to this span were rarely identified in assemblages associated with or overlying Terminal Classic architecture. This absence is all the more striking given the EPP’s proximity to ruins of the earlier occupation; a scant 3 m separates Strs. 306-123 and 306-121, which were built roughly 400 years apart. Not only were Roble phase occupants of the settlement refraining from robbing stones associated with earlier edifices, they were also not jettisoning their trash onto these buildings.

Third, seven burials were found on and around three structures dating to the Terminal Classic in the eastern cluster. The locations of these interments, resting above the bases of platform facings, strongly indicate that they were introduced well after the buildings were abandoned. Unfortunately, none of
these burials included any temporally diagnostic grave goods; nor were clear pit lines associated with them. Their high stratigraphic positions in relation to Terminal Classic architecture, however, point to interment having taken place well after the buildings were abandoned and earth had begun to accumulate around them. Given the absence of clear markers relating the remains to the post-Conquest period, these individuals were very likely buried during the Roble phase. The last prehistoric denizens of the settlement, therefore, apparently treated at least parts of the Terminal Classic settlement as a necropolis. There were no signs of late burials in the western patio group.
Finally, the very close juxtaposition of the EPP and the largest concentration of Terminal Classic architecture at Site PVN 306 is striking. Surface evidence and excavations elsewhere at the center indicate that Site PVN 306’s main plazas could have been erected on many other portions of this relatively flat terrace. Location of the EPP directly adjoining Str. 306-105 and its surrounding aggregate was therefore not dictated by any obvious practical necessity. Rather, there was something about the eastern Terminal Classic architectural cluster that attracted the premier Roble phase household to build next to it.

A similar situation may also pertain at Site PVN 144. Here, the Terminal Classic remains are much more substantial, represented by the six monumental constructions and twenty-two smaller platforms that comprise Site PVN 128, 0.25 km to the northeast (Schortman and Urban 2004b; figures 9.1, 9.2). The latter settlement was one of the largest Terminal Classic centers in the Naco valley as measured by the sizes and numbers of its component buildings. Excavations conducted at Site PVN 128 uncovered 936 m² in the course of clearing fourteen buildings, three of which were sizable platforms 1.4–2.6 m high (Schortman and Urban 2004b). These investigations revealed that, like Site PVN 306’s eastern cluster, Site PVN 128 was a focal point for hierarchically organized networks centered on a cadre of elite residents at the settlement (Schortman and Urban 2004b). Based on differences in the scale and number of their constructions, Site PVN 128’s rulers apparently exercised more power, possibly over a larger population, than did their contemporaries at Site PVN 306.

These differences aside, the Terminal Classic buildings at Sites PVN 128 and PVN 306 were treated in much the same ways. Specifically, platforms at the former settlement evinced little evidence of damage from ancient stone robbing. They were apparently left relatively untouched until recent times, when looting and road construction took their toll on the edifices. Further, despite the short distance separating Sites PVN 128 and PVN 144, very little Roble phase material is found on or around the earlier buildings. Unlike the case at Site PVN 306, however, there were no late burials associated with Site PVN 128’s Terminal Classic constructions. Whatever connections might have been made between Site PVN 144’s occupants and the ruins lying 250 m away, they did not apparently involve treating the latter as final resting places for the former.

Naco’s architectural core was also situated near major construction dating to the Terminal Classic. The extensive modifications made to Naco and its environs by colonial and later occupation stretching into the present make it difficult to ascertain the nature and scale of architecture here dating to any prehistoric span. At least one center composed of seven edifices up to 2.5 m
tall and grouped around two plazas, however, lies on the west border of the Roble phase center and seems to have survived the last prehistoric centuries intact (Site PVN 99; figure 9.1). Limited test excavations on two of the monumental platforms at Site PVN 99, however, revealed no burials dating to any span.
Such juxtapositions between late and earlier political centers could, of course, be fortuitous. The physical criteria that must have been met to support moderately large settlements in both the Terminal Classic and the Roble phase were much the same, for example easy access to flat, fertile land and a year-round supply of water. It is not surprising, therefore, that populations continued to cluster in the same spots throughout the Naco valley’s long prehistory; in fact, evidence of occupation at Sites PVN 306, PVN 128, PVN 99, and Naco reaches well back into the Preclassic and continues without apparent break through at least the Terminal Classic. What is surprising is that later occupants did not directly reoccupy or do noticeable damage to structures raised by their predecessors. It is as though Terminal Classic edifices were preserved, unmodified, as monuments to a past deemed important by at least some Late Postclassic population segments. How widespread this reverence was among the occupants of Sites PVN 306, PVN 144, and Naco is not clear. Elites very likely numbered themselves among those who respected their predecessors, as they would have had the power to either raze earlier buildings or restrain their followers from pillaging these ruins.

It is also noteworthy that this apparent celebration of the past was highly selective. Roble phase people consciously chose to erect their centers near certain, but not all, sizable Terminal Classic settlements. They apparently avoided the largest of the earlier centers, La Sierra, which had been the valley’s capital during the Late Classic and remained a major political and population center into the Terminal Classic (Schortman and Urban 2004b). Linkages were made between specific sets of Roble phase magnates and what was recalled about particular Terminal Classic political foci and, presumably, their leaders.

The lines of evidence outlined here imply that Terminal Classic constructions at Sites PVN 306, PVN 144, and possibly Naco were held in some regard by these settlements’ late prehistoric inhabitants. At the very least, they did not pillage them or treat the buildings as trash receptacles. In fact, the ruined edifices of this earlier period were sufficiently important that Roble phase centers were raised near but not over large-scale Terminal Classic platforms. This relationship is clearest at Site PVN 306, where the preeminent household established its residences and seat of power adjoining a concentration of Terminal Classic buildings. The burial of some members of the Site PVN 306’s Roble phase population around Terminal Classic platforms provides even stronger evidence that connections between the past and the present were explicitly drawn. The same direct linkages to antecedent events and personages were made less explicitly, or at least not in quite the same ways, at Site PVN 144 and Naco. Still, in all cases the decision to raise Roble phase political capitals near prominent monuments to Terminal Classic leadership and to preserve those expressions of power intact strongly implies that late prehistoric elites were
drawing their predecessors into a network focused on themselves. We are not certain how this connection was imagined by rulers and ruled. The fact that it existed and was important to substantiate the former’s claims to preeminence in the fourteenth through early sixteenth centuries seems clear, however.

**REACHING INTO THE PAST WITH STYLE**

Analysis of 14,018 Naco Viejo Ceramic Complex pottery sherds from Sites PVN 306 and PVN 144 revealed an assemblage marked by considerable cultural continuity with the basin’s ceramic tradition reaching back into the Middle Preclassic. Changes in pottery forms and designs, as well as in other categories of material culture, certainly occurred, but the shifts do not constitute dramatic disjunctions. Instead, the sequence is characterized by a gradual unfolding of stylistic, formal, and technological themes likely reflecting stable populations and evolving cultural understandings and practices. The most dramatic shifts in ceramic decoration and form are represented by the red-on-white–painted bichromes discussed in chapters 1 and 8. Even in this case, however, designs of clear foreign inspiration were synthesized with locally derived motifs to create symbols that couched foreign concepts in familiar terms. This incorporation of exotic motifs within a local decorative repertoire was fairly common in the Naco valley ceramic sequence. The red-on-white–painted bichromes, therefore, do not necessarily constitute a disjunction in local populations or in basic principles of pottery decoration but instead are part of a venerable tradition of design syncretism within the Naco valley (Wonderley 1986).

What is striking about the Naco valley’s Roble phase ceramics are the assemblage’s relative simplicity and its harkening back to surface treatments that had not been common in the basin since the Late Preclassic. Red slipping, a prevalent form of decoration during the Middle and Late Preclassic, had all but disappeared during the Classic period but was once again frequently attested to in Roble phase collections (Urban 1993a). A comparable shift is recorded in the Maya lowlands, where red slipping follows a similar temporal trajectory (Masson 2001; Rice 1983). Vertical-neck jars with direct rims that had been relatively common during the Preclassic also underwent a resurgence in the Late Postclassic. This form is exceedingly rare in Classic period Naco valley assemblages, where jars tend to have either flaring necks or vertical necks with pronounced everted rims. Restricted orifice jars (tecomates) are relatively common in Preclassic Naco deposits but do not reappear in later collections. Somewhat smaller bowls with in-curving walls resemble these tecomates and do constitute a significant proportion of Roble phase forms in several taxa. Once again, such neckless forms characterized by restricted orifices are rarely attested to in Classic period assemblages.
This is not to say that Roble phase ceramics are indistinguishable from their Late Preclassic counterparts. Decorative treatments such as brushing and red painting on white-slipped surfaces are distinctive of pottery vessels made in the basin during the last two prehistoric centuries. In addition, such appendages as hollow supports in the form of bird feet or heads are diagnostic of the Roble phase. Nevertheless, the similarities between Preclassic and Roble phase ceramics are remarkable, especially given the more than 1,000 years separating the two periods. The significance of these commonalities to those who made and used the vessels is unclear. It is hard to imagine that Roble phase potters recalled traditions dating back to before AD 200 and consciously revived them. Such attributes as red slipping may have been adopted from lowland Maya populations involved in their own program of reviving Late Preclassic decorative modes (Masson 2000b: 44–45, 47; 2001; Rice 1983). If so, what seems to have been a reversion to earlier decorative attributes was merely the adoption of treatments from neighboring populations, with similarities to earlier Naco valley treatments simply fortuitous. Such an explanation still begs the question of why these innovations would have been so readily and widely accepted. Whether autochthonously developed or borrowed from afar, the widespread use of such attributes as red slips implies that they resonated positively with all segments of the Naco valley’s Roble phase population. This resonance was almost certainly rooted in memories associated with certain ceramic designs. It may be, however, that the primary factors motivating changes in ceramic forms and treatments had less to do with what was recalled fondly concerning Preclassic pottery and more to do with negative associations linked to Classic period ceramic designs and treatments.

On a general level, it seems that the Naco valley’s Roble phase inhabitants were eschewing certain prominent ceramic modes associated with the Late and Terminal Classic. Specifically, orange slipping of open bowls, the painting of those vessels in red and red-and-black designs, and the fashioning of large jars whose shoulders and vertical necks were adorned with red-painted designs of avian and geometric forms are characteristic of the earlier periods but completely absent from the Roble phase ceramic repertoire (Urban 1993a). We are confronted, therefore, with a seeming contradiction. On the one hand, prominent members of Roble phase populations in the Naco valley were associating themselves with the remains of Terminal Classic political leaders. At the same time, however, any such connections were actively denied in the ceramic containers used by all of the basin’s late prehistoric occupants. The distinctive symbols painted on jars and bowls by those who lived in Terminal Classic polities were replaced by a novel set of images that, while drawing inspiration from past examples, still diverged from their predecessors in form and manner of execution. This disconnection in the way architecture and ceramics dating to
the Terminal Classic were treated strongly indicates that the views of the past entertained by Roble phase peoples in the Naco valley were conflicted.

What these conflicts might have entailed depends on what the symbols emblazoned on Late and Terminal Classic vessels meant to the basin’s Roble phase denizens. We have argued elsewhere that during the Late Classic, one particularly salient component of that earlier design repertoire, the bird, was closely linked with a hierarchically structured network that tied together all residents of the valley and was focused on elites who ruled from the site of La Sierra (Schortman, Urban, and Ausec 2001). During the succeeding Terminal Classic, the same bird continues to appear on pottery as well as, much more rarely, in stone sculpture. The Late Classic was a period of locally unprecedented political centralization in which those who resided in La Sierra’s site core concentrated power over populations within and immediately outside the valley in their own hands. During the Terminal Classic, power fragmented. While La Sierra remained an important political and population center, its magnates now shared the stage with numerous elites who could also commission large-scale constructions. The occupants of Sites PVN 99, PVN 128, and PVN 306 were among those whose usurpation of power contributed to the decentralization of the Late Classic La Sierra realm. The continued importance of the same avian imagery during these political transformations implies that the significance attributed to this motif changed. The bird may have originally symbolized a unified domain and the elites who ruled it. As this imagery survived the balkanization of that polity, new power holders likely strove to preserve some sense of valley-wide unity, even if it was no longer focused on a specific ruling house.

However these relations may have played out, it is clear that increasing diversity and elaboration of ceramic designs in the Late and Terminal Classic Naco valley correlated closely with major political shifts (see also Masson 2001: 161–162). Significant transformations within network structures were involved in these changes, but throughout the seventh through tenth centuries, ceramic designs were implicated in the creation of hierarchically organized webs that encompassed the entire basin and its environs. By the eleventh century, clear signs of such hierarchical formations had disappeared from the Naco valley; monumental constructions were not erected during the Early Postclassic, nor is there any evidence of population nucleation. The Early Postclassic pottery assemblage underwent dramatic simplification; its vessels were virtually undecorated, although there is strong continuity in forms (Urban 1993a). As hierarchical nets were reestablished in the Roble phase, older designs were not resurrected to express inequality. Something about the messages conveyed through Late and Terminal Classic symbols emblazoned on ceramics was no longer considered appropriate. As noted in chapter 8, references were still made
to birds in the Nolasco/La Victoria Bichromes, but the form of the bird had changed, as had its location on the outside of bowls and as supports for those containers. These oblique references to avian images may have safely recalled links to past concepts without conjuring up meanings tied to specific Late and Terminal Classic rulers or forms of governance.

The shift to earlier forms of pottery decoration, therefore, might not represent a conscious evocation of clearly remembered Late Preclassic lifestyles and organizational forms. It may instead express a disavowal of political concepts and arrangements explicitly embodied in Late and Terminal Classic ceramic designs. As Roble phase rulers refashioned a polity-wide identity (see chapter 8), they cautiously revived avian imagery but transformed it sufficiently so as to recall a general sense of past affiliations shorn of their associations with older ruling houses. Distinctive vessel forms, such as the high vertical-necked jars with everted rims, that had been canvases for so many Late and Terminal Classic design displays, along with other motifs tied to the earlier bird images, were dropped from the Roble phase repertoire. They may have been too closely associated with the political messages conveyed in avian form to survive in the new contexts. The decision to revert to red slipping as the primary means of decoration could therefore simply reflect a desire to avoid any overt reference to symbols that evoked memories of particular forms of hierarchy and power. The similarity between Roble phase and Preclassic assemblages would, in this view, result from an accidental convergence of approaches to vessel treatments based largely on the limited array of materials available in the valley for fashioning and decorating pottery containers.

The changes in ceramic assemblages outlined here are matched by comparable shifts in most aspects of material culture. Mold-made, fired clay whistles, figurines, and ocarinas that assumed a variety of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic forms were commonplace throughout the Naco valley during the Late and Terminal Classic (figure 9.3). These effigies disappear completely from the archaeological record by the Early Postclassic. When figurines reappeared in the Roble phase, they assumed radically different forms and were not explicitly associated with musical instruments (see figure 8.6). Incense burners also underwent drastic transformations. The variety of three-prong, modeled, ladle, and complex incensarios that characterized the basin's Late and Terminal Classic collections was reduced by the Roble phase to tube-handled ladle censers and, very rarely, spiked bowls (figures 9.3 and 9.4). Candeleros, flat-topped ceramic forms with one to more than twenty-four conical holes punched into their tops, also disappeared after the end of the Terminal Classic, as did ceramic stamps used for decorating cloth and human skin and such jewelry as clay pendants and ear spools. These shifts bespeak profound transformations in a variety of behavioral arenas, from personal adornment to ritual. The refusal to
revive these artifact forms during the fourteenth through early sixteenth centuries also indicates that the basin’s denizens were uninterested in re-engaging in the activities in which these objects had played integral parts. It is as if most of Terminal Classic Naco valley life was blotted out from memory even as hierarchically structured social forms were reconstituted in the Roble phase.

**SUMMARY**

The Naco valley’s Roble phase rulers confronted the same problem all would-be leaders face; that is, how to make their pretensions to power seem like parts of a timeless and unchanging universe rather than the machinations of en-
terprising agents taking advantage of opportunities offered by particular moments in time. To achieve this objective, these rulers had to build networks that connected them to previous notables and notable events. By their very nature, the recollections on which those webs were founded would have been partial and selective. Operating outside even the flexible constraints of written documents concerning the past, what any occupant of the Roble phase Naco valley remembered about his or her history was likely heavily influenced by current
concerns and understandings. Elites, however, layered onto the various factors that condition recall their own conscious desires to privilege themselves within novel political relations. Building networks into the past, therefore, very much required shaping social memory (Alcock 2000, 2005; Bloch 1977a, 1977b; Casey 1987; Schank and Abelson 1995).

To say the least, this is not an easy job. Earlier events and personages can be deeply problematic for those seeking to restructure sociopolitical relations in the present. Whereas some figures and happenings can provide powerful rationalizations for hierarchical political structures, others may evoke negative associations that could lead to questions about the wisdom of such arrangements and the motivations and fitness to rule of those promoting them. Thus highlighting certain features of history and ensuring particular interpretations of those features require simultaneously forgetting other aspects and repressing alternative views.

Both processes can be glimpsed in operation within the Roble phase Naco valley. On the one hand, elites strove to link themselves with aspects of Terminal Classic rulership. This interval was, from the perspective of the basin’s fourteenth-century inhabitants, the most recent period in which there were moderately well-defined hierarchical social formations. By raising their paramount households close to the ruins of Terminal Classic power centers, leaders at Naco and Sites PVN 306 and PVN 144 were apparently making claims to some association with the hierarchical formations those settlements represented. The care taken to leave the earlier sites intact and unencumbered by late prehistoric occupation further testifies to the regard in which Terminal Classic monumental buildings were held by elites at least. The ties thus forged are clearest at Site PVN 306, where not only was the paramount elite household established only 3 m west of the settlement’s Terminal Classic eastern focus but some members of the Roble phase population were buried around these earlier edifices. It is not at all clear that those interred in the eastern Terminal Classic aggregate were members of the social group that resided in the EPP. The simple form of the uncovered burials would, in fact, argue against such a view. While we do not know who was laid to rest in the environs of Site PVN 306’s Terminal Classic buildings, this burial practice strongly implies a close connection between at least some segment(s) of the settlement’s Roble phase population and whatever was represented by Terminal Classic architecture.

At the same time selected features of the Terminal Classic were remembered positively, at least by late prehistoric elites, others were clearly not viewed in such a manner. Specifically, Roble phase potters assiduously avoided distinctive symbols emblazoned on pottery vessels and tied to aspects of Late and Terminal Classic rule. So complete was this disavowal of decorative motifs and their referents that certain vessel forms, such as vertical, high-necked
jars with everted rims, prominently associated with the earlier symbol system, disappeared altogether. Decorated types, specifically red-on-white–painted bi-chromes, did constitute a consistent minority of Roble phase assemblages. The forms in which they most commonly appeared (tripod bowls), the serpent motifs that adorned them, and the mode of rendering these designs together constitute a marked departure from Late and Terminal Classic precedents. Even as late prehistoric magnates sought to use ceramics to forge polity-wide identities, they avoided explicit references to symbols employed in similar efforts four centuries and more before. Despite the fact that we lack a clear idea of what the motifs involved meant to those who used them, it is obvious that Terminal Classic designs were anathema to Roble phase rulers and, presumably, their supporters.

We cannot say at this point what Terminal Classic figures and events were incorporated in the nets constructed by Roble phase elites. From their selective use of architecture and aspects of pottery design, however, we can infer that the process of casting history in the service of present concerns was a creative one. Certain aspects of the relatively recent past were embraced, while others were hidden firmly from view. In the process much was forgotten, and that which was recalled was almost certainly reinterpreted in ways that made sense in, and served the interests of, networks operating in the Naco valley during the fourteenth through early sixteenth centuries. Such selectivity implies that a tension ran beneath these uses of the past, a tension that may not have been fully resolved when the Spanish first brought these “people without history” into the European orbit (Wolf 1982).