

Paleodemography in mummies of prehispanic populations from Arica

Paleodemografía en momias de poblaciones prehispánicas de Arica.

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Mummies' demographic information of 10 prehispanic cultures that developed in the Arica region of Chile about 7000 years ago is analyzed and related to the present population structure. A paleoepidemiological analysis supports a relationship between cultural development and demographic structure. In chronological sequence, 4 demographic patterns can be distinguished: 1) archaic, a mature population with the highest life expectancy and the lowest dependence from prehispanic populations; 2) later archaic, a population in demographic explosion with its larger fraction under 15 years of age, elevated fertility rates and the greatest prehispanic dependence; 3) andean, a transition population with moderate fertility rates and dependence index; and 4) modern, an aging population with the highest proportion over 45 years of age and the highest life expectancy. The present demographic analysis may help to understand the relationships among disease, individual and culture from the perspective of