

Bone tools of Late Holocene hunter-gatherer-fishers of North-Central Chile: Case study of the Punta Teatinos assemblage

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During the Late Holocene, important changes can be identified in the social dynamics of hunter-gatherer populations in different regions of the Southern Andes. These transformations are associated with processes of demographic growth, territoriality, increased social complexity, technological innovations, and intensified exploitation of the environment. One of the technological transformations associated with these processes is the popularization of bone instruments. In this study, we discuss the functions of bone tools made by Late Holocene coastal hunters-gatherers of North-Central Chile, by carrying out a morphological characterization and identifying use-wear patterns on their surfaces. Our results show that bone technology was used for hunting, fishing, and gathering activities, from flint working to processing vegetal fibres and hide. A reduce number of artefacts had an ornamental use as well. These results suggest a varied and intensive exploitation