# 1

# The Central Coast around the Arrival of the Inkas: An Introduction

Around the year 1470, Inka troops under the leadership of Tupaq Inka Yupanki[1] reached the central coast of Peru, as part of an intensive Inka imperial expansion across the Andes, which took place after the consolidation of their political, economic, and religious power in southern Peru, specifically in the region around Cuzco, during the Late Intermediate period (AD 900–1470) (Malpass 2016). They arrived apparently at the site of Pachacamac, which was at that time not only a well-known coastal oracle located in the Lurín valley, but also the main religious and political center of the lordship or *Señorío* of Ychsma (Rostworowski de Diez Canseco 1972, Rostworowski de Diez Canseco 1978a, Matos Mendieta 2000, Díaz Arriola 2011).

Prior to the arrival of the Inkas on the central coast, the Pachacamac province was a vast region of coastal valleys with a long occupational sequence dating back to between two and three thousand years before the Inka intrusion in the region, as well as a very long history of economic cooperation between different coastal, middle- and upper-valley Andean polities, including the valley of Chillón (Dillehay 1976, Dillehay 1987, Farfán Lobatón, Bautista Alderete et al. 2014), Rimac (Silva, Kenneth et al. 1983, Marcone 2012), and Lurín (Patterson and Lanning 1964, Feldman 1980, Makowski and Cornejo 1993, Dulanto 2002, Makowski 2009). The Lurín valley seems to have been the most important area of the whole Pachacamac province during the Late Intermediate period, with the Rimac and Chillón valleys apparently subordinated to it (Rostworowski de Diez Canseco 1978a).

At that time the lordship or *Señorío* of Ychsma was one of various local sociopolitically well-organized ethnic entities that emerged in the central region during the Late Intermediate period, and controlled and administered a vast territory comprising the valleys of Lurín (the studied area) and Rimac (Rostworowski de Diez Canseco 1972, Díaz Arriola 2011). It was contemporaneous with other lordships, such as the lordship of Collique and Guacayo, restricted to the Chillon valley (Dulanto 2008, Díaz Arriola 2011), and of Chancay, governing the northern valleys of Chillón, Huaura, and Supe, as well as with the lordship of Chimú, controlling the northern valley of Lambayeque; it was also contemporary with lordships governing southern valleys, such as Mala, Chincha (La Centinela), and Chiribaya (Rostworowski de Diez Canseco 1972, Lozada 1998, Díaz Arriola 2011). Some of these ethnic entities eventually became more complex, increasing regionalisms throughout the Andes, particularly on the coast and highland of the central Andean region (Bonavia 1991, Vallejo Berrios 2008).

Despite these regionalisms, there was an intensive exchange of products between societies at an interregional level and at great distances, and also a high demographic density expressed in numerous settlements with differentiated architecture at that period (Parsons, Hastings et al. 2000, Vallejo Berrios 2008). Conversely, there were also interethnic conflicts, archaeologically perceptible in the settlement patterns marked by fortifications and defensive locations to avoid hostilities (Malpass 2016) – conflicts that would have led to the isolation of some population centers in the central and south highlands toward high, inaccessible regions (Nielsen 2002). Consequently, a set of factors like ethnic interregional warfare and conflicts due to competition for power and territory, as well as environmental conditions leading to competition for resources, provided the ideal conditions for the emergence, political unification, and arrival of the Inkas on the central coast of Peru (Malpass 2016).

From then on – during the Late Horizon period, AD 1470–1533 – the Inkas would be the dominant cultural group, from the coast to the highland, establishing the largest empire that had ever existed up to that time in the whole Andean region. Their dominance brought about several changes in the sociopolitical organization of the local societies, unifying local settlements under a single administration, specifically under the lordships of Ychsma and Collique established in the Lurín, Rimac, and Chillón valleys, and recognized as the Pachacamac province at that time (Rostworowski de Diez Canseco 1978a). The oracle of Pachacamac[2] undoubtedly left a great impression on the Inka rulers. Under their authority, Pachacamac became the most important ceremonial and administrative center

[1] His name means "noble Inka accountant." He was the eleventh Sapa Inka (King) of the Inka Empire (AD 1471–93), and already head of the Inka army in 1463. Most of the chronicles describe how vast the expansion of the Inka Empire was under his governance. Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa (1572) reports the voyage of exploration into the Pacific around 1480 led by Tupaq Inka Yupanki, navigating and visiting the islands of Avachumpi (fire belt) and Hawa Chumpi (outer belt), which according to some historians would have been the Galapagos Islands (Ecuador), or even Easter Island (Chile). Buse de la Guerra, H. (1973). La Expedición de Tupac Inca Yupanqui. *Historia Marítima del Perú. Época Prehistórica.* H. Buse de la Guerra. 2: 859–928.

[2] Referring to the oracle of Pachacamac, Cobo wrote: "called Pachamama [Pachacamac], name of the idol or false God to whom he was dedicated, which means the Earth-Maker, which was carved in wood in the form of a fierce and frightening figure, and now very venerated, because he spoke in name of the devil, and gave answers and oracles to the priests . . . " Cobo, B. (1653). *Historia del Nuevo Mundo*. Madrid, Ediciones Atlas.

in the whole region, generating drastic changes in the site's internal organization, including new monumental buildings, architectural patterns, and use of space, but the worship of the Inka god Inti (Sun) also superseded that of the local god of Pachacamac (Earth-Maker), bringing with it a new era of intensive pilgrimages from all around to the oracle of Pachacamac (Díaz Arriola 2004, Díaz Arriola 2011).

The Inkas called their empire *Tawantinsuyu* ("the four parts together," Fig. 1.1), which comprised: the *Chinchaysuyu* (north-central part), *Antisuyu* (eastern part), *Qollasuyu* (southern part), and *Kuntisuyu* (to the west), the center of the empire being the city of Cuzco (Malpass 2016). There appears to be consensus that the great success, expansion, and development of the Inka Empire rested in an ideology of rule determined by the resources to be controlled and the

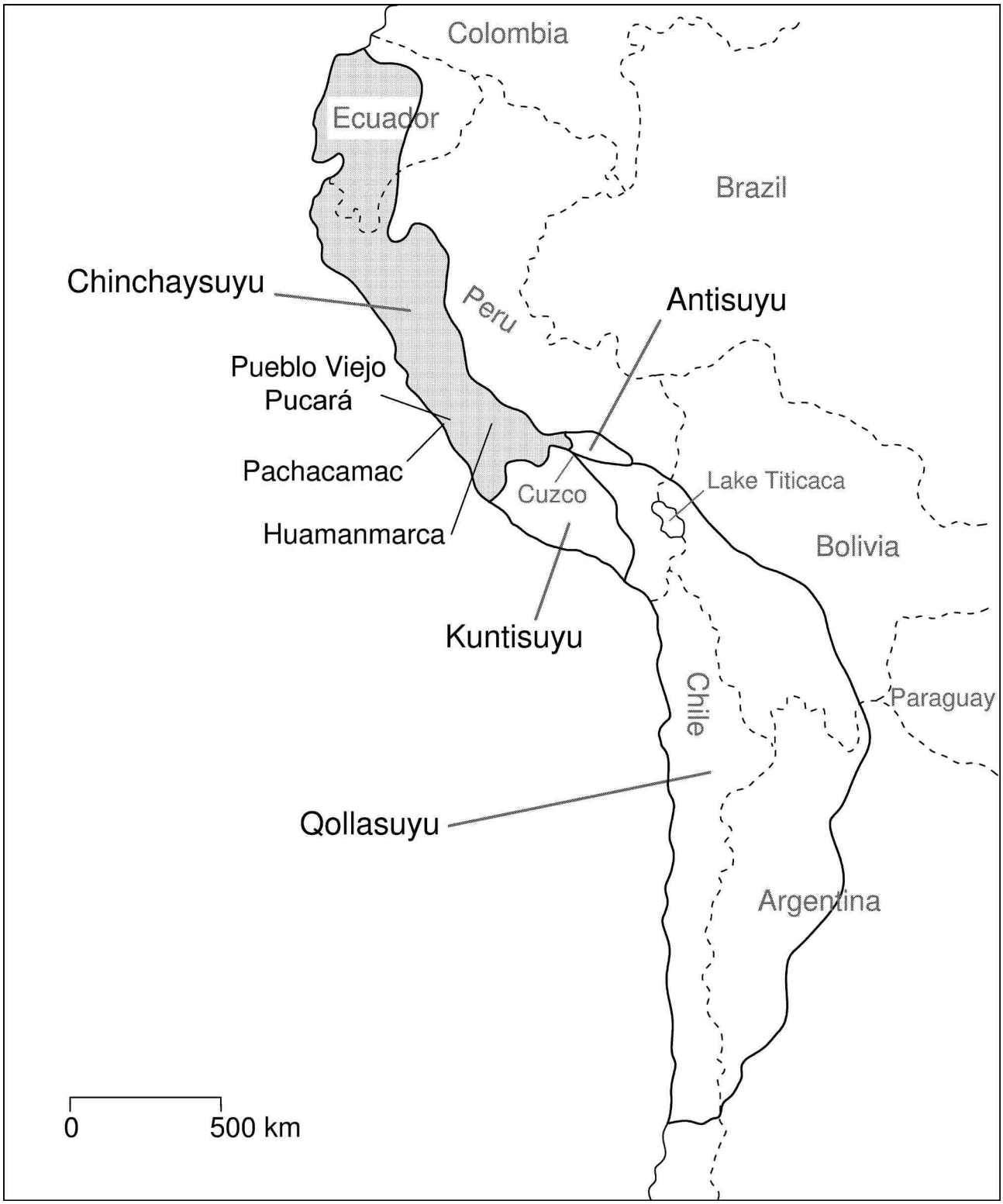


**Figure 1.1. Map of the four *Suyus* (parts) that comprised the *Tawantinsuyu.***

level of local political authority and military resistance to be faced (Morris 1998, Malpass 2016). It rested also in the use of traditional systems of reciprocity and redistribution on a large state-scale (Murra 1980), and in the crucial role played by lords with an enormous interethnic authority based on the recognition of their political and religious functions, leading interprovincial confederations such as those of Charcas, Collao, and Quito, and receiving from the Sapa Inka (highest ruler) several privileges with interprovincial powers as a result of their distinguished role in military campaigns (Pärssinen 2002).

There were multiple reasons behind the Inka expansionism and subjugation of many ethnic groups in the central Andean region. It was a conquest motivated not only by ideological but above all by economic factors (Morris 1998), particularly control over some valuable resources, such as the coca fields located in the mid-valley region (Rostworowski de Diez Canseco 1988a, 1989, 1999, Cornejo Guerrero 2000, López-Hurtado 2007). In effect, as is affirmed by some chroniclers, the arrival of the Inkas in a new region was not deliberated or unpremeditated, but on the contrary, it was well planned, including a preliminary exploration of the conquered regions. There was an evaluation of all local available resources and a primary identification of the local leaders to get a key perspective on the local socioeconomic, ideological, and political organization of the region (Cieza de León 1553, Betanzos 1557, Cobo 1653).

Once settled on the central coast, the Inkas claimed ownership of all conquered lands to expand labor service, craft, and food production to be used for state and religious purposes. However, they also brought to the locality new technological advances, such as the implementation of terrace systems with irrigation canals to supplement the existing rain-fed ones used prior to their arrival. Despite possible inequalities, relations remained reciprocal. They allowed local communities to have the usufruct right to grow crops, to herd camelids on local pastures, and to manufacture craft items and housing supplies for their own subsistence and well-being (Pease 2007, Malpass 2016). As the empire expanded, it became necessary to develop a complex infrastructure of roads and administrative centers along the coastal and highland regions of the Andes, as well as a system of *chaskis* (runners) and *chaskiwasi* (runners' houses) to keep the Inka authority informed, and a system of *qollqa* (storehouses) at very high altitudes for the storage of agricultural produce (Hyslop 1984, D'Altroy 1992, Morris 1998, Malpass 2016).

In 1531 Atahualpa was proclaimed Sapa Inka of Quito, and after defeating his half-brother Huascar in the battle of Cotabamba (Apurimac), advanced victorious to Cajamarca (northern Peru), where in 1532 he was captured and executed by the first expedition of Spaniards reaching the northern Peruvian coasts. A year later, in 1533, Hernando Pizarro arrived with his troops on the central coast of Peru, at the oracle of Pachacamac, to claim in gold the ransom for the liberation of the Inka Atahualpa. Both these historical events are considered by many scholars to mark the fall of the Inka Empire, in which factors like the Inka war of succession, the spread and devastating effect of epidemics (smallpox, typhus, measles, influenza) coming from an already dominated central America, the help of dissatisfied local ethnic groups within the empire, and a technological disadvantage of weapons, finally resulted in the disintegration of the empire and subjugation under the Spanish invaders (Cieza de León 1553, Cobo 1653, Rostworowski 1983, Morris 1988, Rostworowski de Diez Canseco 1992a, Rostworowski and Morris 1999, Pärssienen 2003, Raudzens 2003, Moseley 2004, Pease 2007, McEwan 2008, Díaz Arriola 2011, Malpass 2016).

In the context of this historical scenario, I considered researching food behaviors, identity, and people's diet as part of a social construction, and the impact of food habits on their nutritional status during a period of sociopolitical changes, interethnic alliances, local conflicts, and the establishment of a new political authority with the arrival of the Inkas in the central Andean region.

Determining the relationship between diet, food choices, and the acquirees of food behaviors is key to understanding local identities. Furthermore, determining the relationship between diet and nutritional status is key to understanding the impact of food on people's health. The site of Pueblo Viejo-Pucará is well suited for exploring these relationships. Different lines of evidence from the site, such as the spatial architectural design, pottery, and funerary patterns, suggest a strong affiliation between this coastal site and the central highland region at that time, as a result of the relocation of highland communities to the site by the imperial Inka political authority. This variability, also at the level of social segments, will allow us to perceive subtle differences created when deciding how to live, eat, and die as part of an Inka-period society.

I assume that there is a reciprocal relationship between food and identities. That means ethnic identities are expressed through food, and simultaneously that daily meals and feasts shape social relationships and identities as well. Indeed, the integrative analysis of the available subsistence and funerary data makes it possible to infer food behaviors and in turn identities in the past, which are shaped in processes that I refer to as "food identity" and "food symbolism." To address the relationship between food behaviors and identity, we must first explore directly, based on the bioarchaeological data, the local subsistence strategies, diet, and food-cooking modalities in household areas and spaces of common use, as well as in the funerary sphere, where food, eating, and drinking habits played a crucial role. We must begin by answering the small questions regarding local subsistence and funerary practices in order to lay the foundation for answering the large ones:

- *Question 1*: What kind of subsistence strategies were developed by the Caringa people settled in Pueblo Viejo-Pucará? What kind of food was consumed?

How varied were the food-cooking, serving, and eating modalities within the site? What were the consequences of these modalities for the household organization and local development? Once these questions are answered, I proceed to address more complex questions linking food behaviors and identity at a local scale.

- *Question 1.1*: What does food tell us about food meanings and people's identity? What kind of symbolic role does food play within the funerary rituals? How did new sociopolitical reorganizations at local level affect people's food behaviors?

Alongside the composition of diet, the food-intake frequency, consistency, and food-cooking modalities also play an important role in the rate of certain food-related dental conditions in human populations (Larsen 1997a).

- *Question 1.2*: Do there appear to be intra-site and inter-site-level differences in terms of food consistency, dietary intake, and cooking modalities? Yes, I expect there will be. To test this, I compare the prevalence and severity of food-related dental pathologies such as dental caries, dental calculus, and tooth wear, within Pueblo Viejo-Pucará and also between both sites.

Thus, when we consider diet and food behaviors as a social construction, we need to ask not only about the type of food consumed and possible preferences, but also about the different modalities behind its preparation and serving, about its crucial role in other social spheres of the society. To test these questions, I consider the spatial distribution and functional analysis of assemblages of ceramics, cooking utensils, flora/faunal and malacological remains, which have been found in household, funerary, public, and transit-corridor areas, as part of new data generated in my excavations of sector 5 in Pueblo Viejo-Pucará.

It is also important to understand that the probable arrival of labor colonists from the highland to the site did not necessarily mean that people stopped cultivating and consuming their own food. Rather, people may have still cooked and consumed their food, particularly food loaded with symbolic meaning at public events, funerals, and other occasions. This foreign element in turn suggests variability in terms of diet within the site. Here questions are raised as to the extent to which people's diet sheds light on a coastal–highland connection.

- *Question 2*: Was there a highland food tradition on the coastal site of Pueblo Viejo-Pucará? To what extent did people rely on the consumption of local versus foreign crops? Did the Inka install a highland community in Pueblo Viejo-Pucará, and if so, how did it change the food landscape of the settlement and region? I expect that this will be the case, given contextual evidence indicating affinity in terms of architectural and funerary patterns with highland sites.
- *Question 2.1*: Do there appear to be group-level differences in diet consistent with highland labor colonists (mitmaqkunas) among local Pueblo Viejo-Pucará sectors or *barrios*? Yes, I expect there will be, due to a probable variability in terms of diet driven by a hypothetical consumption of non-local foods at the site.

To address these questions, I conducted stable carbon, nitrogen, and oxygen isotopic signatures of bones and teeth, to explore the main dietary staples on the site. I compare my results with a comparative sample from the highlands, specifically with the isotopic signatures of bones and teeth from the site of Huamanmarca, located at 3940 m.a.s.l. in the highland of the central Andean region and from the same chronological period (Late Horizon, 1470–1532 AD).[3]

Assuming there is variability in terms of dietary intake and food habits among populations, it is expected that not all segments of a society are equally impacted by physiological disruptive events (stress) in the same way, and not all social segments buffer stress in the same way. I wonder whether this variability had an impact on people's nutritional status and health at population level, and to what extent this variability is linked to nutritional deficiencies and to the social inequalities proper of a highly hierarchical society.

- *Question 3*: Do there appear to be group-level differences in food variability, and in turn in nutritional status among local Pueblo Viejo-Pucará sectors or *barrios*? Yes, I expect there will be. To test this, I analyse enamel hypoplastic defects on teeth (linear enamel hypoplasia) within sectors of Pueblo Viejo-Pucará, and also between sites.

Addressing all these questions requires multiple lines of evidence that are directly relevant to the reconstruction of food behaviors, diet, and nutritional status at Pueblo Viejo-Pucará. As mentioned above, I consider archaeological, zooarchaeological, malacological, osteological, dental anthropological, and stable isotopic data from Pueblo Viejo-Pucará (coast) and Huamanmarca (highland site, for comparative purposes). This corpus of data bears directly on the research questions, as they retain residues of a past, but also generate a fuller understanding of food behaviors and identity, as well as the impact of diet on people's nutritional status, as part of a population living under the Inka governance.

Before I address these research questions, it is crucial to provide the archaeological background from each site necessary for understanding and interpreting the data. Chapter 2 is divided into two sections. The first one presents some theoretical background about food as a social construction. I focus on Andean food, food technologies, cooking, eating, and drinking modalities in

[3] The osteological sample was excavated by Elizabeth Enríquez-Tintaya, who led the project and kindly facilitated my access to this collection.

the past through ethnohistorical and archaeological sources of information. I address how food traditions and choices, even though dictated by food attributes and accessibility, are continuously shaped and transformed in all societies, and in turn, how food permeates all levels of human existence and is bound up with the formation of identity within a society. The second section focuses on health status and disease in the past from a biocultural approach. It emphasizes the relationship between diet and health, particularly the relationship between food procurement, availability, and choices, and nutritional deficiencies and health status, as a crucial mechanism of adjustment and adaptation in every past population.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of Pueblo Viejo geographical settings, chronological framework, and spatial organization. It also provides the archaeological fieldwork and research conducted in sector 5, as it pertains to subsistence strategies and funerary patterns. This is particularly relevant since previous studies at the site have set the stage for the research questions pursued here. It also provides a brief overview of the archaeological site of Huamanmarca, used as a comparative site in this research. This chapter builds a basis for understanding the food behaviors, subsistence, and funerary patterns of the Caringa from Pueblo Viejo-Pucará: a basis that is necessary for proper assessment and interpretation of the large corpus of bioarchaeological and dental anthropological data recovered during our fieldwork in sector 5. The following chapters involve the presentation and analysis of the data. In these chapters I discuss and correlate specific bioarchaeological, dental anthropological, and biochemical (isotopic) data to answer the research questions.

Chapter 4 integrates the assessment of different lines of evidence, such as the spatial distribution and functional analysis of food utensils (ceramic), zooarchaeological and malacological analyses to infer subsistence practices, food-cooking, eating, and serving modalities, as well as resource availability and food procurement in the studied area. Consequently, it addresses food behaviors and cooking modalities in relation to the type of food and the magnitude of the event where food behaviors and choices played a crucial role.

Chapter 5 brings into the discussion food and dietary intake from a dental anthropological approach. It integrates the analysis of different food-related dental conditions, such as dental carious lesions, dental calculus, and tooth wear, which constitute a valuable analytical tool to reconstruct important aspects of dietary intake, for example, its consistency, cooking modalities, and possible preferences in food preparation, and also to infer to what extent people consumed a well-processed diet, and how food habits may have changed.

Chapter 6 provides the reconstruction of a long-term diet based on the stable carbon, nitrogen, and oxygen isotope analysis of teeth and bones, exploring diet in a wider regional context. Based on biochemical data, it explores intra-site variability in terms of diet and possible connections with highland populations. Chapter 7, meanwhile, provides the assessment of a dental indicator of physiological stress, particularly linear enamel hypoplasias, to explore past nutrition and health status. It addresses whether variability in people's diet, food choices, and food behaviors affected the nutritional status of the Caringas.

Chapter 8 offers an overall discussion based on a reading of our results from the previous chapters. It discusses the perception of food as a social construction in association with food identity and symbolism in the archaeological record. It includes a discussion of cooking modalities and eating habits in association with the spatial distribution of food-related utensils found in sector 5 and dictated by the Caringa's daily activities and subsistence practices – food habits that made it possible to approach people's food preferences and choices in sector 5. This discussion is reinforced by the reconstruction of diet based on biochemical and dental anthropological data. This dental data includes inferences on cariogenic and tooth-wear conditions to discuss cooking and eating modalities, and inferences on dental enamel hypoplasias to discuss nutritional stress and health on the site. All dental information is compared on a regional level. The chapter finally includes a brief discussion on the perception of health and illness in the Andes. Finally, Chapter 9 integrates all interpretations and offers overall conclusions.

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