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Exploitation of beasts of burden in the territory of present-day Serbia during the Late Antique and the Early Byzantine periods: a zooarchaeological perspective

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ABSTRACT: This paper discusses the exploitation of equids and camels throughout the Late Antique and the Early Byzantine periods in the territory of present-day Serbia. During the Roman times, horses, donkeys, mules, and camels were used to carry loads in long/short distances either for army needs or in caravan trade, and the usage of those animals in the region is evidenced by archaeofaunal data. By bringing together zooarchaeological data on equids and camels, this paper aims to provide an insight into their exploitation strategies in different settlement types from the 4th century to the beginning of the 7th century AD in the territory of present-day Serbia. The comparisons of the relative distributions of their remains, their body-part profiles, age and sex data, pathological changes, as well as butchery marks between different archaeological sites, site types, and periods will be used to explore plausible diachronic and contextual differences in the strategies of exploitation of indicated animals.

















