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Thierry Argant

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The impact of Romanisation on Hippophagy and Cynophagy: a long-term perspective from Lyon, France

Abstract

Lyon (Rhône, France) has been permanently occupied since the late Neolithic (c.2000 B.C.) and, up until the end of second Iron Age (mid-1st c. B.C.) at least, the site has regularly produced zoo archaeological evidence for dog and equid consumption. After the establishment of the Roman colony of Lugdunum, however such evidence disappears from faunal assemblages, a time when new phenomena such as dog burial and horse knackerly emerges, particularly in suburban areas, only for it to reappear once more during the 2nd c. A.D. This paper traces the changes in human exploitation of horses and dogs during the 1st millennium A.D. and focuses, in particular, on the impact of Roman cultural attitudes towards these species.

Keywords: Romanisation; Hippophagy; Cynophagy; France; Craft working; Iron age; Sheep and goats

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Thierry Argant

Laboratoire Archéométrie et Archéologie, France

Correspondence: Thierry Argant, Laboratoire Archéométrie et Archéologie, France, Tel 0667934848, Email thierry.argant@eveha.fr

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Introduction

Lyon (Rhône, France) has been permanently occupied since the late Neolithic (c.2000 B.C.) and, up until the end of second Iron Age (mid-1st c. B.C.) at least, the site has regularly produced zoo archaeological evidence for dog and equid consumption. After the establishment of the Roman colony of Lugdunum, however such evidence disappears from faunal assemblages, a time when new phenomena such as dog burial and horse knackerly emerges, particularly in suburban areas, only for it to reappear once more during the 2nd c. A.D. This paper traces the changes in human exploitation of horses and dogs during the 1st millennium A.D. and focuses, in particular, on the impact of Roman cultural attitudes towards these species.

Historical context

The city of Lyon is located in south-eastern France at the confluence of the River Saône, connecting from the north and the Rhône, flowing from the Alps, which together run south to the Mediterranean (Figure 1). The earliest evidence for settlement has been identified on the alluvial plain of Vaise in the northwest of the city and on the hills surrounding the Rhône in the east (Corbas, Vénissieux and Meyzieu). Since the middle of the 1980s, the development of rescue archaeology has allowed the identification of about thirty sites dating from the Hallstatt D2-D3 and La Tène A1 periods (5th c. B.C.) and these are distributed over c.150 ha of the plain of Vaise.¹ This occupation appears to have been extensive and unenclosed, with denser concentrations of structures found in the southern part of the plain (Figure 2). It is also marked by imported Mediterranean pottery associated with wine consumption. Both structures and finds provide evidence for agriculture and stock-raising alongside specialized craft-working, including iron and copper-alloy working, horn-working and textile production (Table 1).

At the end of the second Iron Age, in the middle of the 2nd c. B.C., Vaise remained an important meeting place with large ditches in which waste from feasts has been found discarded and these appear to correspond to a large, enclosed, high-status settlement.² In 43 B.C., the

Senator and Consul, Munatius Plancus, established the Colonia Copia Felix Munatia Lugdunum with the status of Roman Colony of Right (optimo iure) on the summit of the hill of Fourvière. This represented the beginning of an era of prosperity which lasted about two centuries. The city rapidly expanded from the hillside onto the Presqu'île and in 12 B.C., became the provincial capital of the Three Gauls. Thereafter, Christianity gradually became more influential after it was introduced to Lugdunum by large numbers of Greek settlers from Asia Minor. In AD 177, the martyrdom of the Christians of Lyon took place, a point which marked the beginning of a period of decline for the city and by the end of the 3rd c. AD it had lost its status as provincial capital to Treves. The church recovered quickly, however and by the 5th c. A.D. the first cathedral was established in the city whilst the Burgondes occupied the region.



Figure 1 Location map of Lyon and surroundings with location of suburban sites.

Table 1 Location of sites from Late Neolithic to Second Iron Age

N°	Site	Equids					Dogs					Remarks	Source
		Total NISP	NISP	Consumption	Craftwork	Burial/ Knackery	NISP	Consumption	Craftwork	Burial/ Knackery			
Late Neolithic													
1	11-13 rue Roquette	5	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	Argant [18]	
2	BPNL	96	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	Forest [19]	
3	Station métro GDL	14	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	Méniel [20]	
Early Bronze Age													
4	17-21 rue GDL	251	3	?	?	-	2	?	?	-	-	Argant [3]	
5	29-31 rue GDL	40	0	-	-	-	1	?	?	-	-	Argant [21]	
2	BPNL	262	4	?	?	-	2	?	?	-	-	Forest [19]	
3	Station métro GDL	15	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	Méniel [20]	
Late Bronze Age													
5	29-31 rue GDL	12	0	-	-	-	1	?	?	-	-	Argant [21]	
2	BPNL	639	0	-	-	-	22	?	?	-	-	Forest [19]	
10	Corbas - Grand Champ	66	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	Argant [3]	
10	Corbas - Grand Champ	17	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	Argant [3]	
12	Hôpital de l'Antiquaille	5	0	-	-	-	1	+	-	-	radius	Argant [22]	
13	Meyzieu - Les Hernières	129	0	-	-	-	1	?	?	-	3 month puppy	Forest [23]	
3	Station métro GDL	71	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	Méniel [20]	
15	Vénissieux	100	2	?	?	-	2	?	?	-	-	Forest [24]	
First Iron Age													
1	11-13 rue Roquette	353	1	?	-	-	4	+	-	-	clear cutmarks on dog	Argant [18]	
17	14, rue des Tuileries	731	0	-	-	-	6	?	-	c	puppy and old dog	Argant [25]	
18	4-6 rue du Mont d'Or	500	1	?	-	-	0	-	-	-	not studied yet !	unpublished	
2	BPNL	158	2	+	-	-	0	+	-	-	-	Forest [19]	

Table Continued....

N°	Site	Equids					Dogs					Remarks	Source
		Total NISP	NISP	Consumption	Craftwork	Burial/ Knackery	NISP	Consumption	Craftwork	Burial/ Knackery			
20	Horand 2	540	5	+	-	-	11	+	-	-		Argant [7]	
20	Horand 3	125	1	+	-	-	1	+	-	-		Argant [7]	
20	Horand 4	239	2	+	-	-	0	+	-	-		Argant [7]	
24	10, rue Marietton	522	2	+	-	-	3	+	-	-		Argant [7]	
25	Sérézin du Rhône	146	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-		Poulain [26]	
26	65, rue du Souvenir	193	1	+	-	-	1	+	-	-		Argant [7]	
3	Station métro GDL	1083	15	+	-	-	8	+	-	-		Méniel [20]	
15	Vénissieux	231	0	-	-	-	2	?	?	?		Forest [24]	
27	Rue Berthet/ Cottin	692	1	?	-	-	5	?	+	-	skinning on dog	Lalai [27]	
Second Iron Age													
24	10, rue Marietton	206	17	?	?	?	0	-	-	-	in a ditch	Argant [7]	
18	4-6 rue du Mont d'Or	500	1	+	-	-	1	+	-	-	not studied yet, big dog	unpublished	
31	Chais Beaucairois	3000	3	-	-	+	3	+	-	+	in tombs : offering food and sacrificed individuals	Argant [10]	
32	Clos des Frères Maristes	6	1	?	-	-	1	?	-	-		Argant [14]	
33	Hôpital Sainte- Croix	502	2	?	?	?	15	?	?	?		Krauz [8]	
34	Îlot Cordier	687	108	+	-	-	6	?	-	?	in a ditch	Jacquet [9]	
35	Quartier Saint-Vincent	478	1	i	-	-	8	+	-	-	young equids and dogs	Argant [7]	
26	Rue du Souvenir	1347	51	?	?	?	4	?	?	?		Forest [28]	
15	Vénissieux	24	0	-	-	-	2	+	-	-	cutmarks on coxal bone	Forest [24]	
38	Verbe Incarné	2624	20	?	?	?	1	?	?	?	in a ditch	Goudineau [29]	

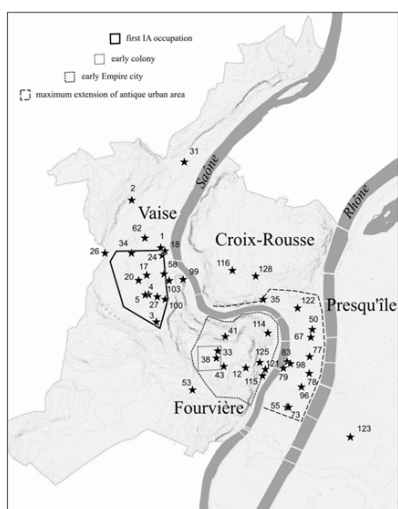


Figure 2 Map of the city (Service Archéologique de la Ville de Lyon), with the schematic area of the first Iron Age occupation (based on Carrara 2009), location and extension of Lugdunum from the rise of the colony to its maximum development (based on Le Mer and Chomer 2007) and location of sites mentioned in Table 1.

Meat-based diet

To a large extent, cattle (*Bos taurus*) bones dominate many assemblages from Lyon dating between the late Neolithic and the end of first Iron Age.³ This pattern, particularly during first Iron Age, is quite similar to that recorded for the Saône valley, an area with similar geographical characteristics, while in south-eastern France, with its drier landscape, sheep/goat (*Caprinae*) remains are more common.⁴ By the end of second Iron Age in Lyon, pig (*Suss domesticus*) bones become more common (Figure 3). At the same time, red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) remains become less frequently identified than brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*), a change which appears to mirror a decline in the forest in the vicinity, as is shown by pollen analysis.⁵ At the beginning of the Roman period, pig remains continue to dominate many assemblages, though cattle become increasingly important again over time, a trend which correlates with the establishment of slaughterhouses and butcheries in the Roman town.³ For example, the site of Tramassac Street at the southern gate of the late Roman town revealed a striking example of one of these establishments, producing quantities of processed cattle remains.⁶ Outside the town limits, sheep/goat bones are more commonly recovered, together with pigs, whilst cattle remains are less frequently identified and later, during the Early Middle Ages, sheep/goats continue to dominate (Table 2) (Table 3).

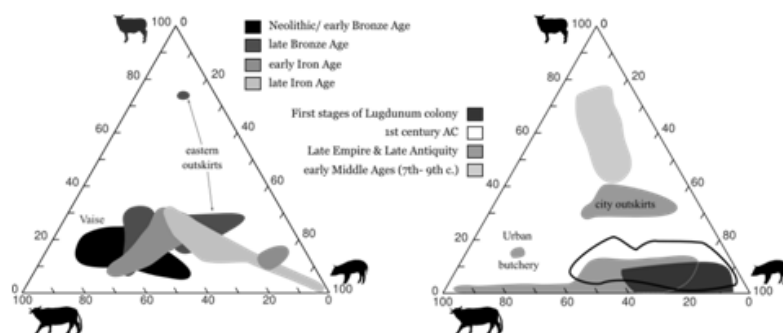


Figure 3 Tripolar plot of relative abundance inside domestic triad, from the Neolithic to the Early Middle Ages in Lyon.

Table 2 Location of sites in Early empire-augustean

N°	Site	Equids	Dogs	Remarks	Source
Early empire-augustean					
1	11-13 rue Roquette	109	3	- - ? 0 - - -	Argant 18
18	4-6 rue du Mont d'Or	218	0	- - - 0 - - -	Argant30
32	Clos des Frères Maristes	40	0	- - - 0 - - -	Argant 18
32	Clos des Frères Maristes	4	0	- - - 0 - - -	Argant 18
43	Cybèle - D1	3587	0	- - - 31 ? ? +	Forest31
43	Cybèle - F2	640	0	- - - 0 - - -	Forest32
43	Cybèle - F2	647	0	- - - 1 ? - ?	Forest32 gracil tibia's diaphysis : might be fox
43	Cybèle - B14	3185	0	- - - 30 ? + ?	Argant3 3 individual, healed fracture, cutmark on femur, puppy
46	Genas	71	1	? - - 1 ? - -	Argant33 beheaded horse, old dog

Table Continued....

N°	Site		Equids		Dogs		Remarks	Source
Early empire-augustean								
47	Hôpital de Fourvière	41	0	- - -	0	- - -		Argant34
12	Hôpital de l'Antiquaille	95	0	- - -	0	- - -		Argant22
50	Place de la Bourse	111	0	- - -	0	- - -		Forest 32
Early empire-1st .AD								
1	11-13 rue Roquette	113	5	? - -	0	- - -	Suspicious marks	Argant 18
1	11-13 rue Roquette	60	5	? - +	1	? - -	Equids in well	Argant 18
53	19-21 rue Fossés de Trion	16	0	- - -	0	- - -		Lalai27
54	27 rue Auguste Comte	45	0	- - -	0	- - -		Argant35
54	27 rue Auguste Comte	308	0	- - -	0	- - -		Argant35
54	27 rue Auguste Comte	107	0	- - -	10	- - +	Young dog in well	Argant35
54	27 rue Auguste Comte	52	1	? - -	0	- - -	3rd phalanx	Argant35
58	4 rue Saint-Didier	208	17	- - +	8	- - +	Pathology	Argant36
58	4 rue Saint-Didier	106	19	- - +	36	- - +	Dwarf hound (type 1b)	Argant36
18	4-6 rue du Mont d'Or	221	0	- - -	0	- - -		Argant30
2	BPNL	589	90	? ? ?	22	? ? ?		Forest 19
62	Clos des Arts	274	53	- - +	0	- - -	Funerary context	Schmitt et al.37
32	Clos des Frères Maristes	167	0	- - -	0	- - -		Argant 14
32	Clos des Frères Maristes	29	0	- - -	0	- - -		Argant 14
32	Clos des Frères Maristes	57	0	- - -	0	- - -		Argant 14
43	Cybèle - DI	2137	0	- - -	1	- - +	Medora	Forest31
67	Grand Bazar	300	1	- - -	0	- - -	Mandible in pit	Lalai27
47	Hôpital de Fourvière	354	0	- - -	0	- - -		Argant34
47	Hôpital de Fourvière	83	0	- - -	0	- - -		Argant34
47	Hôpital de Fourvière	424	0	- - -	0	- - -		Argant34
47	Hôpital de Fourvière	658	1	? - -	0	- - -	1 limb	Argant34
12	Hôpital de l'Antiquaille	294	0	- - -	0	- - -		Argant22

Table Continued....

N°	Site		Equids			Dogs			Remarks	Source	
73	Hôtel de Cuzieu	95	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	Argant25
73	Hôtel de Cuzieu	163	0	-	-	-	5	?	-	-	Young and adult gracil dogs Argant25
75	La Boisse	106	0	-	-	-	2	-	-	+	Canid in incineration Silvino38
50	Place de la Bourse	42	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	Arlaud39
77	Place de la République	79	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	Arlaud39
78	Rue Bellecordière	155	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	Argant3
79	rue Colonel Chambonnet	209	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	Argant3
79	rue Colonel Chambonnet	135	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	Argant3
79	rue Colonel Chambonnet	50	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	Argant3
79	rue Colonel Chambonnet	439	0	-	-	-	1	?	?	?	Argant3
83	Théâtre des Célestins	179	0	-	-	-	4	?	?	?	Argant5
83	Théâtre des Célestins	334	0	-	-	-	1	?	?	?	Argant5
15	Vénissieux	143	1	?	-	?	4	?	-	?	3 dogs Forest24

Table 3 Location of sites from Early empire - 2nd c. to Early middle age

N°	Site		Equids			Dogs			Remarks	Source	
Early empire - 2nd c.											
1	11-13 rue Roquette	18	2	?	-	?	0	-	-	-	Argant [18]
1	11-13 rue Roquette	44	6	+	-	+	0	-	-	-	Cutmarks on humerus Argant [18]
17	14, rue des Tuileries	774	11	+	+	-	14	-	-	?	Sawed bones Argant [40]
2	BPNL	544	133	?	?	+	33	?	?	?	Forest [19]
27	Rue Berthet/Cottin	47	4	?	?	?	1	-	-	-	Laläi [13]
32	Clos des Frères Maristes	1008	0	-	-	-	3	-	-	+	Argant [14]
32	Clos des Frères Maristes	117	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	Argant [14]
46	Genas	2	0	-	-	-	1	-	-	+	Dwarf hound (type 1b) Argant [33]
47	Hôpital de Fourvière	194	0	-	-	-	1	?	-	?	Argant [34]
12	Hôpital de l'Antiquaille	1938	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	Feast's wastes Argant [22]
73	Hôtel de Cuzieu	45	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	Argant [25]
96	Place Antonin Poncet	1	0	-	-	-	1	-	-	+	Dog's grave in little channel unpublished
50	Place de la Bourse	91	0	-	-	-	4	?	?	?	Arlaud [39]
98	Place des Célestins	102	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	Arlaud [39]
99	Quai Arloing	730	3	-	+	+	0	-	-	-	Horse's patella in a child grave Delaval [11]
100	Quartier Saint-Pierre	1	0	-	-	-	1	-	-	+	Dog's grave with its bowl Delaval [11]
100	Quartier Saint-Pierre	1	0	-	-	-	1	-	+	-	Dismembered dog, thrown on the road side Delaval [11]

Table Continued...

N°	Site	Equids			Dogs			Remarks	Source			
100	Quartier Saint-Pierre	5	5	-	-	+	0	-	-	-	Mass grave	Delaval [11]
103	rue du Chapeau Rouge	1	1	-	-	+	0	-	-	-	Foal in the filling of a room of a ceramic workshop.	unpublished
83	Théâtre des Célestins	263	0	-	-	-	1	?	?	?		Argant [5]
83	Théâtre des Célestins	21	0	-	-	-	1	?	?	?		Argant [5]
83	Théâtre des Célestins	23	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-		Argant [5]
46	Genas	2	1	-	-	+	0	-	-	-	Foal ABG associated with calf	Argant [33]
83	Théâtre des Célestins	110	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-		Argant [5]
53	19-21 rue Fossés de Trion	8	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-		Rémy [27]
Late Empire												
54	27 rue Auguste Comte	199	0	-	-	-	2	-	-	+	Young dog in well	Argant [35]
54	27 rue Auguste Comte	376	2	-	-	+	2	?	-	?	Equids and dogs in well. Pathological and gnawed dog	Argant [35]
47	Hôpital de Fourvière	658	0	-	-	-	4	-	-	?	Small dog	Argant [34]
73	Hôtel de Cuzieu	37	0	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		Argant [25]
114	Hôtel de Gadagne	79	0	-	-	-	2	?	?	+		Argant [3]
115	Parking Saint-Georges	1151	0	-	-	-	1	?	?	?		Ayala [41]
98	Place des Célestins	457	6	?	?	?	2	?	?	?		Arlaud [39]
78	Rue Bellecordière	100	3	?	?	?	2	?	?	?		Argant [3]
83	Théâtre des Célestins	324	1	?	?	?	0	-	-	-		Argant [5]
116	7-11 rue des Chartreux	66	36	-	+	+	0	-	-	-	Sawed horses bones, exposition	Argant et al. [42]
Late antiquity												
58	4 rue Saint-Didier	57	19	?	-	+	1	+	-	-	Cutmarks on equid vertebra ?, elbow dislocation on dog	Argant [36]
114	hôtel de Gadagne	865	2	?	?	?	0	-	-	-		Argant [3]
115	Parking Saint-Georges	574	11	+	-	?	4	?	?	?	Donkey and horse	Ayala [41]
122	Place des Terreaux	412	3	?	?	?	5	?	?	?		Arlaud [39]
123	rue du Père Chevrier	94	4	?	?	?	5	?	?	?		Blaizot et al. [43]
124	rue Mgr Lavarenne	764	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-		Argant [44]
125	Tramassac	8815	20	+	?	-	43	?	?	?		Arbogast [6]
15	Vénissieux	66	2	?	?	?	4	?	?	?		Forest [24]
Early Middle Age												
58	4 rue Saint-Didier	69	1	-	-	-	46	-	-	+	Erratic distribution of equids, dog ABG	Argant [36]
128	41-43 rue des Chartreux	663	1	?	?	?	2	?	?	?		Ayala et al. [45]
129	Décines- Montout	120	23	+	-	-	0	-	-	-		Ferber [46]
114	Hôtel de Gadagne	246	0	-	-	-	1	?	?	?		Argant [3]
98	Place des Célestins	2029	9	?	?	?	2	?	?	?		Arlaud [39]

History of the horse (Equidae)

Horse remains occur in zooarchaeological assemblages continuously from the early Bronze Age to the second Iron Age (Figure 4). During the Roman period, for about a century and notably in the town centre, their bones are only recovered from a very limited number of contexts, but gradually become more frequent again from the 2nd c. A.D.

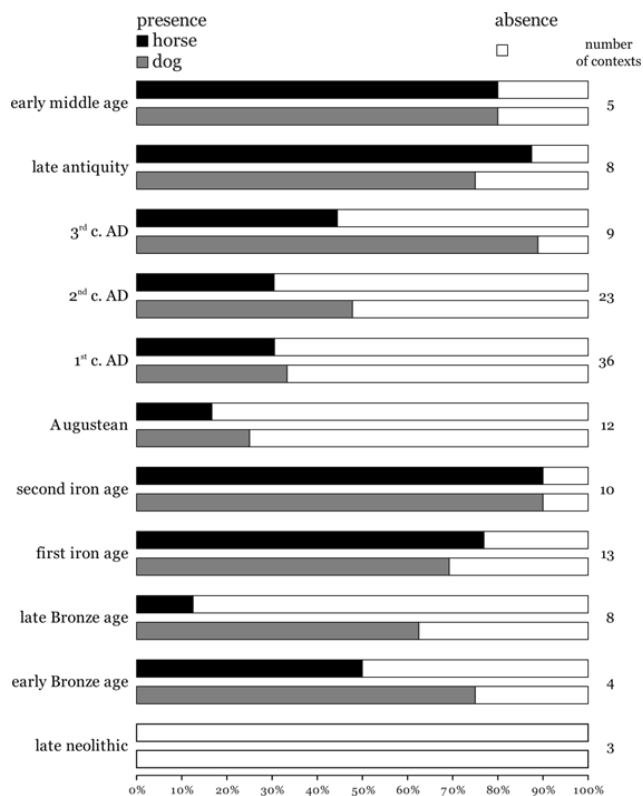


Figure 4 Proportion of sites where horse or dog are represented for each chronological layer in Lyon and around (Table 1).

During the first Iron Age, evidence for butchery on equid bones is rare, though a thoracic vertebra from rue du docteur Horand displays clear cut marks.⁷ In addition, pathologies are also witnessed on some horse bones in this period, indicating their difficult living conditions at that time (Figure 5). In the second Iron Age, horse consumption is more evident, though evidence that horses were also exploited in other ways is also detectable. On some sites, such as rue Roquette in Vaise, cut marks have been observed on meat-bearing parts of the skeleton, as well as patterns of bone breakage similar to that seen on cattle in particular. On the top of the hill of Fourvière, many complete horse bones were discovered in a ditch at Verbe Incarné in association with a high number of pig bones, remains which were interpreted as the debris from a large feast,⁸ though here it is uncertain whether horse flesh was consumed. A similar pattern was also recorded at îlot Cordier, though this time horse bones were predominantly found in association with cattle remains and were butchered in a similar manner, suggesting that horse consumption had taken place.⁹

In the necropolis of Chais Beaucairois, four tombs contained the bones of both humans and domestic mammals. Among them, elderly stallions (more than 10 years old) were found lying on their side in the funeral chamber.¹⁰ These aged animals showed pathologies associated with the carrying of heavy loads and we can suppose that these were

used as mounts, perhaps belonging to the deceased. Alternatively, they may have been chosen from animals unfit for service, as a symbolic gesture, in a context where they were of great value.



Figure 5 14 rue des Tuileries, First Iron Age. First and second horse phalanx fused together following bacterial infection ?

In the initial period of the Roman colony, horse bones are lacking from most sites, especially in the centre of the city (Figure 6). At the same time, however, the first evidence for knackerie is also identified from the remains of complete long bones plus some associated bone groups discovered, notably in ditches located around the necropolis, outside of the compendium in the Vaise suburbs. During the 2nd c. A.D., evidence for horse consumption returns, once again in the form of fractured bones which display cut marks from meat-bearing parts of the skeleton. However, this evidence is still restricted to suburban areas, whereas horse bones remain completely absent from within the colony. Occurrences of horse butchery in funerary areas is also fairly common from this phase, along with more rarely horses buried in pits, such as at boulevard périphérique nord de Lyon. At the quartier Saint-Pierre, an exceptional burial of humans and horses were found together in a pit along a suburban street.¹¹

The occurrence of equid bones amongst craft-working waste became more common during the 3rd c. A.D., whilst in the early Roman period only cattle bones were used for this purpose. This may indirectly indicate evidence for horse consumption if the retrieval of long bones for craft-workers was integrated with the butchering process. On the site of rue des Chartreux, bone-working waste was found deposited in a rectangular ditch which surrounded an empty ‘inhumation’ pit. Within the ditch, disarticulated human skulls and long bones were identified along with a very poorly preserved horse skull, a lion tibia and a bear molar (Figure 7). The interpretation of the feature, possibly a structure, is difficult to determine. It may have been a monument erected to commemorate an event, perhaps associated with the amphitheatre, which may explain the association of people and wild animals in this context, or perhaps a trophy erected following one of the battles of 197 between the armies of the rival emperors Albinus and Septimus Severus which took place around Lyon.¹²

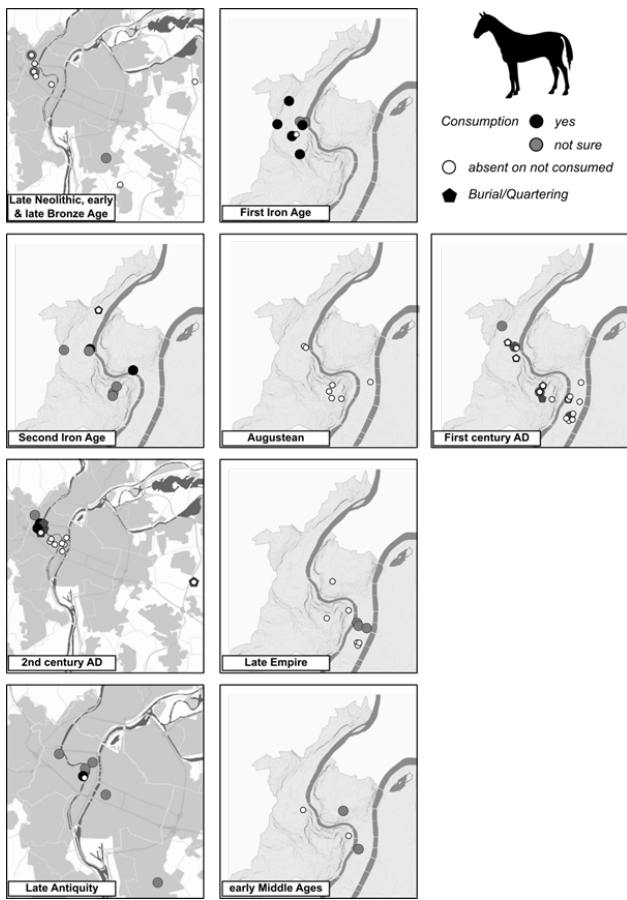


Figure 6 Maps of horse presence, consumption and burial, by chronological layer (based on table 1).

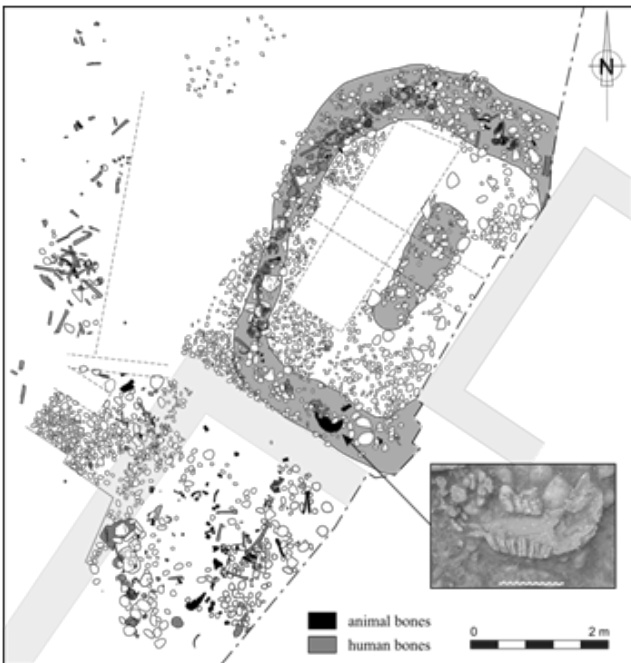


Figure 7 7-11 rue des Chartreux. Plan of the third century ditch with human and animal bones exposed. The picture shows the horse skull. Only the upper teeth were preserved, with the mandible.

By the end of Roman period, horse bones continued to be recovered in very small amount from the slaughterhouses and urban butcheries at Tramassac, perhaps indicating that the consumption of horse meat also continued, though direct evidence is lacking.⁶ Similarly, in the Early Middle Ages, the consumption of horse meat is suspected from remains on some sites, whilst only a few centuries later, it became very common in the countryside around Lyon, especially on agriculturally-poor land on the Dombes plateau to the north-east.

History of the dog (*Canis familiaris*)

Canid bones have been recovered from the majority of sites in Lyon dating from the early Bronze Age and, similar to horses, the Roman period appears to be an exception in that continuum (Figure 4). It is difficult to identify evidence for dog consumption from Bronze Age sites, notwithstanding the possibility that some bones from that period might have derived from wolves. Contrastingly, cynophagy is frequently mentioned in site reports dating to the first Iron Age. At Rue Roquette, for example, scapula and os coxae bones exhibited clear evidence for cut marks, suggesting that dog meat had been consumed. On other sites, as at rue du Docteur Horand and rue Berthet, butchered phalanx and metapodials suggest the exploitation of skins, whilst the first evidence for the inhumation of a dog is also testified at rue Berthet.¹³

During the second Iron Age, evidence for dog consumption continues. For example, at Saint-Vincent, clear and deep cut marks appear on dog tibiae. Other specimens were associated with inhumation burials of the Chais beaucairois¹⁴ (Figure 8). At this site, two matching mandibles from a puppy were placed on top of a funerary vessel, possibly as a food offering. Notably, a similar deposit was identified at the necropolis of Lamadelaine in Luxembourg, where Méniel noted the presence of puppy and chicken bones placed on top of a pot as possible food items.¹⁵

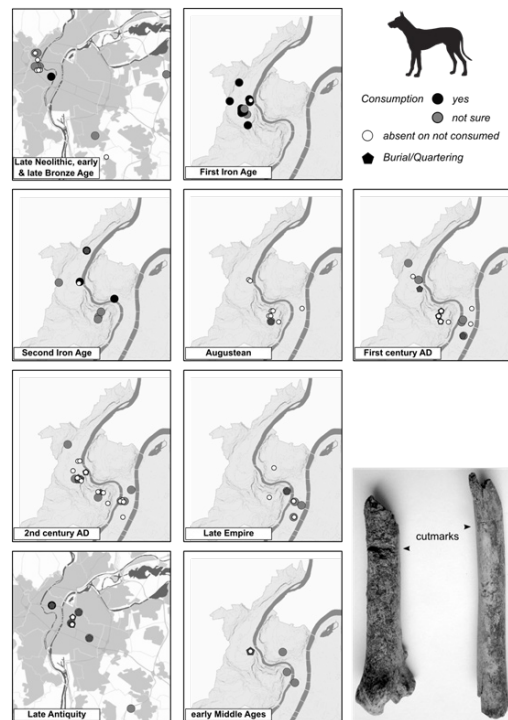


Figure 8 Maps of dog presence, consumption and burial, by chronological layer (based on table 1). Example of cutmark on dog tibiae from Saint-Vincent.

During the early Roman period, evidence for canids scavenging on carcass parts is regularly observed from gnaw marks on bones, suggesting that dogs were common on the streets and around rubbish dumps. However, evidence for dog consumption disappears during this period (Figure 8), whilst dog burials become more prolific within the city. A more exceptional find includes the identification of dog bones amongst burned offerings in a funeral pyre at the villa of La Boisse. There is also evidence for small dog breeds in the Roman town, for example at Verbe Incarné, whilst evidence for dwarf hounds have been found close to the town at Rue Saint-Didier and at nearby rural settlements such as Genas. Similarly, in the 2nd c. A.D., no evidence for the consumption of dog meat has been identified, though dog burials continue to be common. However, some remains demonstrate that individual dogs may have been treated quite differently by people in the town. One dog, with poorly-healed fractures, had been skinned before being disposed of along a street in the quartier Saint-Pierre.¹¹ In contrast, on the same site, another individual was carefully buried with a vessel, which may have been the dog's bowl. On this specimen, the right humerus demonstrated a healed fracture, though this appeared to have mended well, perhaps with the help of a thoughtful master.¹

During Late Antiquity (mid-4th c. A.D.), in the suburban Vaise area, at rue Saint-Didier, an adult ulna shows cut marks on the proximal end, perhaps indicating that the dog had been consumed. At Hôtel de Gadagne, a dog was found partially burned and deposited with coins in the foundations of a hypocaust, just prior to being sealed by a concrete slab.¹⁶ By the Early Middle Ages, some instances of dog burial continue, whilst isolated bones may be more ephemeral evidence for dog consumption, though this remains to be proven.

Conclusion

To conclude, evidence that dogs and horses were eaten before the establishment of the Roman colony at Lyon is found at a number of sites. However, a Roman taboo¹⁷ over the consumption of dogs and horses appears to have been exercised from the beginning of that period (Figure 9). At the same time, a diversification of dog breeds occurred when they also began to appear in a range of ritual practices and some may have been cared for. Contrastingly, evidence for stray dogs scavenging in the town streets also becomes more common, with a number exhibiting pathologies suggesting that they had been poorly treated.

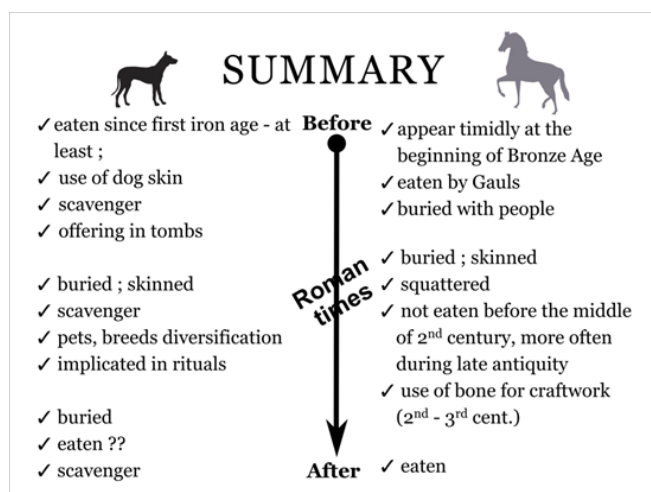


Figure 9 Synthesis of dog's and horse's status in Lyon from Neolithic to Early Middle Ages showing the influence of the Roman period.

¹Ibid 65.

For horses and other equids, a different history is evident. Horses were eaten by the Gauls, but also buried alongside people and other domestic species. If their consumption stopped strictly with the arrival of the Romans, it appears to have started once more from the middle of the 2nd c. A.D. At this time, horse bones were also exploited for craft-working and raw resources may have been supplied through knackers. And, since they were not eaten, their carcasses appear to have been scattered in the suburbs and in the neighbourhood of the necropolis.^{47,48}

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Conflict of interest

Author declares there is no conflict of interest.

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