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Text and Transmission: The role of intertextual intervention of copied texts in etymological research¹

Abstract:

The name haima Hêrakleous is cited in the Byzantine version of Dioscorides' famous herbal known as Constantinopolitan or Viennese (dated 512) as synonymous to krokos (together with castor and kunomorphos being lined one after another). The synonym lists with their alternative nomenclature in other languages found in Dioscorides' books 1-4 are not by Dioscorides himself. Although these are by later lexicographers such as Pamphilus, they are of interest for the reception of the work, and Wellmann had placed them between the text and the apparatus criticus with the designation RV (from the Viennese recension). The name haima Hêrakleous has never been fully explained and convincingly argued in previous phytonomastical research and its iconymic structure is still considered to be obscure. The method of comparativeetymological analysis applied to the naming units with the same denotative function (castor and kunomorphos) enabled us to mark out the specific concept used in the word-coining process referred to the phytonym haima Hêrakleous: a narrative that emerged from two different traditions regarding the story of castoreum - of which one concerns the early transmission and reception of the ancient medical texts and the other one is in relate with the early transmission and reception of the famous collection of zoological fables and religious moralizations called Physiologus. The aim of this study is to give the exact reconstructs of the referred onomasiological procedures (of the name-giver).

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