Summary

'Wolf' and 'Bear' in Germanic and Romance Name-Giving

Names embedding animal designations, i.e. so-called theriophoric names, are particularly common among Germanic anthroponyms. Names containing Germ. *wulfa-z M. ‚wolf' are most numerous, followed by those formed with Germ. *berōn M. or *bernu-z M. ‚bear'. These Germanic personal names find their semantic counterpart in the Romance names *Lupus* and *Ursus* as well as in the varied diminutives and suffix-derivations of those latter.

It is striking that mainly from the 6th century onwards Romance names increase noticeably, the majority of which is already accounted for as cognomina as well as in inscriptions in almost all parts of the Roman Empire from the 1st century BC on. Their importance apparently declined, however, in the 4th and 5th centuries. The article investigates whether we can speak of independently formed, parallel developments or whether interferences can be detected when exploring the semantic field of those Romance and Germanic anthroponyms embedding animal descriptions, which mainly appear in areas of Romano-Germanic interference. It can be shown that a major portion of the *Lupo-* and *Urso*-names formed mainly from the 6th century onwards is owed to the increasing predominance of the Germanic name system. We are therefore looking at one of the numerous linguistic phenomena that can be explained by the encounter of the Roman and the Germanic name systems during Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages.