ON THE COLOUR OF PEPPER

Giuseppe Giangrande
King’s College, London


Some further material is furnished in order to explain the mss. reading in Lithica 721, in addition to what the author wrote in Habis 20 (1989).

The following material will be, I hope, found useful by the reader in addition to what I wrote in Habis 20 (1989), 62, in order to explain the mss. reading χρυσοχίτωνα in Lithica 721.

As is clear from RE, s.v. Pfeffer, 1423, 40 ff., Pliny (N.H. 12.28) knows two varieties of pepper, album and nigrum; the same is the case with Dioscorides, who (Mat. Med. II, § 159) is acquainted with these two varieties (μέλαιν and λευκόν). On the other hand (RE, art. cit., 1423, 40 ff.). Theophrastus knows two varieties of pepper, which he calls μέλαιν and υπέρυθρον. The colour υπέρυθρον (RE, art. cit., 1421, 47 ff.) is “keineswegs eindeutig auf den schwarzen Pfeffer”; in the phrase κέλυφος ... υπέρυθρον the word κέλυφος denotes the “Schale” (RE, art. cit., 1421, 60) and corresponds exactly to the Hinterglied χίτωνα in the compound χρυσοχίτωνα as used in Lithica 721. Orpheus, in Lithica 721, alludes to pepper in its two varieties mentioned by Theophrastus: one of these varieties was
μέλαν (= μελαγχροίη, Lith. 721), whilst the other had a red “Schale” (κέλυφος ... υπέριθρον = χρυσόχιτων, Lith. 721, “with a red shell”).

In sum: the epithet χρυσόχιτων, in Lithica 721, is perfectly sound, whether it refers to the “skin” or to the “shell” of the kind of pepper Orpheus has in mind.