ΚΟΣΜΟΣ AND ITS DERIVATIVES IN THE PLUTARCHAN WORKS ON LOVE

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Abstract
This paper aims to explore the different meanings of the word κόσμος and its derivatives, also looking for a unified understanding of them in the Plutarchan works on love, namely Amatorius, Amatoriae Narrationes, Coniugalia Praecepta, Mulierum Virtutes and Consolatio ad Vxorem. By analyzing first a more general and primordial meaning of 'cosmical organization' and then a more domestic one – that of female cosmetics –, as well as others, an attempt is made to understand Plutarch’s use of those words, as well as the moral and philosophical principles they imply.

The term κόσμος is one of those words whose semantic range and versatility most surprises philologists, since even words which are etymologically derived from it can be seen to bear the imprint of its diversity. When Plutarch, in the second century AD, uses it to characterize the position of women in the context of a loving relationship, especially marriage – and I refer mainly to the works Conjugalia Praecepta, Consolatio ad Vxorem and Amatorius –, there is already an immeasurable philosophical and linguistic tradition conveyed by κόσμος. Thus, this study aims to analyse, briefly but as completely as possible, the appropriation and manipulation of this term by Plutarch.

According to Liddell-Scott’s Greek English Lexicon, κόσμος has two primary meanings: (1) “order”, that corresponds to the semantic value of τάξις (cf. Latin ordo)\(^1\), and, also related to the previous one, (2) “ornament” or “adornment” (cf. Latin ornamentum, ornatus). In fact, they both came to signify the same idea of aesthetical organization of unrelated elements and it is actually difficult to detect which one comes first in Greek language and literature. In relation to its more concrete and scientific sense still used nowadays – “cosmos” or “cosmic order” – it is traditionally ascribed first to Pythagóras (apud Placit. 2.1.1, D.L. 8.48; cf. [Philol.] 21) and Parmenides (Thphr. ap. D.L. l.c.), although it is already found in the fragments of their predecessors, such as Anaximander (fr. 12A 10 Diels) and Anaxymenes (fr. 13B 2 Diels). Nevertheless, it must have reached this meaning, in a definitive way, by the time of Empedocles (fr. 134 Diels)\(^2\). However, Greek literature

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1 E.g. II. 10.472 (εὖ κατὰ κόσμον), Od. 8.179 (οὐ κατὰ κόσμον), II. 2.214, Od. 13.77, II. 12.225; Ἡδτ. 2.52, cf. 7.36; Ar. Aev. 1331; Pl. P. 3.82; A. Ag. 521; Ἡδτ. 8.86, 9.59, 9.66; Th. 3.108; A. Pers. 400. It also started to relate to the specific order of States (e.g. Th. 4.76, cf. 8.48, 67; Ἡδτ. 1.65).

2 For another examples see Heraclit. 30 Diels (κόσμον τόνδε οὔτε τις θεῶν οὔτε ἄνθρώπων

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