

IS THE POEM "THE SHIELD OF HERACLES" A COSMOGONIC MYTH OR A SMALL LESSON IN ASTRONOMY?

The poem "The shield of Hercules" is attributed to Hesiod since the time of antiquity, although the authorship is not certain. In some of its parts, fragments from Homer's "Achilles Shield" are repeated, so there are researchers who consider it to be a (unsuccessful) compilation. Hesiod lived and worked in the seventh century of the old era, so if the poem is not his, we do not really know when it was created. If at the time of flourishing of Helada it was attributed to this author, there must have been some reason for this, so the time of its creation can, in the absence of other temporal determinants, be placed at the time of Hesiod.

At first glance, the poet tells a myth, he describes the struggle of Hercules with Cycnus and Ares, the god of war and the father of Cycnus. He also describes the shield, which is handled by the main hero, Hercules, as well as his genealogy. The reader must notice that all the actors of the poem can be seen in the sky; Cycnus, like the constellation Cygnus (its name and meaning), Hercules, as constellation Hercules, Iolaus, his coachman as the constellation of Auriga (Coachman), Apollo as the Sun - he is the solar god, Ares, as the planet Mars, called Pireis ("fiery"). Thus, the poem can be read as a myth of the origin of the described part of the heavens or as a small lesson from astronomy with a description of the part of the sky. The aim of this paper is to point out the possible astronomical nature of this poem.

Key words: Archaeoastronomy, Cycnus, Hercules, Pagasa