

PLEIADES STAR CLUSTER - MYTH, OLD LORE AND FOLKLORE AS A FEATURE OF THE ASTRONOMICAL EVENT OF THE CROSS- QUARTERS DURING THE YEAR WITHIN THE EARTH'S ORBIT AROUND THE SUN

The Pleiades or Vlačići are an asterism and scattered star cluster in the constellation Taurus, near the constellation Hyades. In Messier's catalog they are marked M45. In Greek mythology, that name was used for seven divine sisters, daughters of the titans Atlas and oenaidēs Pleione. The Pleiades are among the Serbian people known as Vlačići. In ancient Egypt, the Pleiades constellation was represented as seven judges, who decide the fate of the human soul after death. In ancient times, the plane of the ecliptic, in which the Earth revolves around the Sun, began to gain more and more importance in the sky. The seven stars of the Pleiades served as the starting point for the creation of that new composition, which were the seeds from which the Zodiac later emerged. Such a narrative is recorded in Indian mythology, to explain the story of the separation of the seven wives of the great rishis from their husbands. The constellation is known from ancient cultures around the world, including the Celts, Australian Aborigines (from several traditions), Persians, Arabs, Chinese, Mayans, Aztecs. This important constellation played a key role in attempts to define astronomical timekeeping through the ancient world calendar and its connection to higher levels of existence through tradition and folklore. The cross-quarter days fall more or less halfway between the equinoxes (when the sun sets due west) and the solstices (when the sun sets at its northernmost or southernmost point on the horizon). For this work, the second and fourth quarters were mentioned, that is, from the appearance of the Pleiades in the sky - at the beginning of May, and their visible disappearance - at the beginning of November, and in connection with that, the two holidays that are celebrated in that name. Both belong to the Celts – Beltane and Halloween.

Key words: Pleiades, Vlačići, myth, tradition, festivals, days of the cross quarter, the Coligny Calendar, Beltane, Halloween