

The Ensemble of the Acropolis of Athens in the Light of Ancient Greek Mythology*

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Abstract—The article sets the task to find explanations for the structural, architectural, and artistic features of the Acropolis of Athens in the mythological conceptions of the ancient Greeks regarding the cosmic world order. For this purpose, correlations of the objects located on the Acropolis, with their probable heavenly prototypes imprinted on the starry sky are carried out. It is established that the terrestrial projection of constellations corresponded to such turn of the sky at which the Milky Way followed a latitudinal direction, and the plane of ecliptic surrounded by a belt of the Zodiac rose in the West and lowered in eastern direction. In general, the Acropolis was like the ship Argo, aimed at the rising sun. Its southern — right side corresponded with the constellations of the Leo, Virgo, Libra and Scorpio, and the northern — left — Taurus, Aries, Pisces and Aquarius. The first of them was associated with the mother earth and the light wise maiden Athena, while the second one — with the dark and stormy water elements embodied by Poseidon.

Keywords—architecture; town planning; ensemble; worldview; mythology; astral symbolism

I. INTRODUCTION

Many hills have been revered as abodes of the gods visiting the earth from time to time. By the will of nature and the efforts of humans, they turned into unique architectural and town-forming complexes. At the same time, there were always signs of the universal archaic model of cosmic world order preserved in them. This model was characterized by the likening of the sky itself, stretching over the earth, to the great mountain. Homer, in the *Iliad*, called the sky Mount Olympus [1]. It follows that it makes sense to look for the initial astral symbolism in the construction of various kinds of sacred citadels and acropolises. This is the aim of the

proposed article, where an attempt is made to correlate the objects located on the Acropolis of Athens with their celestial prototypes depicted in the starry sky, and thus discover the mythological motivation for the construction of this glorious ensemble.

The rock of the Acropolis at least from Mycenaean times served as a place of veneration for the wise maiden goddess, whose name was given to the main attic polis. On its crest the Temple of Athena Polias, known as Hecatompedon stood. To the North-East of it, there was a palace complex of Athenian kings. At the turn of the 5th century B.C., it was decided to expand and level the upper platform of the Acropolis with the construction of a retaining wall along its southern edge. It was necessary to build a large temple of Athena-Parthenos here. The first Parthenon remained unfinished because of the Persian invasion. However, under Pericles, in the years 447-438 B.C., on its place (although on a different foundation) by the efforts of the best masters of classical Greece, a new All-Hellenic temple was successfully erected. Propylaea (437-432 B.C.) was built afterwards, and in 421 B.C. the construction of the temple of Athena Nike was completed and the erection of the Erechtheion, which replaced Hecatompedon, started and continued until 406 B.C. ("Fig. 1".)

The history of the creation of the Acropolis of Athens is well enough studied, both on written sources, and on natural archaeological and restoration materials, as evidenced by the mass of publications. In the given article, it is possible to be limited to references only to some generalizing books which are enough to undertake the attempt of disclosing the symbolical meaning of the given ensemble [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [7].

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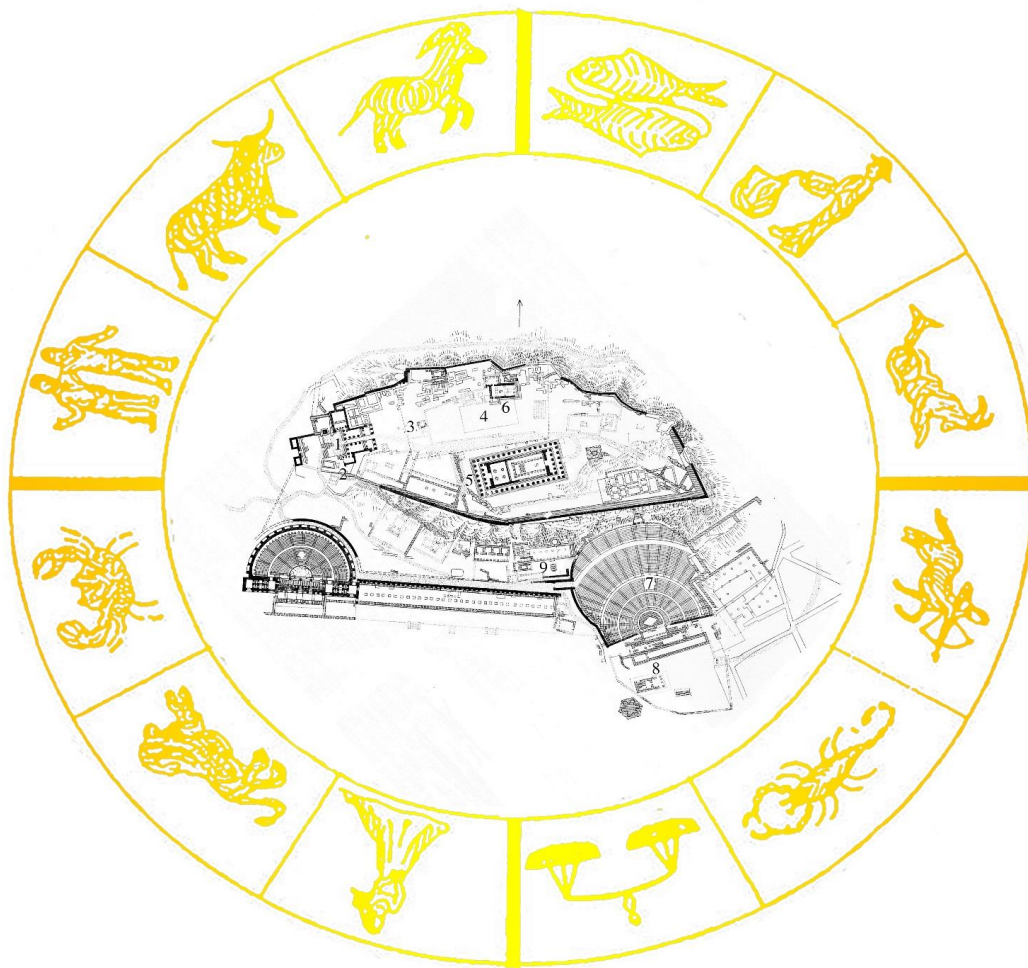


Fig. 1. Plan of the Acropolis of Athens surrounded by the Zodiac. Author's diagram. The drawing of the Acropolis is reproduced by: [8]. Explication: 1. Propylaea, 2. Pyrgos and the temple of Athena Nike, 3. Statue of Athena Promachos, 4. The outline of Hecatompelon, 5. Parthenon, 6. Erechtheion, 7. The Theatre of Dionysus 8. The Temple of Dionysus, 9. The Temple of Asclepius

II. ASCENT TO THE SEVENTH HEAVEN

The ceiling of the central entrance portico of the Propylaea was decorated with golden stars shining on a blue background [9]. Due to the rise of the relief, the ceiling was approximately on the same level as the upper platform of the

Acropolis. It happened that those entering, passing the Propylaea and heading towards the Parthenon, as if went through the celestial shell, which separates the profane world from the heavenly one. The main temples of the Acropolis turned out to be standing over this shell — over the stars ("Fig. 2").

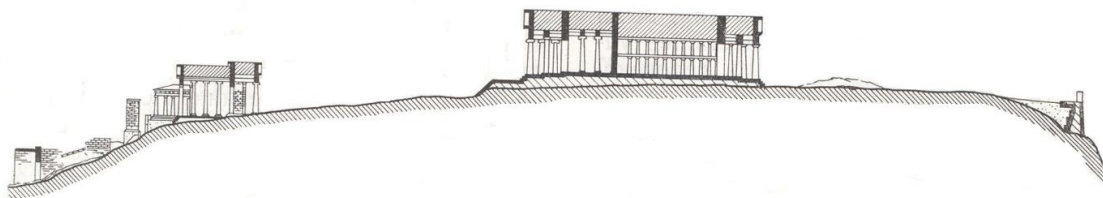


Fig. 2. Longitudinal section of the Acropolis. Reproduced by: [8]

In the myths of Ancient Greece, the description of the hard, heavy sky, which the titan Atlas has had to hold, draws attention. On top of this sky, there are palaces of Olympians.

Figures of athletes, comparable to the columns, were sometimes put around the perimeter of the building, thus ensuring, the horizontality of its entablature. However, myths definitely point to the existence of only one Atlant supporting the firmament in the West. What about the East? One might think that there, the firmament falls to the ground and rests on it. In ancient Greek sources, we do not find any evidence of that, but in the Bible, there is such a phrase: "He inclined the heavens and descended" [Psalm 17, 10]. In one medieval apocryphal epic, it is said that the earth "touches" the heaven [10]. It is known that the altar of the Christian church is an image of "earthly sky". How can we understand all this?

It seems that the known fact of an inclination of a plane of the ecliptic in relation to a plane of equator here can serve as a prompt. The most remarkable thing is that among constellations of the Zodiac belt, framing the ecliptic plane, there is one, which includes a star called Atlas! This is the constellation of Taurus, located just where the ecliptic is raised.

Why were the pillars of the sky often multiplied and placed around the perimeter of the building? This can be explained by the visible rotation of the sky around the vertical axis. Twelve signs of the Zodiac, bypassing the Earth in an inclined position, lay in the sky seven horizontal circular routes: five paired and two single — at the top and bottom. I have already suggested that it is this projection regularity of the geocentric structure of the universe that is reflected in the myths about the seven-tier structure of the sky [11] ("Fig. 3").

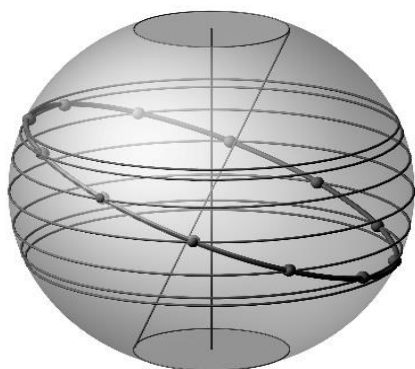


Fig. 3. Seven Tiers of The Sky, Organized by The Rotation of The Twelve Inclined Signs of The Zodiac. Scheme by *The Author*.

Constellations are constantly circling the earth, like in a circle dance. Does this circle dance have a beginning and an end? It turns out that it has, as soon as the stationary earth in the considered archaic model of the universe has a binding to the cardinal directions, and with them — to the projections

of the starry sky. Atlas stands on the western edge of the earth, where his country Atlantis was, which has plunged into the waters of the ocean, called Atlantic since then. In the sky he moves along with all other constellations, leaving at night his earthly home and returning to it every night. The same can be said of other constellations that are in the sky but have their loci on earth.

The ascent to the Acropolis of Athens is from the West. There is physical tension from overcoming the height on which the sacred rock rises like a seven-tier sky. Framing the entrance of the Propylaea is similar to the Gemini, controlling the space gap between themselves. The constellation of Gemini directly adjoins the constellation of Taurus, and below it, there is a spectacular constellation of the giant — Orion, very much reminiscent of such a titan, which is the only one able to raise the edge of the sky, surrounded by the Zodiac.

III. A VESSEL ON THE MILKY WAY

It is important to note that the Milky Way passes through the constellation of Gemini, and is believed to be followed by the gods and souls of the dead [12]. In the lower part of this "path" aside from the Zodiacal Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, under the Canis Major are the constellations of Pup, Argo Navis (Ship Argo) and Vela (Sails). In the era of antiquity, they formed a single constellation of the mythological ship Argo. If this ship's stern was facing the West, then it was heading East. Argonauts led by Yason went for the Golden Fleece, symbolizing the sun. The bow of the ship is not fixed in a particular constellation, however, in the sky, there are such creatures, which usually crown the ship's bow. We mean, first of all, the birds — Eagle, Hawk, Swan, as well as the flying Dragon. All of them face the rising sun at such turn of the sky.

In the Middle Ages, the Argonauts' star ship was identified with the Noah's Ark. And, most remarkably, they retained the pre-Christian view of its West-East orientation. In the treatise of Hugo of Saint-Victoria (XII century) the "Mystic Noah's Ark" it is told, that its bow is directed to the East, and the stern — to the West, "thus the arrangement of places corresponded to an order of times and the end of the world coincided with the end of time" [13]. European basilicas, as well as Russian churches by the "vessel", consider an embodiment of this sacramental image. In front of them was an altar associated with paradise, and behind it was the main entrance, often flanked by two "twin" towers.

Here it makes sense to recall the famous tradition of depicting the Last Judgment on the western wall of the Christian church. The foundations for the formation of such a tradition are found, unexpectedly, in the sacred topography of ancient Athens. To the West of the entrance to the Acropolis the hill of Ares is situated, where the council of elders — Areopagus — met and the court was located.

The 300-meter long, latitudinally stretched rock of the Acropolis of Athens with its pointed eastern end, in fact, resembles the ship that since time immemorial has been towering over the vast valley, serving as a reliable stronghold for the residents of the polis and nearby areas.

IV. FROM ARES TO ANTARES

In front of the entrance to the Acropolis on the right side—a monumental stone-lined ledge — Pyrgos — was arranged. Trophies taken during military operations were displayed on it. And on top of it, the Victory Temple of Athena Nike (Wingless Nike) stood. The worship of the god of war Ares on the opposite hill appeared here, as it can be seen, naturally.

One may suppose that the arrangement of Nike's temple on the Pyrgos was conditioned by its ideological connection with the image of the royal and victorious lion. The cornerstone Zodiac constellation of the Leo in the projection on the ground should have occupied this place, if the constellations of Cancer, Gemini and Taurus were located to the North of it.

At the base of Pyrgos, the niche-sanctuary of Gaia and Demeter [14] has been arranged. Obviously, the southern, sunny side of the Acropolis beginning from here correlated with agriculture, as evidenced by the Zodiac constellation of the Virgin following the Leo with its bright star Spica, denoting a ripe ear in the hand of the goddess.

At the same time, Gaia was involved in the birth of the Lernaean Hydra, as at the beginning of time she gave birth to Typhon, who was considered the father of this nine-headed monster. This myth is important to note because in the sky under the Zodiac Cancer, Leo, Virgo, and Libra, there is a Hydra constellation winding like a snake. Greeks connected it with Lernaean Hydra killed by Hercules, and Arabs named it — the Big Snake [15]. Gaia — the earth — had a fundamental mythological connection with all snake-like, chthonic creatures. Worshipping this most ancient titanide together with the Olympic goddess who also personified "the Mother- Earth" [16], at the entrance to Acropolis should, apparently, secure Athenians from raging natural forces and promise a good harvest.

Right after the Zodiacal Leo in the sky, there is a constellation of the Ursa Major (Big Bear), which, in turn, is connected with the circumpolar Ursa Minor (Little Bear). And on the Acropolis, behind the Pyrgos, West of the sacred site of Athena Ergana, located just before the Parthenon, there was a sanctuary of Artemis of Brauronia — the Bear. Was it an accident? Perhaps, the place of worship of the "bear goddess" was founded there on purpose, based on the heavenly topography, reflected on the surface of the sacred rock.

The constellation of the Leo in the Zodiac belt is followed, as already noted, by the constellation of the Virgo. The Temple of Athena Parthenos (Athena-Virgin) — Parthenon was built near the southern wall of the Acropolis in accordance with this order.

The next successive descending Zodiac constellations — Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius — could relate to the temple of Asclepius and the temple and the theater of Dionysus, arranged on the South-eastern slope of the Acropolis. In order to justify this idea, it is necessary to penetrate the semantics of those images and perceptions that are accumulated in the specified and adjacent constellations.

First of all, it should be noted that in ancient Greece, Libra was considered to be the claws of Scorpio. That is, the constellation of Scorpio seemed large, reaching out to the Virgo. The cunning arachnid is known for its deadly poison. However, in Ancient Egypt, the goddess Serket, a scorpion, was worshipped as a healer. The Greek god of healing was Asclepius. When he mastered the skill of resurrecting the dead, Zeus struck him with a lightning and took him to heaven. Asclepius was identified with the constellation of the Ophiuchus (Serpent-Bearer), which is close to Scorpio and can even be considered the thirteenth sign of the Zodiac. At the same time, Asclepius was associated also with the Raven [17] which constellation is on a back of Hydra.

It is necessary to mention two centaurs located in the same part of the sky. One of them is the Zodiac Sagittarius, and the other is the Centaurus descending into the southern hemisphere. Sagittarius was considered to be a centaur Krotos. Some researchers believe that he was the guardian of the entry into the world of the dead [18]. The Centaurus — is Chiron — the wisest of the titans. It was represented on ancient maps of the sky with a spear piercing the Wolf, which constellation adjoins Scorpio. Greeks and Romans named this heavenly wolf — "The Beast", and ancient Sumerians — "the Beast of Death" [19]. According to the ancient Greek mythology, it was Chiron who revealed Asclepius the secret of the resurrection of the dead. Being immortal, he, after being injured by a poisoned arrow of Hercules, has voluntarily descended in the netherworld on what stars of southern hemisphere point to.

Everything speaks for the fact that in this place, a sacrament of the interrelation of life and death, dying and rebirth takes place. The sun comes here in the autumn. A moment after, it will hold still on the lowest point of its trajectory — during the winter solstice. The harvest ends, and nature falls asleep. Persephone goes to the grim kingdom of Hades. But here the beginning of a new life cycle is also rooted.

Dionysus belonged to the number of dying and resurrecting gods which are honored almost in all ancient world [20]. Theatres devoted to him held the performances genetically connected with mass ecstatic mysteries. Dionysus was the phallic god possessing goat features, and it allows to find its connections with the same Sagittarius — Krotos — an offspring of goat-legged Pan, and also with the following fantastic being on a Zodiac circle — the Capricorn, differently named Capricorn Fish or Goat's Horn [21].

If we take into account that the brightest star of the constellation of Scorpio is called Antares, that is, "Confronting Ares", the binding of the image of Scorpio to the eastern edge of the Acropolis will find another significant reinforcement, as the hill of Ares is located just on the western side of the Acropolis.

Near the Theatre of Dionysus, there was a small temple of Asclepius. However, it was not located on the same side as the constellation of the Serpent-Bearer — Asclepius which adjoins Scorpio. Probably, in this case Asclepius was associated with the Raven. In addition, his temple quite

accurately pointed to the place of the descent of the Centaurus Chiron.

In this part of the sky, one more constellation draws special attention, namely: Ara (The Altar), which is located in the Milky Way right under the sting of Scorpio. Its role is beyond doubt: to resume life, it is necessary to make sacrifices. The altar of Athens could be likened to a heavenly altar. However, by the height of its location, it was more like a constellation of the northern Crown.

It should be noted that the altar of the Christian church, also moved to the East, in a transformed and rethought form embodies the same fundamental idea of the connection of life and death.

V. POSEIDON VERSUS ATHENA

The following signs of the Zodiac, if you continue to move counter-clockwise — are Aquarius, Pisces, and Aries — do not find direct analogies with the structures and tracts of the Acropolis that have survived until today. And yet, some thoughts in favor of such parallels can be expressed.

The most noticeable natural object with a talking name is located in the valley North of the Acropolis. It is the Eridanos River, which makes its way within the city from the North-East to the North-West. There is a river with the same name in the starry sky. And it wriggles just between Aquarius and Orion. It seems that in its waters there are Zodiac fish splashing, and underneath them — under Aries and Taurus — Cetus (The Whale) swims.

The remains of the king's chambers on the Acropolis are located approximately under the area where the constellations of King Cepheus and Queen Cassiopeia shine in the sky. The constellation of Princess Andromeda is in contact with Cassiopeia, who is threatened by the monstrous whale sent by Poseidon. A little bit more Westward and higher — there is the constellation of her savior — Perseus, holding a sword in one hand, and the severed head of Medusa — in the other.

According to Ovidius, Perseus killed the inhospitable king Atlas with this head, who looked at it and turned into a huge stone mountain, the peak of which rested on the sky. Thus, the once blooming Atlantis ended its existence [22]. The rock base of the Acropolis of Athens can be considered an illustration of this myth. Subsequently, Perseus has given a deadly head to goddess Athena, and she has placed it on her shield.

On the Acropolis directly opposite the entrance was a colossal statue of Athena Promachos — the Warriress, the work of Phidias. Its location is suitable for counting the transfer of the head of Medusa to Athena already held especially if we imagine that the armed goddess stands with her back turned to the Propylaea.

It is now accepted that Athena Promachos was facing the Propylaea, like a hospitable hostess meeting guests. This is in line with the modern understanding of the organization of the architectural ensemble in anticipation of its opening to the viewer, starting from the entrance. However, it should be

noted that the temple statues of Athena Polias, Athena Parthenos and Athena Nike were facing East, where the temples themselves were oriented. The ritual demanded it. I think Athena Promachos was also turned to the East. Thus, she looked like a stern man or captain pointing her ship forward. If so, the shield of the formidable leader, being in her left hand, echoed exactly that part of the sky where the constellation of Perseus shone at night with its famous shimmering star, identified with the head of Medusa. The Arabs called it Algol — "The Devil's Star".

Plato in dialogues of Critius and Timei associates Atlas and his country Atlantis with the god of the seas Poseidon. Giant Orion was considered the son of Poseidon. And the bull — the Taurus was his animal. The Minotaur was born from Poseidon, who turned into a bull. And the hero Theseus who has killed Minotaur, becoming the Athenian ruler subsequently, had the divine father of Poseidon [23]. Other legendary kings who lived in the palace on the Acropolis — Erichonius, Erechtheus, Aegeus, whose name is the sea, were also connected with Poseidon in one way or another. It is also necessary to note the existence of the hill of Nymphs on the territory of Athens to the North-West of the Acropolis, on the way to the port of Piraeus. This was the absolute possession of Poseidon, as long as the nymphs were under his authority, and he was called "Nymphaget". The constellation of Auriga (The Charioteer) above the Gemini was also sometimes identified with Poseidon on a chariot driven by heavenly horses.

Thus, the north-western and northern side of the Acropolis, facing the valley of the river Eridanos, retained its mythological connection with the god of water from those memorable times when he competed with Athena for the possession of the Attic. Although Athena won, Poseidon continued to be honored. Thus, not far from the olive planted by Athena, a well with salty water, carved out, according to legend, with Poseidon's trident was carefully preserved from century to century. Nearby on a sacred site of the most ancient temple of Athens the legendary king Erichonius was buried.

In the 5th century B.C., Erechtheion, the western bigger part of which can be considered the temple of Poseidon, was built over this sacramental place. According to Pausanias' testimony, three altars were built here: Poseidon's and Erechtheus' (the grandson of Erichonius, the Athenian king), the hero Butes' and Hephaestus' (who was considered the father of Erichonius). Under a floor of a cella there was a crypt where a sacred snake Erichonius lived, and under a floor of Pronaos — there was a well with salty water — "Erichonius' sea" [24]. The eastern, smaller part of Erechtheion, raised by more than three meters, became the temple of Athena Polias or, more precisely, "the inaccessible sanctuary of Athena", where the ancient wooden statue of the goddess from the demolished Hecatompedon was transferred to. The entrance portico of the temple of Athena was oriented, as it should be, to the East. And the entrance to the lower part of Erechtheion was arranged from the North in the form of a large six-column portico, facing the vast city panorama. On the opposite side of the western edge of

Erechtheion, a small portico with caryatid statues was added to the south facing the Parthenon.

The Olive planted by Athena grew in a specially fenced area in front of the western facade of Erechtheion — Pandroseion. It was revered as a sacred tree. This makes it possible to bring it closer to the cherished apple tree in the Hesperides Garden. One of Hercules' feats was to get three golden apples from the garden. The garden was on the edge of the world, but rather on the edge of the sky, supported by Atlas. The hero had to take the place of the titan and hold the sky until he went to the Hesperides and brought apples. According to another variant of a myth, Hercules has got in a garden, has killed dragon Ladon and has taken the fruits [25].

On the Acropolis of Athens, it turned out so that the divine tree is guarded by the first progenitor — half-serpent Erichonius instead of the dragon. And where are the sisters, the Hesperides? Aren't they at the portico of the Caryatids? Probably not, because there are six Caryatids, and according to myths there were only three or four Hesperides. Let me guess that the six female figures carrying on their heads the slab of the southern portico of Erechtheion symbolized the other sisters — the Pleiades, the daughters of the titan Atlas and the oceanide nymph Pleione. There were seven of them, but six married the immortals, and one, Meropa, married the mortal Sisyphus. Since then, she has become timid, dull, and almost invisible. Therefore, the star cluster of the Pleiades, which was rather revered in the ancient world, was sometimes considered consisting of seven, and sometimes of six stars [26].

Vitruvius has brought us the version of an origin of Caryatids from the historical event — destruction by Greeks of the Peloponnesian city of Caria for that its inhabitants have united with Persians. All men have been killed, and women taken as slaves. Sculptures of these women architects began to apply "for carrying the burden, so descendants remember the punishment of Carians" [27]. Without questioning this source, which testifies to the desire to find rational explanations for the formation of mythological images in antiquity, I would like to draw attention to the fact that Caryatids with ease and elegance perform in a smaller scale the same role as the atlants did, who originate from the titan Atlas. This fact gives the basis for a hypothesis about possible identification of Caryatids as Pleiades — the daughters of Atlas.

Where is the Pleiades in the sky? It is located in the same constellation of Taurus where the Atlas star is! They are located on a bend of Taurus adjoining to the next constellation of Aries.

Erechtheion is skillfully built in the Ionic order. The spirally twisted volutes of the Ionic capitals resemble lamb horns. The question arises: did the creators of Erechtheion, in the heyday of ancient classics, had no intention of correlating their exquisite architectural work with the Zodiac constellation of Aries, which associated with the arrival of the sun in its vernal equinox? In any case, the constellation of Aries is opposite the Virgin, and at this turn of the sky points to the North, approximately the same way as Erechtheion is located in relation to the Parthenon.

However, if the portico of Caryatides was the symbol of the Pleiad of the constellation of Taurus, then Erechtheion could not relate to a single constellation of Aries. Its western part, connected with the cult of the god of the seas, belonged to Taurus in astral terms. It is important to note that the capitals over the heads of Caryatids were made not ionic, but Doric. It seems that Erechtheion was consciously created at the junction of two different cults and different Zodiac signs.

VI. CONCLUSION

Thus, the starry sky, which we inherited mainly from the era of antiquity, allows us to correlate with it some architectural and natural complexes formed in ancient times under the influence of astral mythology and pagan religion. Such complexes undoubtedly include the famous Acropolis of Athens. It has signs of a conscious reproduction of the archaic picture of the world, in which the earth remained stationary, and the sky floating above it was in a constant circular motion. The rock of the Acropolis, steeply rising above the valley, looked like the sky itself. So, it should have been, since it housed the sanctuaries of the Olympians. The location of the royal chambers here does not contradict what was said, because in ancient times the kings of were considered sacred figures. In the classical period, when the Acropolis of Athens was transformed into a brilliant architectural ensemble, there were no more kings, the state affairs were run by strategists, who lived, like everyone else, in the city.

However, the Acropolis could only symbolize the sky, because it belonged to the earth and was unshakable. The celestials visited it at the appointed hours and then left to continue their journeys. It is essential to establish the starry sky projection that determined the topography and toponymy of the Acropolis of Athens. This task was helped by the data set of ancient Greek and partly medieval astral mythology involved in the analysis. It turned out that the citadel of Athens was like a great celestial ship, which stood here as if on a quay, turning the stern to the West and nose to the East with its longitudinal axis on the Milky Way. And the vertical axis, although it corresponded, inevitably, to the zenith, speculatively echoed the axis of the world. The analysis of the plan of the "wheeled city", according to Herodotus, which has grown around the Acropolis allows us to confirm it. This analysis shows that Athens was surrounded by some semblance of the Zodiac belt.

The Acropolis, as we can see, was surrounded with the same star belt, not round, but flattened on the sides. This can be interpreted as a model of the initial stage of the formation of the geocentric universe when it has just split into two halves on the ring of the Milky Way, aptly named "a suture, connecting the two halves of the sky" by Plato and Theophrastus [28]. It was only after such a schism or split that, according to the logic of things, when a widening vortex movement began to appear. Rising winds and a stormy sea are dangerous for sailors. But the ship on the Milky Way is out of danger, because it follows the straight path, adhering to the "golden mean" between the extremes. And it can be called a saving ark, floating quietly along the fairytale "milk river with jelly banks".

The Acropolis of Athens is a very picturesque and asymmetrical architectural and natural ensemble. The explanation for this is usually seen in its gradual formation and lack of time and money for total planning transformations. In fact, the Acropolis received a straight wall with large segments only from the southern side. The northern slope remained quite different.

But did ancient Greek architects really strive for regularity? It is possible that some sought — because at Pericles in Athens, worked Hippodamus of Miletus, famous for the orthogonal layouts of cities. However, in this case, the ensemble was created according to other principles deeply rooted in a cultural tradition. It was impossible to transform the edges of the northern slope of the Acropolis on the model of the southern slope. And it seems to me that this was understood by the leaders of the reconstruction who were great masters and intellectuals.

The southern side of the Acropolis turned to the daytime luminary — is the "midday" side, as they would say in Russia — which was dedicated to a bright and wise goddess who stands for justice and order in the world, patronizing cities and crafts. And the opposite side — the "midnight" one — remained in many respects in the power of the stormy elements, the embodiment of which was Poseidon, sometimes called the "oscillator of the earth", as well as "landlord" and "the spouse of the earth" [29].

Earth and water are very different elements, but their union is vital. That is why Poseidon, who lost, did not leave Athens. The ensemble of Acropolis has evidently immortalized rivalry of two gods and natural beginnings personified by them. And that is remarkable, it demonstrated not a shaky dialectical balance of opposites, but quite a certain predominance of one of the parties, achieved by the victory of the cosmic mind over the destructive forces of chaos. Thanks to this victory, Athena established herself not only on her native half but also on the other half, which belonged to the enemy, curbing the forces of nature to the extent necessary here.

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