

(a) Elena G. Rabinovitch, 5 Tavritcheskaia St. Apt. 61, 191015 StPetersburg, Russia; tel.: (7 812) 275 22 35 (home); email: egr@ER1126.spb.edu

(b) “Greek and Roman Epic” or “Religion in Society”

(c) The Borders of “Europe” in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo

d) 20 minutes

(e) *The Borders of “Europe” in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo*

Already for Herodotus, who produced the famous mythologem *Europe* vs. *Asia*, the “Ionian” notion of three continents, though traditional, was not clear enough – first of all because of *Europe*. Indeed, while ancient (pre-geographical) *Asia* and *Libye* were names of well-known regions and retained their meaning until Roman times (cf. *Asia propria* and *Africa propria*), *Europe* was mentioned in the pre-geographical period only once, in the Homeric Hymn, when Apollo invited to his Oracle all inhabitants of Archipelagos, Europe and Peloponnesos. Thus, according to the Hymn, *Europe* was situated in the continent and was considered to be a region large enough to be compared with Peloponnesos; later, for the Ionian geographers *Europe* had a sea-coast long enough to be compared with the sea-coasts of ancient *Asia* and *Libye*, the Mediterranean façades of the continents *Asia* and *Libye*. The borders of this ancient Europe can be found only from the inferences in the Hymn. Following Apollo in his search for the place for the Oracle, we can see him walking through Thessaly, Boetia, Phocis and Euboea – therefore, it is possible to conclude, that this region is what was meant under the name *Europe*. This region, too, is large enough to be named together with Peloponnesos and/or Archipelagos, and its sea-coast extends from Olympus to Caphareus, i.e. is long enough to be later compared with that of *Asia* and *Libye*. More detailed analysis will show that *Europe* in the Hymn has to be defined not as a simple sum of Thessaly, Boetia, Phocis and Euboea, but as a special geopolitical entity – the territory under the control of the twelve Amphictyons of Pytho.