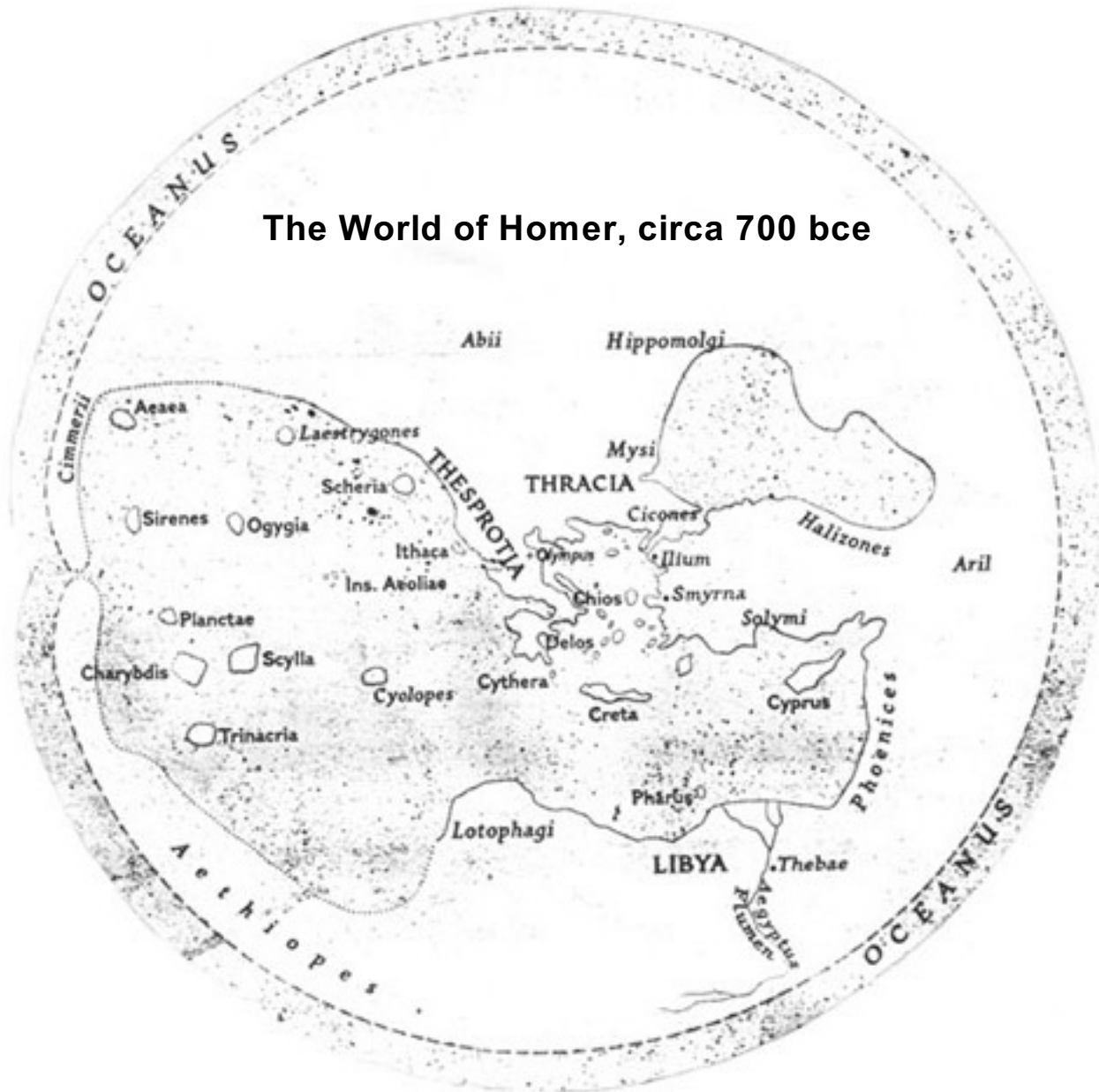


The World of Homer, circa 700 bce



Based on descriptions from Homeric texts, including the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, this is how scholars think Homer must have envisioned the world, circa 800 – 700 bce. Mount Olympus, home of the gods, is in the center. The “ocean stream” forms a rim around everything – just as Homer describes its representation on Achilles’ shield.

Scholars theorize that Homer may have come from Smyrna (just south of Troy, or *Ilium*, as it is called on this map). So his sense of the western Mediterranean was a bit vague. Some think the island of modern day Sicily was home to the Cyclopes and that Circe and the Sirenes were both on the western coast of Italy. But of course, no one knows for sure. The Achaeans believed the Straits of Gibraltar led north, to the Underworld.