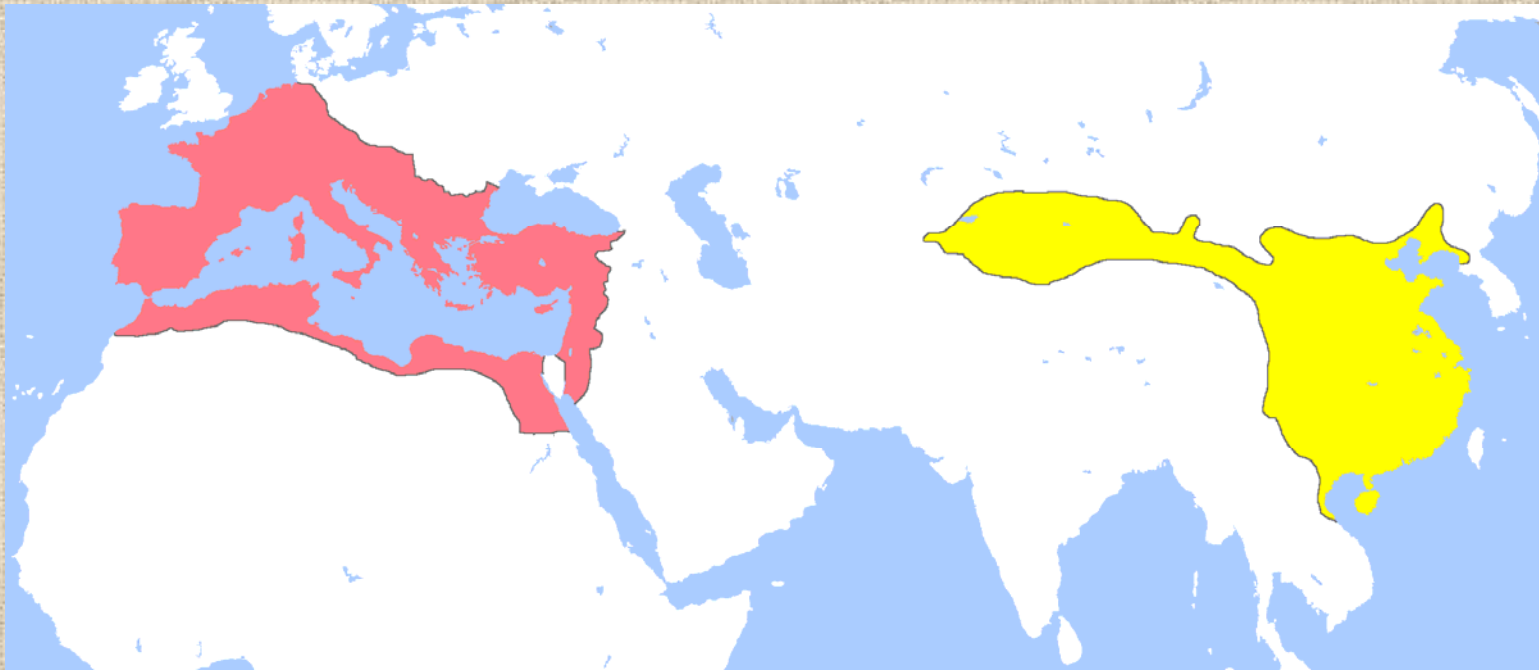


Parallels between Rome & China

REORGANIZING HUMAN SOCIETIES (600 B.C.E. – 600 C.E.)



Similarities

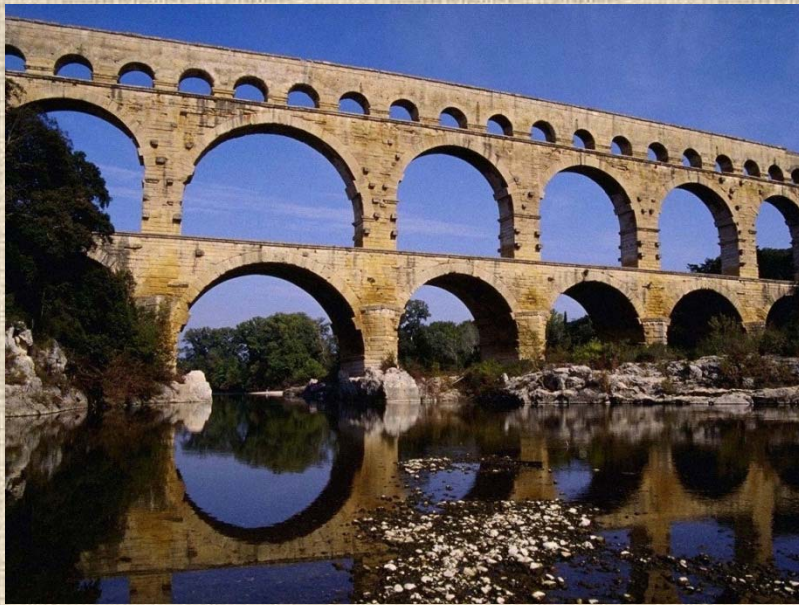
- In both cultures the family (which was important in both) was headed by an all-powerful patriarch.



- Agriculture was the main economic activity and source of wealth in both.



- Both carried out impressive engineering feats involving water.



- Both empires expanded to encompass widespread territories of diverse people and ecosystems - and found a way to unify those new places by exporting their culture. The construction of a network of roads in both also helped.



- They both delegated considerable autonomy to local officials in far away territories of their empire.



- Both eventually collapsed in part due to invasions of “barbarians,” and the financial cost of maintaining and protecting a large empire.



- In both Rome and in China new religions emerged and were perceived as “non-traditional” and a “problem” for their respective societies (at least at first).



Map 5-1
 Ways of the World, First Edition
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Differences

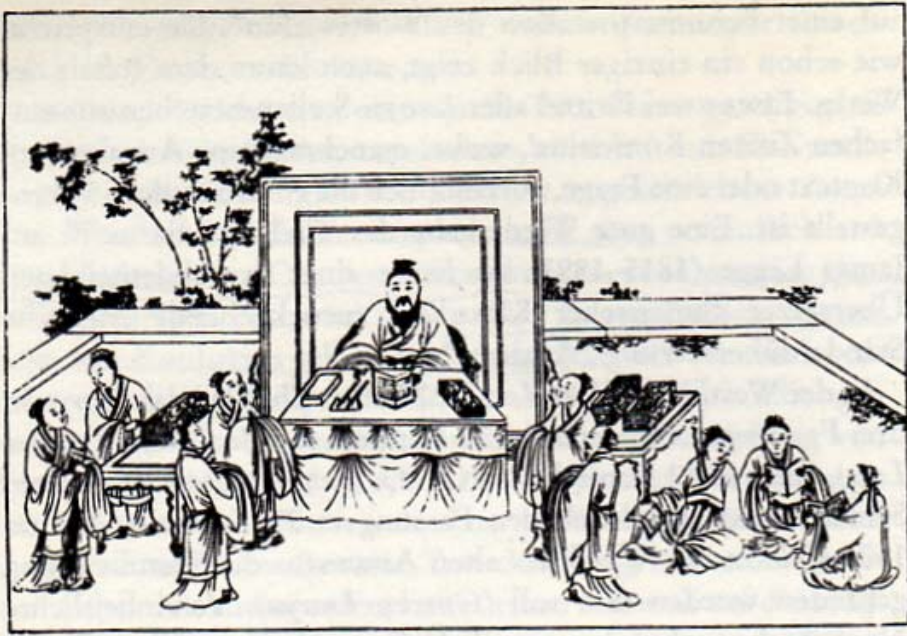
- In China the emperor was the “divine son of Heaven.”
- In Rome the emperor was chosen by the army and the Senate and had no spiritual connection.





- The cult of ancestry in China was not as strong (or perhaps even existent) in Rome. In other words, the family was less of an organizational model for Roman society.
- In Rome there was a much stronger emphasis on law or a legal code than there was in China (despite the legalist roots of the Qin).

- While Confucianism served as a model for unification in China, Christianity was seen a thorn in the side of the empire (until Constantine thought he could use it to his advantage).



- Slavery was crucial to Rome (perhaps 3 in 8 were slaves).
- The Qin Dynasty had abolished slavery (slaves didn't pay taxes, free people did).

