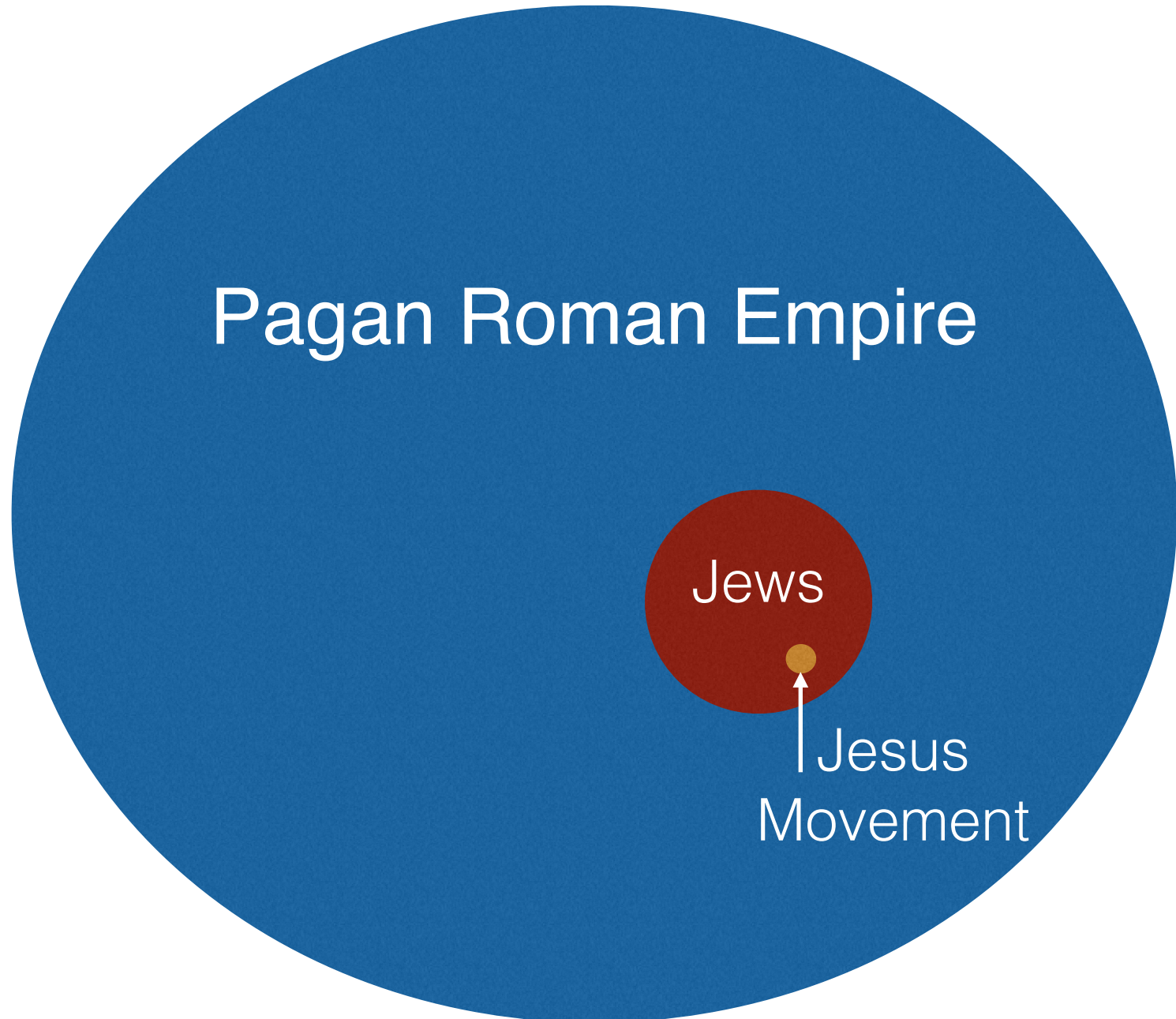


Paganism and Judaism in the 1st Century

www.JeffreySmall.com



Birth of Christianity - 1st Century



Christianity after Constantine 4th Century

Christian Roman Empire

Jews

A diagram consisting of a large brown circle representing the 'Christian Roman Empire'. Inside this large circle, in the lower right quadrant, is a smaller dark red circle labeled 'Jews'.

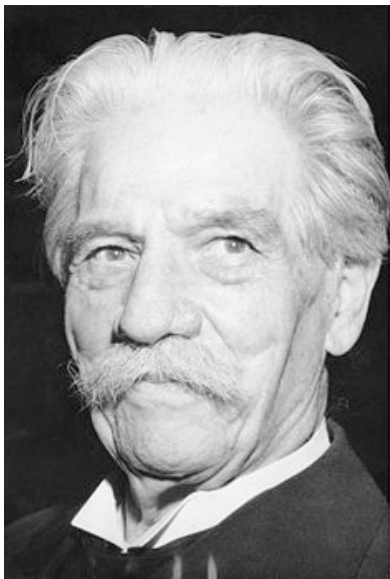
Quest for the Historical Jesus



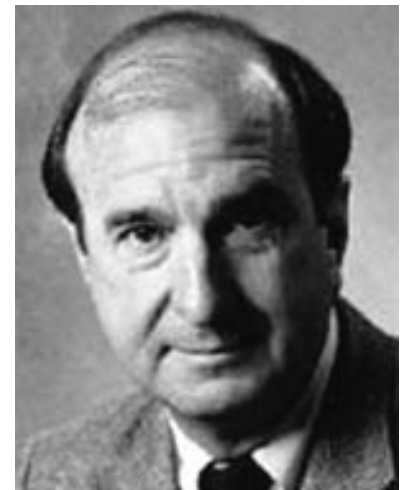
John Dominic Crossan



Marcus Borg



Albert
Schweitzer
(1875-1965)



E.P. Sanders



Bart Ehrman
(1955-)

UNC Chapel Hill

“Religion *of* Jesus
to the religion
about Jesus.”



Paganism
= Polytheism

Ancient Greece

8th Century BCE



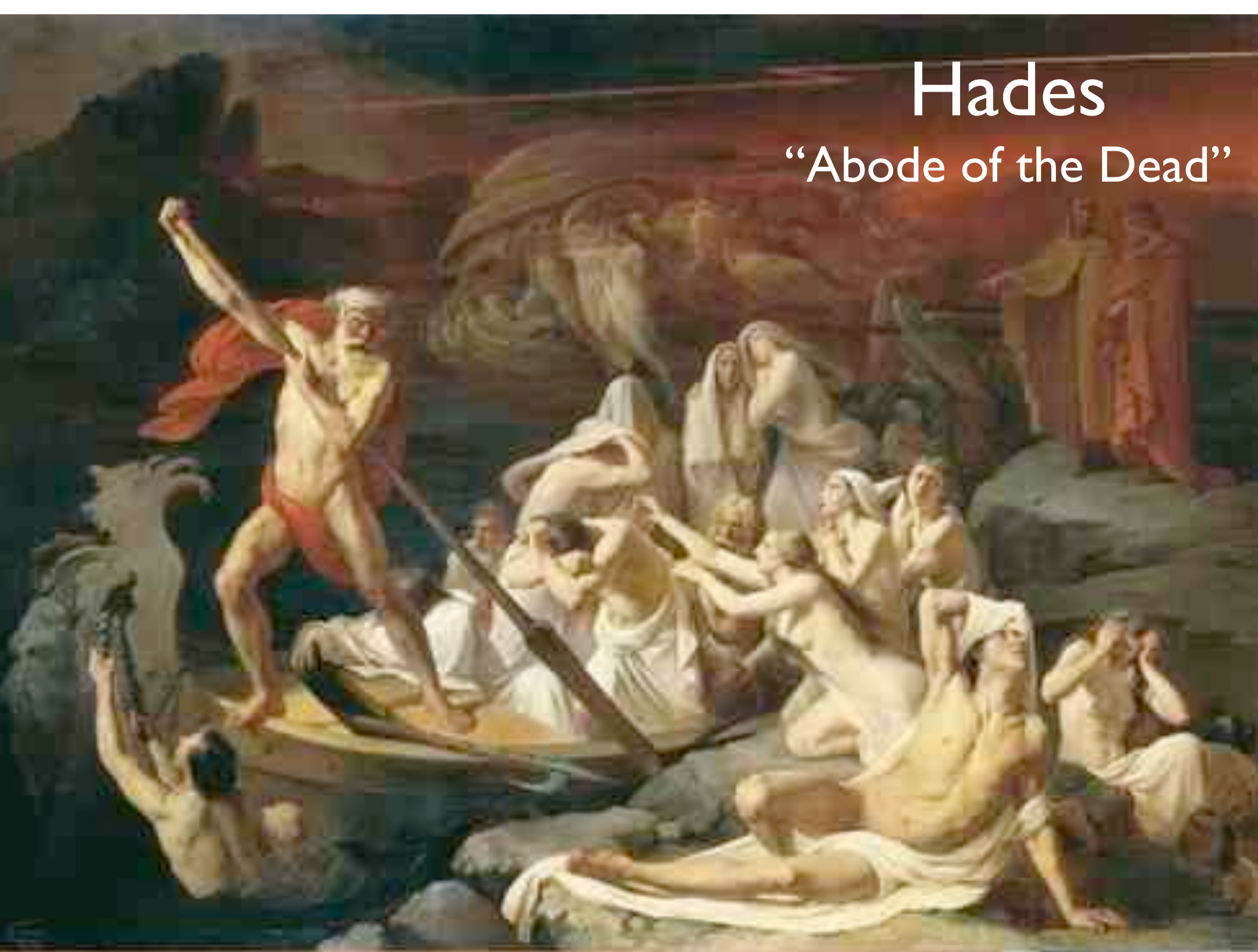
Olympus

“Realm of the gods”



Hades

“Abode of the Dead”





"No one can hurry me down to Hades before my time, but if a man's hour is come, be he brave or be he coward, there is no escape for him when he has once been born."

Homer
The Iliad
8th Century BCE

Roman Empire (27 BCE - 476 CE)



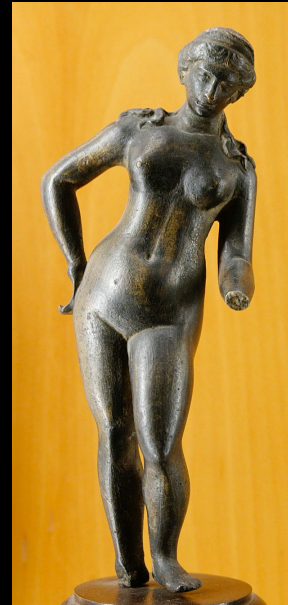
Roman / Greek Gods



Jupiter/Zeus



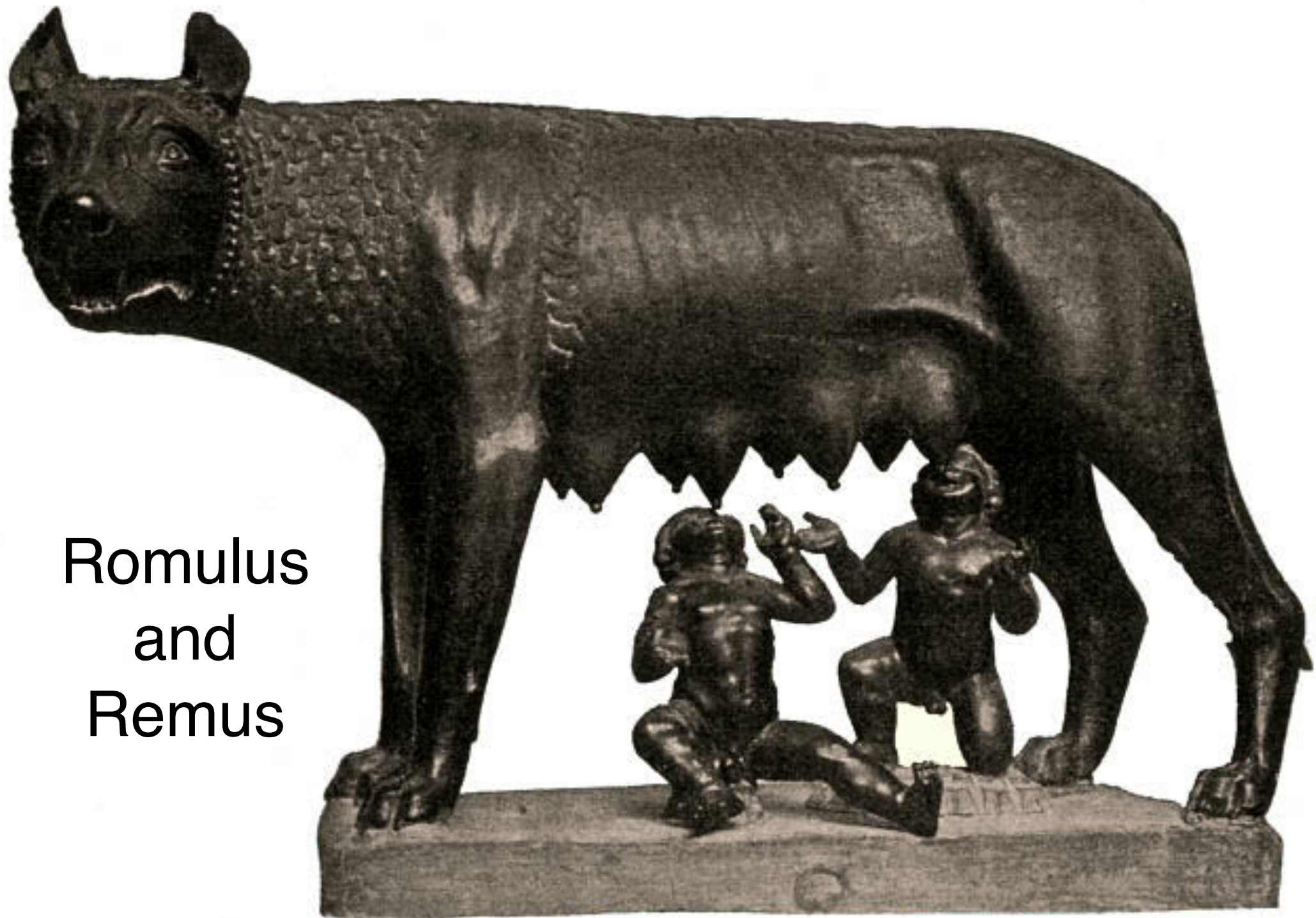
Neptune/Poseidon



Venus/Aphrodite



Mars/Ares



Romulus
and
Remus

A “son of god”?

Hercules/Heracles :

Zeus + Alcmene, a mortal
woman



A “son of god”?

Zeus: “Hearken unto me, all ye gods and goddesses, that I may speak what the heart in my breast biddeth me. This day shall the goddess of childbirth bring to the light a man that shall be the lord of all them that dwell round about, even one of the race of those men who are of me by blood.”

Homer, The Iliad



A “son of god”?

Hercules/Heracles :

Apotheosis



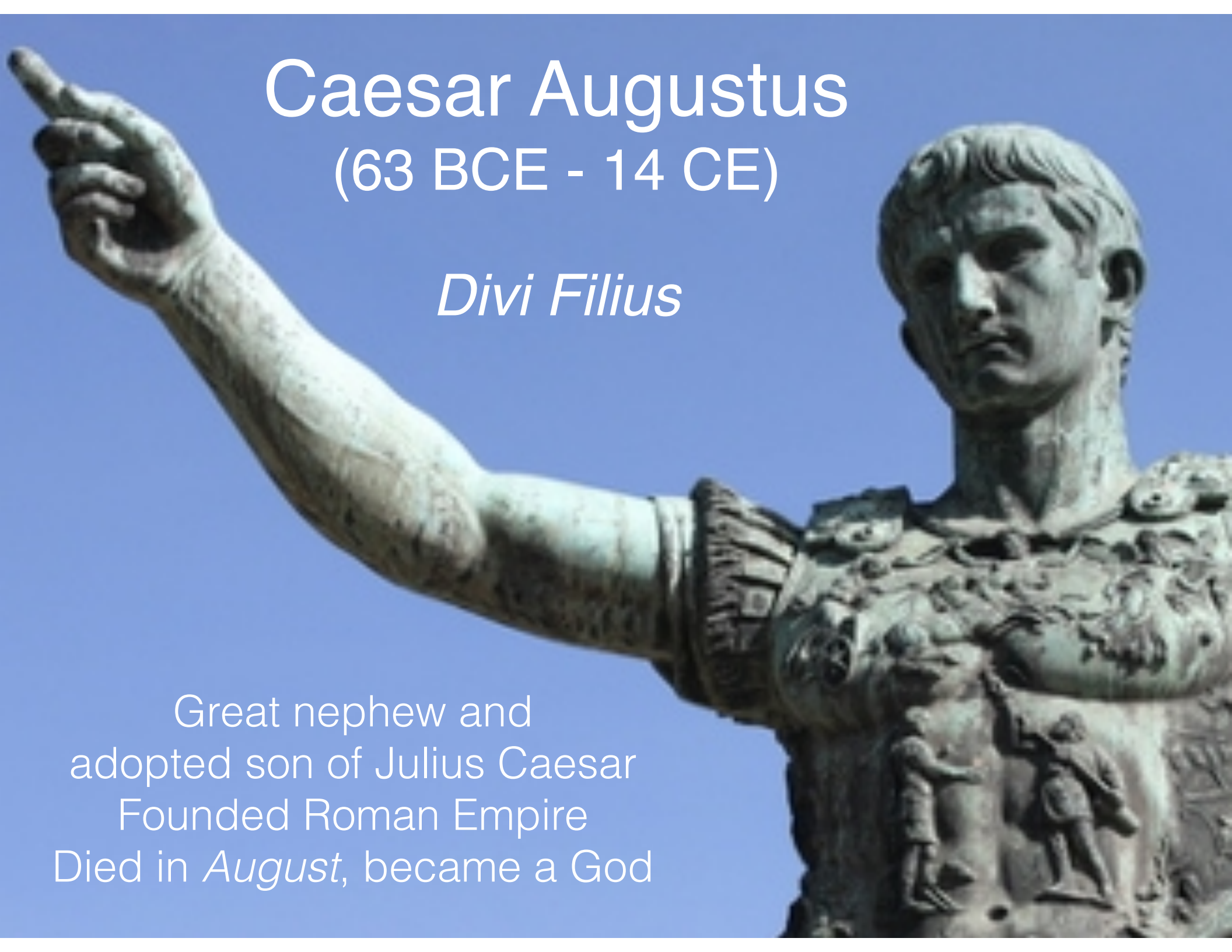
Death



Caesar Augustus (63 BCE - 14 CE)

Divi Filius

Great nephew and
adopted son of Julius Caesar
Founded Roman Empire
Died in *August*, became a God



Pagan Practices

Temple Worship

Sacrifice

Festivals



"Father Mars, I pray and beseech thee that thou be gracious and merciful to me, my house, and my household...that thou keep away and remove sickness; and that thou permit my harvests to flourish, preserve in health my shepherds and my flocks, and give good health and strength to me and my household. To the intent of purifying my farm, deign to accept the offering of these suckling victims."





Greek



Mayan



Hindu

Sacrifices exist across cultures

Model of Sacrifice:

Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss (1964)

Consecration

Victim

Profane  Sacred

Person

“The sacrificer remains protected:
the gods take the victim instead of him.

The victim redeems him...

Because the victim is distinct from the sacrificer
and the god, it separates them while uniting them:
they draw close to each other,
without giving themselves to each other entirely.”

Hubert and Mauss

Hebrew Sacrifice

“When any of you sin and commit a trespass against the LORD...you shall bring to the priest, as your guilt offering to the LORD, a ram without blemish.

The priest shall make *atonement* on your behalf before the LORD, and you shall be forgiven for any of the things that one may do...”

Leviticus 16:6-7

Hebrew Sacrifice

Yom Kippur

“Day of Atonement”

“He shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering
that is for the people...

Thus he shall make *atonement*...

because of their transgressions, all their sins...”

Leviticus 16:15-16

Atonement



Festivals

Saturnalia

(December 17th - 23rd)



Saturnalia

(December 17th - 23rd)

Gift Giving

Banquets

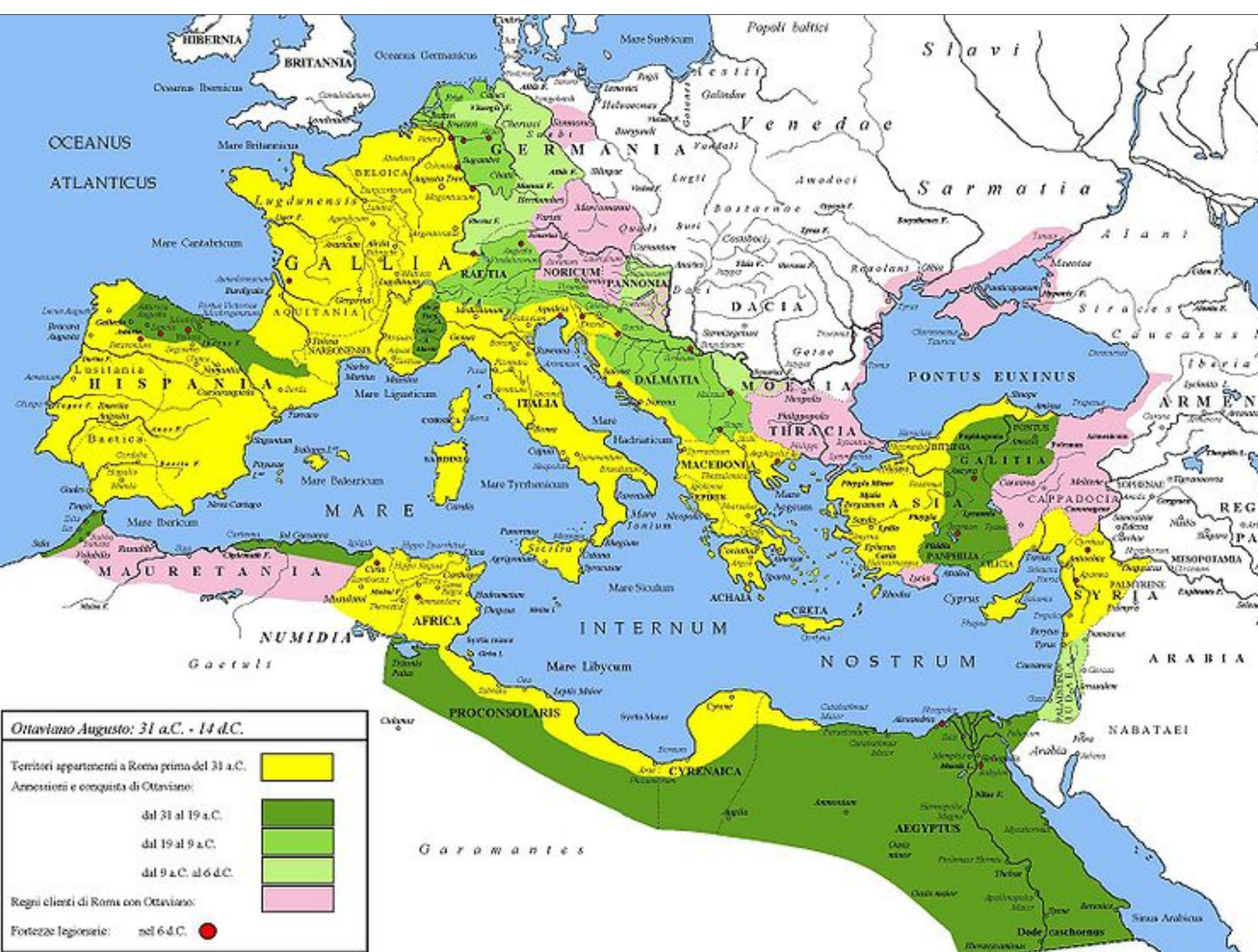
Role Reversal

Parties

Candles

Winter Solstice - December 25th





Ottaviano Augusto: 31 a.C. - 14 d.C.

Territori appartenenti a Roma prima del 31 a.C.

Annessioni e conquiste di Ottaviano:

- dal 31 al 19 a.C.
- dal 19 al 9 a.C.
- dal 9 a.C. al 6 d.C.

Regni clienti di Roma con Ottaviano:

Fortezze legionarie: nel 6 d.C.

Pax Romana

Christians as Atheists

“Hence we are called atheists. And we confess that we are atheists with reference to gods such as these, but not with reference to the most true God. But neither do we honor with many sacrifices...that people have formed and set in temples... for we do not think that G has such a form... We consider this not only irrational, but to be even insulting to G... We are not atheists, since we worship the Maker of the Universe, and declare that he has no need of blood and libations and incense.”

Justin Martyr

First Apology (155 CE)

1st Century Judaism

The Historical Jesus

Jewish reform movement

He and his followers Jewish

Reform not establish
new religion

Paul takes message
to Gentiles

“The early Jewish mission was not an overwhelming success, however, as most Jews found the Christian claims about Jesus unbelievable and ludicrous, or even blasphemous. First-century Jews who were expecting a messiah anticipated a person of power and grandeur, a great warrior-king who would overthrow Israel’s political enemies...Jesus, on the other hand, was a relatively unknown teacher from a remote rural area who was executed for sedition against the state.”

Bart Ehrman

After the New Testament

Second Temple (516 BCE - 70 CE)



Wailing Wall





Pharisees

Scribes
“Separate”
Mosaic Law
Resurrection

Sadducees

Priestly/Aristocracy
Hellenization
Temple Rites
No Resurrection

1st Century Jewish Identity Crisis

Separation

Anti Semitism

Food regulations

Little intermarriage

Lived in own districts

1st Century Jewish Identity Crisis

“If a people ascribes to itself a privileged role among all the nations but is threatened with eclipse by the political or cultural superiority of other groups, it will inevitably be involved in a serious crisis of identity.”

Gerd Theissen 1978

Meshiach

מָשִׁיחַ

“Anointed One”

Christ

Χριστός



Prophetic Jewish Movements (1st Century CE)

Simon of Perae

Theudas in Jordan

Menahem in Jerusalem

Judas of Galilee

Anthronges in Judaea

Jonathan in Wilderness

Jewish Reform Movement Ideals

Anti-Roman

Anti-Temple

Messianic

Expecting End Times - Book of Daniel

Stricter Interpretation of the Torah

Brutally Repressed by Romans

Essenes at Qumran



The River Jordan



Jesus Movement

Urban

No Baptism

Wandering Prophet Model

End Times

Compassion, Love, Inclusion

Resurrection Experience

Spread to Pagans - Gentiles



Jesus Movement Report Card

Jewish Reform Movement

F

New Religion of Roman Empire

A+

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