



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- Following the Aryan invasion India was left in a state of chaos.



- Wars of expansion between several large regional Aryan Kingdoms resulted in the collapse of what little government was established in India...remember the Caste System.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- India was left in a state of small tribal societies that had no government and certainly no armies to protect it from outside invaders.



- The country was left in a **State of Nature**



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- **State of Nature** – Is a term the we use today to describe countries and societies that have no centralized government or form of rule.



- Greece Riots of 2012...Unemployment is at 49%, the Country is broke and on the verge of Civil War.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



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# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- In 520 B.C.E The Persian Emperor Darius crossed over the Hindu Kush Mountain path and began to conquer parts of northern India.



- Northern India would remain in the clutches of the Persian Empire until about 327 B.C.E.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- In 327 B.C.E. **Alexander of Macedon** crossed the Indus river looking for War!



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- After conquering the Persia Empire and the Macedonian king (Present Day Iran) Alexander the Great launched a campaign in what was then part of India (today's Pakistan).



- The rationale for this campaign was Alexander's desire to conquer the entire known world, which the Greeks thought ended in India.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- None of the Greeks had ever encountered anything to prepare them for India.



- The terrain, the monsoons and the fierce tribes, all created hazards for Alexander.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- Alexander's geographers had assured him that just beyond India was the Ocean, a great body of water that completely encircled the world.



- They believed that India itself was surely no bigger than the Persia.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- Two factors combined to bring Alexander's march to a halt...



- He began to realize that India was much bigger than he had thought, and a war with an Indian king named **Porus** showed that India would not fall easily to the Greeks.

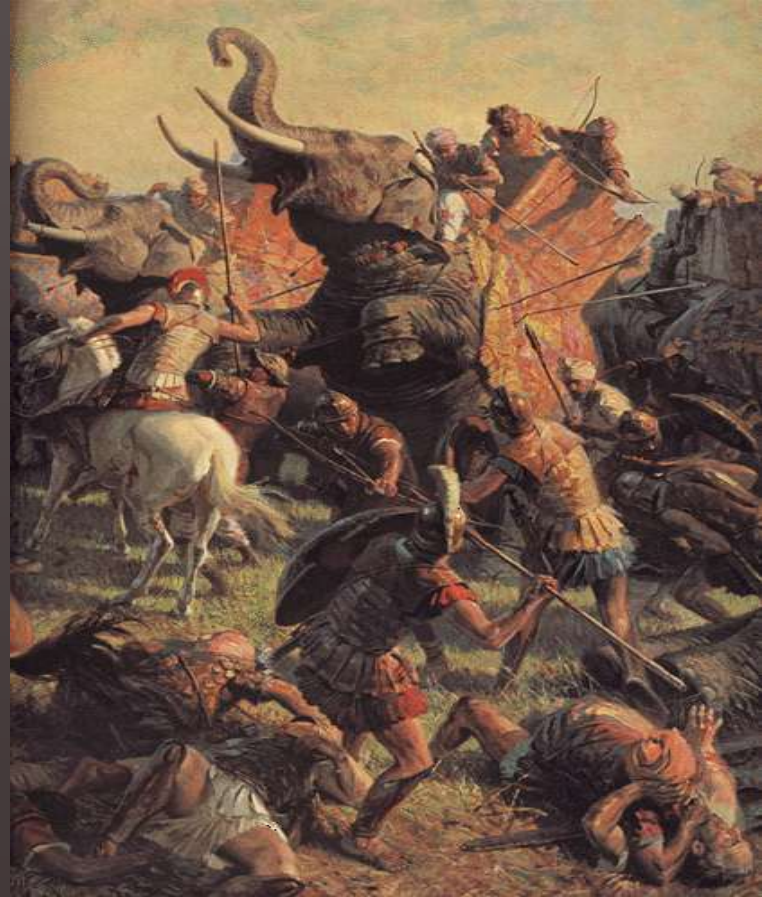


# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

Porus' army was no match for the Greeks, but with an additional advantage...**War Elephants**.

Their main use was to charge the enemy, trampling them and breaking their ranks

A division of war elephants is known as **elephantry**.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires





# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- This marked their first real encounter with elephants in battle, and it terrified the Greeks.



- Worse yet, Alexander met Porus during the monsoon season and faced him across a flooded India.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- Alexander defeated Porus and secured the upper Indus River valley and began to push into the interior of India.



- The land became dry, but the cities and kingdoms were formidable with great weapons and warriors...due to the number of Indian Kingdoms the battles were non-stop.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- Eventually the battles became too much and the order to return to Persia was issued.



- However, going back by way of the Himalayas and Afghanistan was out of the question, the best course seemed to be to work their way down the Indus River to the Indian Ocean.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- It took over a year but eventually the Greeks made it to the Indian Ocean. (During this time Alexander was almost killed by an arrow shot into his lung)



- The Greeks built a fleet of ships and returned to Persia as champions with half the army traveling by sea, and the rest with Alexander along the coast, each army supporting the other in battle.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- Alexander died of a mysterious illness in the palace of Nebuchadrezzar II of Babylon at the age of 32...his final resting place is still one of history's greatest mysteries...**(Alexandrian era tombs...unearthed in 2014 C.E.)**



- His war campaign however, had an important effect on India, creating a political vacuum in northern India by destroying the Persian controlled land and small Indian tribes along the Indus river.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- During the late 320's B.C.E., an ambitious adventurer named **Chandragupta Maurya** exploited Alexander's victory.

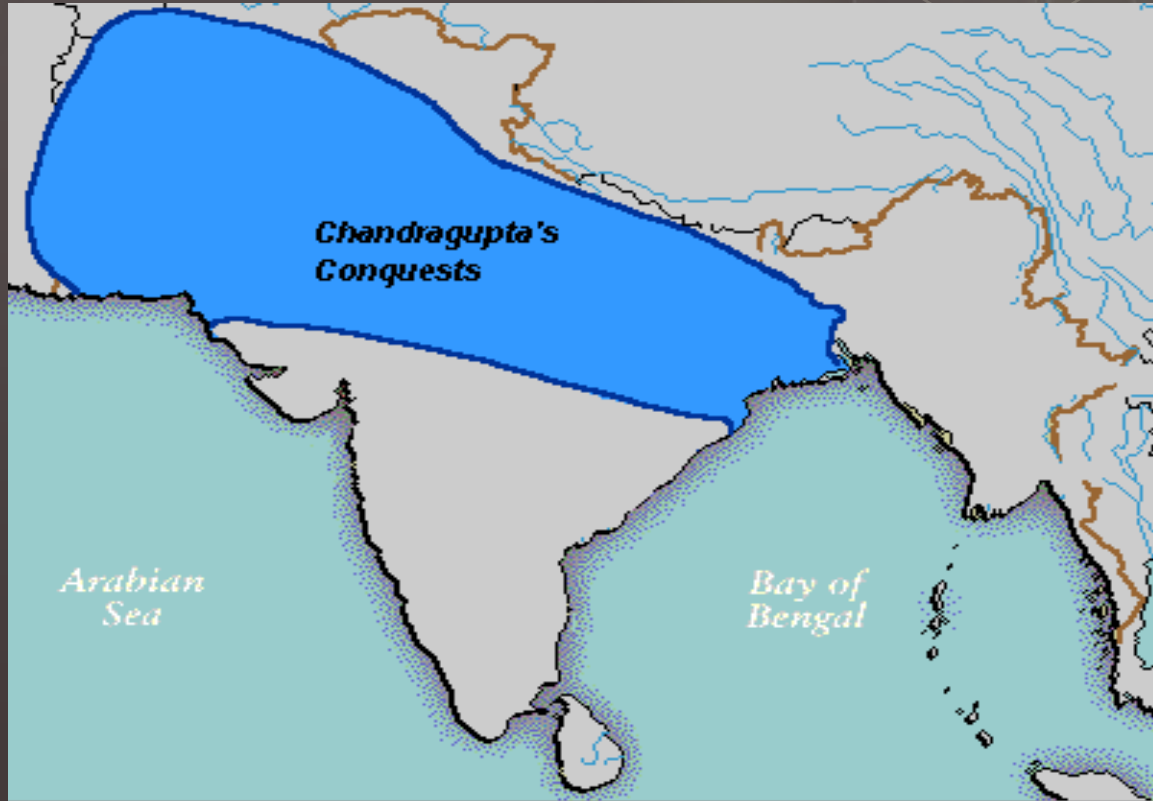


- Chandragupta laid the foundation for what would be known as the **Mauryan Empire**.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- The Mauryan Empire would be the first unified government ever to be established on the Indian sub continent.



- **Chandragupta** began by seizing control of small remote regions of India and gradually working his way towards the center.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- By 321 B.C.E. Chandragupta had overthrown the most of the ruling dynasties and his control encompassed most of northern India, which he began ruling with a conventional government.

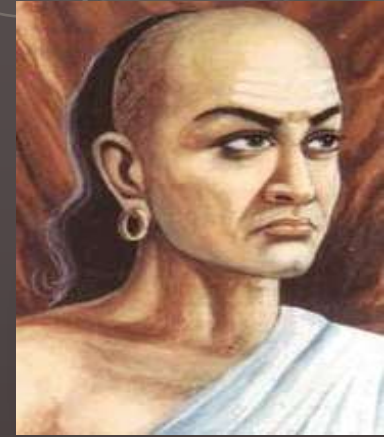


- This government included a network of spies and an enormous army of 600,000 soldiers (The U.S. army only has 1,150,000 soldiers today).



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- In 301 Chandragupta Maurya gave up his throne and began to follow the religion of Jainism



- His son **Bindusara** then succeeded him in 297 B.C.E. and actually added most of southern India to the Mauryan Empire.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- The high point of the Mauryan Empire came during the reign of Chandragupta's grandson **Ashoka** in 270 B.C.E.



- **Ashoka** is regarded as the strongest of the Mauryan emperors and extended rule throughout most of India with brutal military campaigns.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- Ashoka established his capital at the fortified and cosmopolitan city of **Pataliputra**.



- A central administration was set up in the city that organized policies for overseeing the entire empire.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- For years Asoka commanded his armies in brutal battles, but soon he came to a revelation much like his grandfather.



- Asoka converted to Buddhism and swore that he would never launch another war of conquest.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- As a result of Ashoka's new religion and policies, various regions of India benefited from an expanding economy and a much needed stable government.



- Ashoka integrated an expansion of agriculture, and a highly developed road system of high ways that connected major cities.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

Ashoka provided comforts for merchants and travelers by planting trees along the roads to offer shade, drinking wells and even established inns that were free to stay at.





# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- Asoka wanted government officials to be aware of the needs of common people and to dispense justice fairly.



- **Dharma Ministers** (Educated Men) were appointed to relieve suffering and look to the special needs of other religions, women, outlying regions, and neighboring countries.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- Asoka also began to feel so passionately about Buddhism and began to encourage the spread of the religion throughout India and all of Asia.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- He erected **Stupas** and **Monasteries** (Held Buddhist relics), developed a course of study for advocates (of Buddhism and sent missionaries to Sri Lanka

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- Asoka also created “**The Pillars of Ashoka**” during his reign in order to spread Buddhist teachings throughout India...these pillars were full of religious inscriptions and ideals.



- Originally, there must have been hundreds of pillars but only nineteen survive with inscriptions.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires





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- Asoka helped to create the Buddhist "Great Awakening Temple" where Siddhartha reached enlightenment!



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

Asoka died in 232 B.C.E. and the Mauryan Empire soon began to fall apart.

His sons fought each other for power and control while invaders began to threaten the empire's structure.

**Brihadratha Maurya** was the last ruler of the Mauryan Empire.

He was assassinated during an armed forces parade by his commander and chief of his military.

India soon divided into smaller states once again and the Mauryan Empire had disappeared completely.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- After the collapse of the Mauryan Empire, India remained divided for about 500 years, with no central government or military.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- Gateways into India like the **Khyber Pass** was left unguarded and a wave of foreign invasions followed.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- One of the most vital pieces of information to understand about during this time in Indian History is that the **Hellenistic Civilization** was located just north of the country.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- **Hellenistic Civilization** represents the pinnacle of **Greek** influence in the ancient world that started after the death of Alexander the Great.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- King **Demetrius** capitalized on the break-up of India, and conquered southern Afghanistan and Pakistan around 180 B.C.E., forming the **Indo Greek Kingdom**.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- The **Indo Greeks** would maintain holdings in the Indus Valley region, and often assaulted central India with wars for about a century.



- Under **Indo Greeks**, Buddhism flourished, and one of their kings **Menander I Soter** became a famous figure of Buddhism...the Greeks actually began to use Buddhism symbols and hand gestures within their societies including their coins.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- Eventually the Greeks were beaten by the **Scythians**, a group of barbaric Iranian tribes who traveled throughout Europe, Central Asia and Russia.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- India again was left with numerous self governing city states until a new dynasty was established in 320 C.E., **The Gupta Dynasty**



- Under the Gupta Dynasty India once again became united and prosperous.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- The long and efficient rule of the Gupta's made a huge impact on the political, social and cultural spheres.



- Though the Gupta Empire was not as widespread as the Mauryan Empire was in India, it was extremely successful and known as the **Golden Age of India**



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- The rulers of the Gupta Empire were efficient administrators who knew how to govern with a firm hand without being cruel.

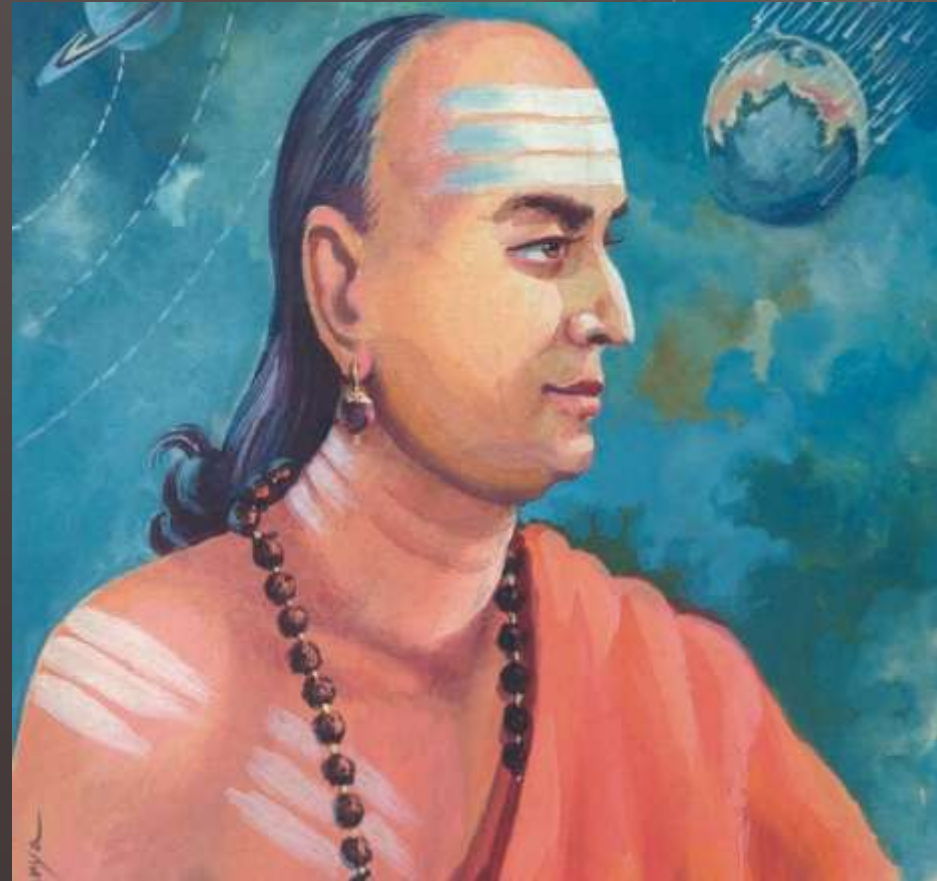


- During this age, art and education flourished and many great discoveries were made in these fields.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- Mathematics flourished under the Gupta Empire.
- **Varahamihira** (Vara- ha-mihira) helped to create equations and symbols that are still being used today.
- He was an Indian astronomer, mathematician, and astrologer.



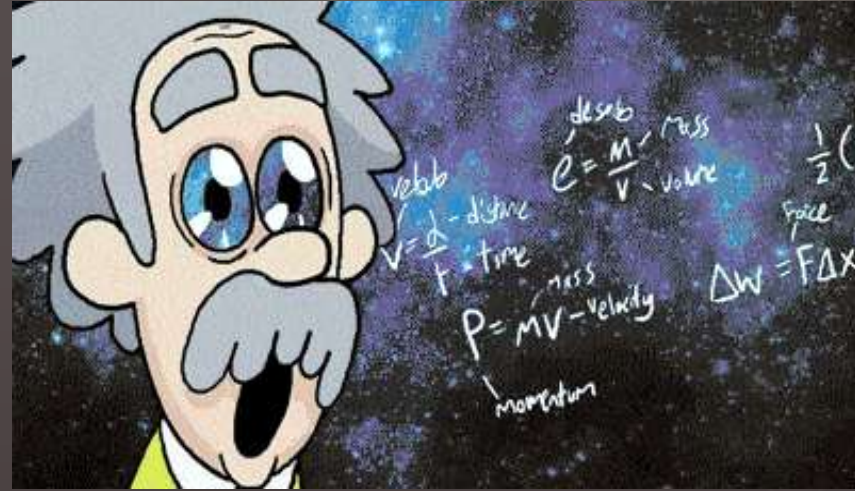


# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

○ Some of the math revelations founded by **Varahamihira**.

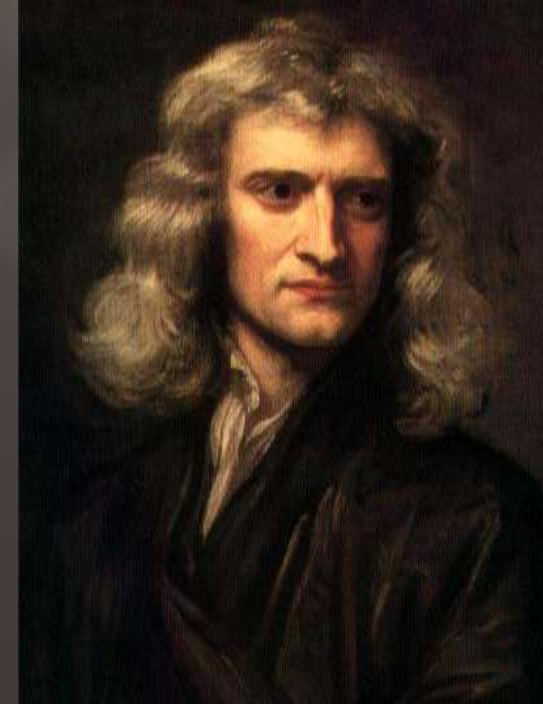
- An estimated the value of "Pi"
- Algebra was developed to a great extent.
- The concepts of zero and infinity were found.
- The symbols of numbers 1 to 9 were devised.

**(These symbols came to be known as Hindu Arabic numerals later when the Arabs too adopted them)**



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- The Gupta Age is also known for its advances in astronomy... astronomers and philosophers proposed the theory that the earth was not flat but round.



- The theory of gravity was also created during the Gupta Empire.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- Gupta astronomers also began using planetary alignments to predict astrological horoscopes.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- There were also advancements in Medicine and basic healing qualities of plants and tea.



- Some of the first surgeries were conducted during the Gupta.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- The Gupta's were Hindu...so Hinduism became India's major Religion.



- The Gupta Kings built many Hindu temples...some of which became models for later Indian Architecture.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires





# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- The Gupta's also promoted a revival of Hindu writings and worship practices.

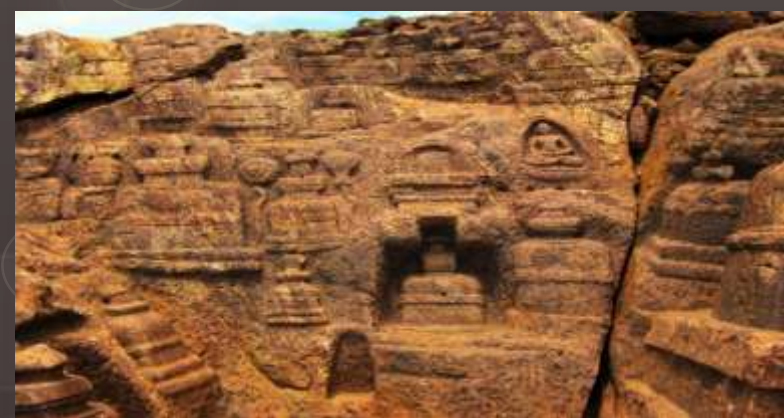
# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- Although the Gupta's were Hindu rulers, they also supported the religious beliefs of Buddhism and Jainism.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



○ The Gupta's also established a **University at Nalanda** that became one of Asia's greatest centers for Buddhist studies.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- At its peak, the university attracted scholars and students from as far away as China, Greece, and Persia.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- Nalanda was sacked by Turkic Muslim invaders under Bakhtiyar Khalji in 1193
- The great library was so vast that it is reported to have burned for three months after they set fire to it.
- All of the monks were driven from the site.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires



- In 2012, Singapore, China, India, Japan, and other nations, announced a proposed plan to restore and revive the ancient site as Nalanda International University.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- Indian societies and life styles reached its high point during the Gupta Dynasty...not just in the realms of astronomy, mathematics and medicine but in human interaction.



- Numerous seaports and trade routes in order to conduct trade on a massive level

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- The Gupta Empire's economy strengthened and the country began to enjoy wealth and prosperity.



- Fine works of art and jewelry were crafted during this time.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- It was also during this time that the Caste System completely became interwoven into the Hindu Religion and the traditional Indian way of life.



- The distinctions in the caste system became apparent and soon poverty in India grew to new heights.

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- The Gupta Empire remained strong in India throughout the late 400's C.E.



- Until **"The Huns"** came from Central Asia invaded India from the Northwest.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- The Huns were a group of nomadic herdsmen, warlike people from the steppes of North Central Asia who terrorized, pillaged, and destroyed much of Asia and Europe from the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries.



- The Huns eventually moved north and sacked Rome leading to the unfortunate end of the Roman Empire as well as the Gupta

# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- The Huns fierce attacks drained the Gupta Empire of its strong military, wealth and overall power.

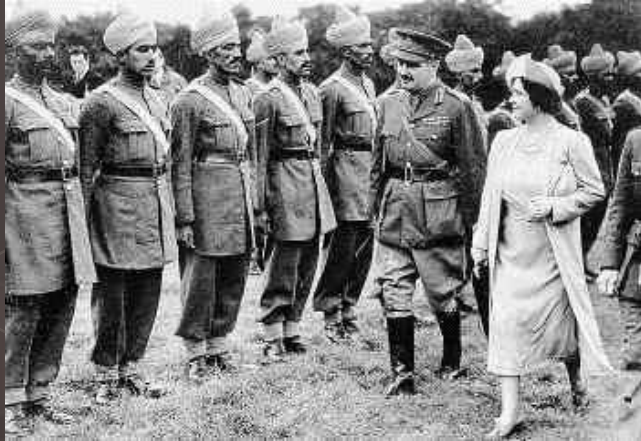


- With the Hun's battle campaigns moving all across India control was impossible to maintain and the empire fell into complete chaos.



# The Mauryan and Gupta Empires

- By the middle of 500 C.E. the Gupta rule had officially ended.



- India had once again divided into small kingdoms with very little power and control...until Great Britain would take control of the country in 1858 C.E.