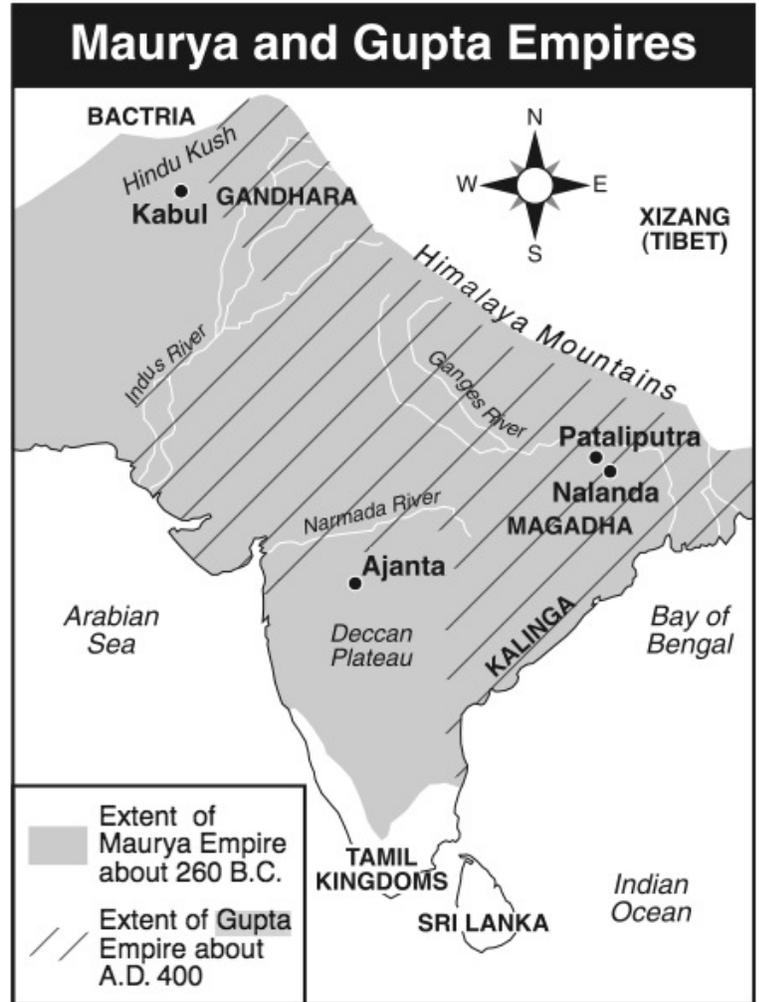


# CLASSICAL INDIAN EMPIRES

**Directions:** Examine the documents below from the Mauryan and Gupta Empires as a group and, based on the evidence from these documents as well as your knowledge from the textbook and class, discuss the evidence to support either side as the better government, citing different methods of governing and accomplishments made by those empires. Then, discuss as a group and try to come to an agreement on which empire you think did a better job ruling India. Write your final conclusions at the bottom.

**DOC #1:** Map showing the territorial extent of both the **Maurya and Gupta Empires**. Note the similarities and differences between their borders.

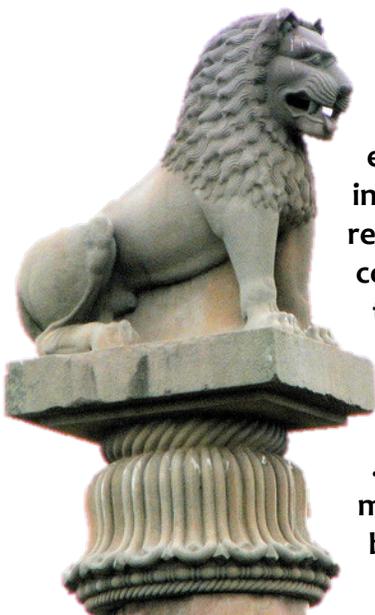


## Arthashastra

“In the happiness of his subjects lies [a king’s] happiness, in their welfare his welfare. He shall not consider as good that which pleases him but treat as beneficial to him whatever pleases his subjects.”

**DOC #2:** Quote from the **Arthashastra**, a Mauryan handbook on governance, explaining how a ruler should govern his people.

**DOC #3:** Excerpt from the **Edicts of Ashoka**, laws promulgated by the **Mauryan Emperor Ashoka** after his Buddhist conversion, promoted on pillars and stone engravings throughout his Empire.



“It is difficult to achieve happiness, either in this world or in the next, except by intense love of Dharma, intense self-examination, intense obedience, intense fear [of sin], and intense enthusiasm. Yet as a result of my instruction, regard for Dharma and love of Dharma have increased day by day and will continue to increase. . . . For these are the rules: to govern according to Dharma, to administer justice according to Dharma, to advance the people’s happiness according to Dharma, and to protect them according to Dharma.”

“The Beloved of the Gods [Ashoka] . . . honors members of all sects [religions] . . . Whoever honors his own sect and disparages [speaks poorly about] another man’s . . . does his own sect the greatest possible harm. Concord [harmony] is best, with each [person] hearing and respecting the other’s teachings.”

— Edicts of Ashoka

**Doc #4:** Selection from the accounts of the Chinese Buddhist monk **Faxian** who visited India during the **Gupta Empire**.

**Doc #5:** Chart of the evolution of the Hindu-Arabic Decimal System, with explanatory text from Linda Black, et al., World History: Patterns of Interaction. Consider in particular the importance of place-value notation

**Gupta scholars were among the most advanced mathematicians of their day as well. They developed many of the elements of our modern math system. For example, the Indians were**

## PRIMARY SOURCES

### Faxian's Record of India

The Chinese Buddhist monk Faxian went on a journey to India from 399 to 414. In the following passage from his record of his journey, Faxian describes some aspects of life in Gupta India.

“The people are numerous and happy; . . . only those who cultivate the royal land have to pay [a portion of] the grain from it. If they want to go, they go; if they want to stay on, they stay . . . Throughout the whole country the people do not kill any living creature, nor drink intoxicating liquor, nor eat onions or garlic . . . In buying and selling commodities they use cowries [shells] . . . All who are diseased, go to . . . houses [of medicine], and are provided with every kind of help, and doctors examine their diseases. They get the food and medicines which their cases require, and are made to feel at ease.”

—Faxian, *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms*

the first people to use a symbol for zero, without which modern math would not be possible. In addition, the numerals we use today are called Hindu-Arabic numerals because Indian scholars created them, after which Arabs brought the number system to Europe. Around A.D. 500, an Indian named Aryabhata (AHR•yuh•BUHT•uh) calculated the value of pi ( $\pi$ ) to four decimal places. He also calculated the length of the solar year as 365.3586805 days. This is very close to modern calculations made with an atomic clock.

Brahmi	↓		—	=	≡	+
Hindu	↓	०	१	२	३	४
Arabic	↓	•	١	٢	٣	٤
Medieval	↓	o	I	2	3	Q
Modern		0	1	2	3	4

**conclusions:** After you have examined and discussed the documents above and referred back to other examples of evidence from your textbook readings, identify and explain which empire you think did a better job ruling India in the space below.