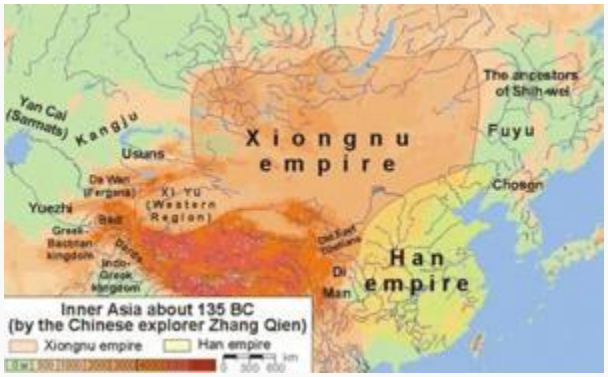
The extension of empire across large areas was dependent upon a government's ability to marshal and project military power. This took place through a variety of techniques:

- **Diplomacy**



The Han acquired allies through diplomacy in order to defeat the Xiongu confederation.

The Gupta Empire and the region of its tributary states.

There is more to winning a battle than military strategy and advanced weapons. Diplomacy, or the negotiation with allies and foes, was crucial for imperial conquest. For example, when the Han Dynasty pushed westward they came into conflict with the powerful confederation of nomadic tribes called the **Xiongnu**. In the ensuing war, the Han Emperor Wu sought alliances with small countries on his western border, offering a Han princess in marriage to the king of Wusun to secure him as an ally. Thus obtained, these allies helped the Chinese defeat the Xiongnu. Such **matrimonial alliances** were common with the empires of the classical ages. Another form of diplomacy is the creation of**tributary states**. Emporer **Samudragupta** of the Gupta Dynasty used this method on several occasions to bring stability to his empire. After defeating rival kingdoms he would allow a defeated king to retain his rule

providing he paid the Gupta a determined price, called a **tribute**. This was often a more practical alternative than trying to rule remote kingdoms directly. In a tributary system, defeated kings basically purchase the right to rule from the victors, making them indirect subjects of the conquering power.

- **Supply Lines** The armies of ancient empires required complex logistical operations, especially when they were on the move. The minimum daily rations for a soldier was 3 pounds of grain and 2 quarts of water. Thus an army of 65,000 men required at least 195,000 lbs of grain and 325,000 lbs of water *each day*.[2]It seems almost miraculous that ancient armies were able to provide for themselves without modern vehicles and paved roads. Armies of the classical age created supply trains of animals and wheeled carts. This increased the provisions that could be carried but also introduced new impediments: the average pack animal required 10 lbs of grain per day thereby increasing the necessary provisions, and carts pulled by some animals slowed the movement of an army to a crawl (most terrain was rough and had no roads). For this reason,**Alexander the Great** limited pack animals to horses and camels and eliminated carts completely from his supply line.[3]Travelling with his army was a significant number of non-combatants whose job it was to manage the movement of supplies across the ranks of soldiers. All of this required tedious centralized planning. And given the fact that the average army could only carry enough supplies to last them for 10 days, sustaining supply lines was very important for armies. These lifelines were also vulnerable to enemy attacks that could bring devastation by cutting an army from its provisions.

- **Forts, Walls and Roads** Effective

A portion of the remains of the wall bult by Roman Emperor Hadrian.

Time and weather have taken their toll on the earthen wall built by the Qin.

armies also need engineers. To ease the role of defense, armies were aided by defensive walls. The famous**Great Wall of China**was first constructed by the Qin Dynasty to protect them from nomadic tribes on their northwestern frontier. The Qin constructed miles of walls and connected preexisting walls. It's noteworthy that the purpose of a wall was not to establish a permanent defensive boundary for the empire. They were made to secure conquered areas with an eye to expansion. "Build and move on was the principle of the wall, not setting up a fixed border for all time. [4] These earthen walls were later fortified with stone by the Ming Dynasty, and this is the wall most familiar with tourists today. The Romans likewise constructed **Hadrian's Wall** to divide their territory of Britain from the Scottish Pics whose raids became problematic for them. In any case, walls were not effective without being manned by soldiers; both the Chinese and the Romans built **fortifications** and garrisons at points along their walls. As empires expanded beyond their resources, the thinning of armies on the boundaries of an empire allowed defensive walls to be easily breached.

Defensive walls were not the only places where empires built fortifications. A fortress made a powerful territorial claim for the empire who built it, and anyone challenging the territory on which the fortress was built had to take the fortress first. The city of Rome built fortifications on the seven hills surrounding the city. When the Mauryans took the province of Kalinga they built a fortification there to secure it as a possession. [5] Most classical civilizations built fortresses to shore up their most vulnerable areas; only the Gupta did not do this,[6] perhaps because as a decentralized state it was less able to garner resources for the collective good.

Due to the size of their imperial reach, empires built roads as well. These facilitated travel and trade but often the construction of roads was motivated by need to move armies across the empire. The Romans excelled in roads, which they called *Viae*.**Viae militares**, or military roads, served to move troops easily to defend or expand the empire. Indeed, for the Romans, the construction of roads was primarily motivated by military needs.[7]

- **Raising armies** All the classical empires needed methods to raise large armies. The **Han army** was primarily made up of soldiers conscripted from the civilian population into military service.[8] Typically, each group of 5 households was required to send 5 troops to military

service. Unlike the troops, whose service was temporary, officers in the Han army were career professionals who advanced through the ranks by demonstrating knowledge of classic texts on military theory, such as Sun Tzu's **Art of War.** (This was not unlike Chinese politicians who gained entrance to the bureaucracy by demonstrating knowledge of the Confucian classics.) Chinese officers communicated troop movements in battle by sounding gongs, bells, drums and signaling with flags.

The Dagger Axe was the preferred weapon of the Han infantry. It was used to chop, decapitate, and pull cavalry men from their horses.

The **Roman army** was probably the most effective killing machine of the ancient world. After the Punic Wars, the infantry was comprised of professional soldiers, not farmers called up for temporary service. They expanded their war machine by "organizing the communities that they conquered in Italy into a system that generated huge reservoirs of manpower for their army . . . Their main demand of all defeated enemies was they provide men for the Roman army every year. "[9] But even in the face of superior numbers and technology, the organization and flexibility of the

The Roman gladius was a short double-edged thrusting sword used to inflict a fatal wound in as short a time as possible. It was characteristically pragmatic.

Roman army was remarkable. The basic unit was 8 men, and 10 of these groups combined to form a century. Six centuries made a cohort and 10 cohorts was a legion. Soldiers drilled to fight at each of these levels. Consequently, a legion could fight as a whole unit or be divided and maneuvered according to the needs of battle into fighting groups ranging from 8 to 480 men. The ability of the Roman army to divide and

adapt itself to battlefield developments was demonstrated at the Battle of Pydna, where the Romans decisively defeated the Macedonian forces.

In the **Mayan army** social elites served as officers and soldiers were conscripted from the local populations. Mesoamerican armies were typically smaller than those in Eurasia, consisting at the most of several thousand soldiers, instead of tens of thousands like the Romans and Han. Mayan weapons did not utilize metals. They were often wooden clubs, some of which they would embed with razor sharp chips of obsidian. These were ideal for maiming enemies by blows to the legs or arms. The non-lethal nature of such wounds allowed them to take live prisoners, many of which were needed for ritualistic sacrifices. Some scholars believe warfare was common among the Mayan, and there is evidence that

A Gupta coin depicting Emperor Samudragupta.

low-intensity fighting occurred even between Mayan cities. However, the overall scale of warfare was significantly less among the Mayan than it was for Han China and the Roman empire.[10]

C. It was in the best interest of classical governments to make trade more accessible. Higher profits brought in more tax revenue to the government. Although Roman roads were built at first to move armies, they greatly facilitated trade across the empire. When the Qin emperor centralized China after the Period of Warring States, he constructed an infrastructure of roads and bridges to increase trade and gather taxes from formerly isolated areas. As Silk Road and Indian Ocean trade brought wealth to Gupta India, emperors commissioned the production of **coins** to ease transactions and make it easier to compare the value of goods. All classical governments enacted policies to facilitate commercial activities.