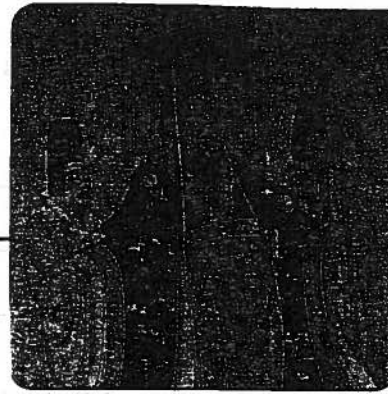


Ancient China**Biography****Wudi**

c. 156-87 BC



WHY HE MADE HISTORY Wudi was a Chinese emperor who was responsible for the expansion of the control of the Han dynasty. He also made Confucianism the state religion of China.

**VOCABULARY**

Confucianism the teachings of Chinese philosopher Confucius



As you read the biography below, think about how Wudi's aggressiveness helped him extend China's borders.

Wudi began his reign as emperor of the Han dynasty around 141 BC. It was unusual for someone like Wudi, who was not the oldest son of the king, to become emperor. However, Wudi's destiny had been decided for him at the age of seven, when relatives secured his position as heir to the throne. He was only sixteen when he was made emperor.

In the early years of his reign, Wudi ruled mostly under the influence of his relatives and political officials. The foreign policy of China at the time was mostly to defend the country when attacked. In the 130s BC, Wudi decided that China needed to be more aggressive in its approach to foreign nations. He launched an attack on the people on China's northern border who were threatening the empire. From then on, Wudi focused his reign on expanding the empire.

During his reign, several areas of Asia came under Wudi's control. Wudi's massive army conquered Southern China, and most of Vietnam and Korea. More battles provided him with control of Fergana, now known as Uzbekistan, and many small states in between.

All of these wars had cost the Chinese a large amount of money. Wudi added new taxes and saw that the government controlled the trade of all salt, wine, and iron in order to raise money. Financial despair resulting from the wars made Wudi unpopular with the public.

Despite his aggressiveness, Wudi was interested in **Confucianism** and he made it the state religion of China. In order to work for the government, a person had to pass a test based on the teachings of Confucius. Wudi even founded a university to teach Confucian ideas. Although Wudi himself did not follow the Confucian ideas of a ruler as a benevolent father figure, he did appreciate Confucius's writings and the Confucian use of ritual in religion.

Near the end of his life, Wudi suffered the dislike of the public as well as personal tragedy. His 15-year-old son, who was to become heir, was accused of witchcraft. The son led an uprising in which many people were killed and he himself committed suicide. Before his death, Wudi appointed his eight-year-old son as heir.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

- 1. Draw Conclusions** Why do you think the people of China were upset with Wudi even though they lived in a more powerful country after his military conquest?

Ancient China

Vocabulary Builder

Section 4

DIRECTIONS Write a word or phrase that has the same meaning as the term given.

1. acupuncture _____
2. seismograph _____
3. sundial _____

DIRECTIONS Read each sentence and fill in the blank with the word in the word pair that best completes the sentence.

4. Under Emperor _____, Confucianism became China's official government policy. (Wudi/Liu Bang)
5. _____ was born a peasant, but he became emperor after his army won control of China after the fall of the Qin dynasty. (Wudi/Liu Bang)
6. Under the _____ dynasty, the Chinese made several advances in art, literature, medicine, and science. (Qin/Han)
7. A _____ is a device that measures the strength of an earthquake. (seismograph/sundial)
8. The practice of inserting fine needles through the skin at specific points to cure disease or relieve pain is called _____.
(seismograph/acupuncture)
9. A _____ is an early type of clock. (seismograph/sundial)
10. The _____ dynasty rose after the collapse of the _____ dynasty. (Qin/Han); (Qin/Han)

DIRECTIONS Look at each set of three vocabulary terms following each number. On the line provided, write the letter of the term that does not relate to the others.

- _____ 11. a. acupuncture b. paper c. Great Wall
- _____ 12. a. Shi Huangdi b. Han dynasty c. Wudi
- _____ 13. a. peasants b. military c. artisans