

The sui dynasty essay



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The Sui Dynasty was a Chinese dynasty that unified China in the 6th century. It was preceded by the Northern and Southern dynasties and was followed by the Tang Dynasty. The Sui Dynasty began around 580 C. E. and ended in 618 C. E. The Sui Dynasty was founded by Yang Chien (Emperor Wendi Ti) and his son Emperor Yangdi. Among Wendi's first acts were the full restoration of rights to Buddhists and the rehabilitation of their clergy. Emperor Wendi also ended the suppression of Daoism. Their capital was at Luoyang. He reunified Southern and Northern China and began the construction of the Grand Canal.

The Grand Canal was extended north from Hangzhou, across the Yangzi to Yangzhou and then northwest to the region of Luoyang. The dynasty began when Emperor Wendi's daughter became the Empress Dowager of Northern Zhou, along with her stepson as the new emperor. After defeating an army in the eastern provinces as the prime minister of Zhou, Wendi took the throne by force and proclaimed himself emperor. Emperor Wendi then initiated a series of reforms aimed at strengthening his empire for the wars that would accomplish the reunification of China.

Beginning in the southern, he assembled thousands of boats to confront the naval forces of the Chen Dynasty on the Yangtze River. Most of his ships were very tall, having five layered decks and the capacity for 800 passengers. Besides Xianbei and other Chinese ethnic groups joining him for the fight against Chen, Emperor Wendi also received the service of aborigines from southeastern Sichuan, a civilization that Sui had recently conquered. During 588 C. E. , the Sui had amassed around 518, 000 troops

along the northern bank of the Yangtze River, stretching from southeastern Sichuan to the Pacific Ocean.

All the while, the Chen Dynasty was collapsing and could not put up with such an assault. By 589 C. E. , many Sui troops invaded Jiankang (Nanjing) and the last emperor of the southern Chen dynasty resigned. The city was demolished to the ground, while Sui troops lead Chen nobles back north, where the northern aristocrats became fascinated with everything the south had to provide culturally and intellectually. Emperor Wendi remitted all taxes in former Chen domains for 10 years. Practically all of eastern China south of the Yangtze quickly fell under the power of The Sui, making China whole once more for the first time in three centuries.

Despite the fact Emperor Wendi was famous for bankrupting the state treasury mainly with warfare and construction projects, he made many advancements within infrastructure during his early rule. He established granaries as sources of food and as a way to regulate market prices from the taxation of crops, similar to the earlier Han Dynasty. Afterwards, around 596 C. E. the block-printing technique was perfected. Emperor Wendi favored his youngest son, Yang Guang as heir, ejecting his eldest son. During 601 C. E. Emperor Wendi began a campaign to carry out Buddhist holy relics to shrines and reliquaries throughout the entire empire.

During the middle of 604 C. E. Emperor Wendi died after an illness. After his father's death, Yang Guang ascended the throne as Emperor Yangdi whose reign produced a greatly expanded canal system and extended China's frontiers as well. Emperor Yangdi announced he would sponsor a revival of

traditional Confucian learning. A year later Emperor Yangdi pursued his father's reform trend, putting into place new controls over the military. That same year, he ordered the construction of the Tongji Canal to link Luoyang with Chuzhou on the Huai River.

Approximately more than one million workers were mobilized for the job. Khitan invaders drilled south as far as Hebei before an Eastern Turk force under Chinese control defeated them and drove them away. During 606 C. E. financial reforms and a very efficient registration system helped increase the empire's taxable population to 8.9 million households which was a huge increase comparing that to 589 C. E. with only four million households. A year later clenching his grip on power, Emperor Yangdi ordered the execution of his most persistent critics in government.

That same year he deployed one million workers for a new north-south section of the Great Wall from the Ordos region to modern Shanxi Province. In 608 C. E. work began on the largest of the Sui dynasty, a canal which is known as the Yongji. The Yongji Canal ran northeast from near Luoyang to the vicinity of modern Beijing. Later that same year Sui forces defeated Eastern Turk tribes and added a large chunk of their territory to the empire. Emperor Yangdi imposed a special war tax in preparation for an expedition into the Korean kingdom of Koguryo. In 611 C. E. floods in the yellow river led to widespread distress and political unrest.

Labor levies for canal building and conscription for the Koguryo campaign fed popular dissatisfaction. About a year later The Sui assembled an army of more than one million near modern Beijing for the Koguryo invasion. Chinese

forces crossed the Liao but were forced to evacuate with heavy losses. By 614 C. E. the Sui armies advanced to the outskirts of Pyongyang, the capital. When the Koguryo king offered to surrender, Chinese forces withdrew. However the Koguryo king did not keep his promise and Emperor Yangdi prepared for a fourth campaign. A fast growing insurgency in China made a renewed offensive impossible.

That year Emperor Yangdi returned from the field, first to Luoyang, the eastern capital, and afterwards headed to Chang'an. During 616 C. E. he set out by canal barge for an extended visit to his Yangtze capital, Jiangdu, which replaced the crumbled Jiankang. He never returned to the northern China seat of the empire. A year later his grandson, Gongdi was enthroned due to the absence of Emperor Yangdi. In 618 C. E. a son of one of Emperor Yangdi's generals murdered him. A period of civil war followed the death of Emperor Yangdi. Meanwhile the Tang Dynasty was beginning.