


# Prince Shotoku's Reforms





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# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- **Main Idea (Objective):**



- Prince Shotoku created Japan's first constitution and borrowed ideas from China.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- o **Lecture Focus (Essential Question):**



- o When you try something new, are you tempted to use what someone else has done as a model?  
Let's look at how Shotoku used China as a model for his reforms in Japan.

# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- Around 600 C.E., a Yamato prince named **Shotoku** took charge of Japan on behalf of his aunt, the **Empress Suiko**.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms



- Before we get into Prince Shotoku it is important to acknowledge who **Empress Suiko** was...her story is truly amazing.
- **Suiko** was the first reigning empress of Japan in recorded history, reigning from 572–585.
- She was the daughter of the **Emperor Kimmei**.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- When Emperor Kimmei died a feud erupted between the **Soga clan**, the **Mononobe Clan** and the **Nakatomi Clan** over the succession.



- The Soga clan was victorious, and the **Emperor Sushun**, whose mother had been a Soga, succeeded to the throne.



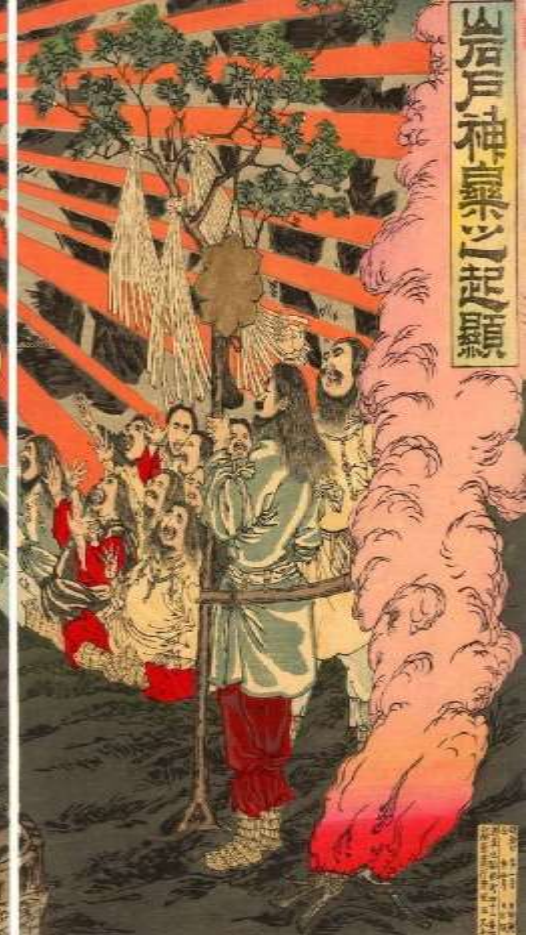
# Prince Shotoku's Reforms



- Emperor Sushun proved too independent, however, and **Soga Umako**, the head of the **Soga family**, had Emperor Sushun murdered in 592 C.E., replacing him on the throne with the empress **Suiko**, who was Sushun's younger sister and Umako's own niece.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms



- Suiko's reign represented a great break with tradition... although Japan had in legend been ruled by several women, in recent centuries the ruling line had been male.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- **Lecture Check:**

- Answer the following questions in 2-3, well written, complete sentences.
- **How could a political assassination change the fate of an entire country? Think about how the United States changed after our own Presidents have been assassinated.**



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms



- Back to **Shotoku**...
- He wanted to create a strong government, and looked to China as an example of what to do.
- Remember that in China, a powerful emperor ruled with the help of trained officials chosen based around their abilities.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- To reach this goal for Japan, Shotoku created a **Constitution**.



- Constitution** – A plan for a countries government



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- Shotoku's constitution gave all government power to the Emperor, who had to be obeyed by the Japanese people.



- Shotoku also created a bureaucracy and gave the Emperor the power to appoint all officials.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- This new constitution also generated a list of rules for working within the government.




- All of these new rules were taken directly from ideas that were originally taught by Confucius.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- Shotoku also wanted Japan to learn from China's brilliant civilization.
- He actually sent officials and students to study abroad in China.





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# Prince Shotoku's Reforms



- The Japanese not only learned about Buddhist teachings but also absorbed a great deal about Chinese art, medicine and philosophy.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms



- Shotoku ordered Buddhist monasteries and temples to be built throughout Japan.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms





# Prince Shotoku's Reforms






# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- One of these temples, **Horyu-ji** “ *Learning Temple of the Flourishing Law*”, still stands to this day.



- Horyuji is Japan's oldest temple and the worlds oldest surviving wooden building.



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In 1993, Horyu-ji was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site under the name *Buddhist Monuments in the Horyu-ji Area*.



The Japanese government lists several of its structures, sculptures and artifacts as National Treasures.




# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- After Shotoku, other officials continued to make Japan's government look like China's.



- In 646 C.E., the Yamato Clan began the **Taika**, or “**Great Change**”.



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- These Japanese leaders divided Japan into **provinces** that were all run by officials who reported directly to the emperor.



- Provinces** – regional districts within a country...almost like a “State” within the United States.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms



- It was also during the Taika Reforms that all Japanese lands officially came under the Emperors control.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- Clan leaders could direct the farmers working the land, but they could no longer collect taxes anymore.



- Instead, government officials were to gather part of the farmers harvest, instead of taxes, for the Emperor.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms



- Together with Shotoku's reforms, the Taika change was able to create a strong central government.





# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- **Questions:**

- **1)** Who did Empress Suiko put in charge of Japan?
- **2)** What plan of government was created in Japan at this time?
- **3)** What country and philosopher was Japan learning from during this era in Japanese history?
- **4)** Japan's officials implemented \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, in order to give complete power back to the emperor.

# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- **Questions:**
- **1)** Who did Empress Suiko put in charge of Japan?
  - **Prince Shotoku**
- **2)** What plan of government was created in Japan at this time?
  - **Constitution**
- **3)** What country and philosopher was Japan learning from during this era in Japanese history?
  - **China / Confucius**
- **4)** Japan's officials implemented \_\_\_\_\_, in order to give complete power back to the emperor.
  - **Taika or Great Change**






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- **Lecture Check:**

- Answer the following question in a 2-3 sentence response.

- **What happened specifically in Japan during the “Great Change”?**



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# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- Primary Source : **Japan's New Constitution Document Based Question (DBQ)**
- The following is part of the Constitution created by Shotoku...
- *"Harmony is to be cherished, and opposition for opposition's sake must be avoided as a matter of principle..."*

*When an imperial command is given, obey it with reverence. The sovereign is linked to heaven, and his subjects are linked to earth. With Heaven providing the cover and earth supporting it, the four seasons proceed in orderly fashion, giving sustenance to all that which in nature. If earth attempts to overtake the functions of heaven, it destroys everything.*

*Cast away your ravenous desire for food and abandon your covetousness (envy) for material possessions. If a suit is brought before you, render a clear cut judgment.*

*Punish that which is evil and encourage that which is good."*

- Prince Shotoku

**"The Seventh Article Constitution"**



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- Document Focus: **Document Based Question (DBQ)**
- Answer the following question with a 2-3 sentence response.
- **To what are the Emperor and his subjects compared to in this section of Prince Shotoku's Constitution.**



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms



o History Biography Time: **Prince Shotoku**

# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- Prince Shotoku was born into the powerful **Soga Clan**, as the second son of Emperor Yomei.
- Shotoku's real name is **Umayado**, which means "the prince of the stable door."
- According to legend, Shotoku's mother gave birth to him while she was inspecting the emperor's stables...hence the name Umayado.





# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- During Shotoku's childhood, Japan was a society of clans, which are basically large extended families.
- There was fighting between Shotoku's own Soga Clan and their rival, the **Mononobe Clan**.





# Prince Shotoku's Reforms



- The Soga and Mononobe clans were Japan's two most powerful families, and each wanted to rule Japan.




# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- Shotoku was very bright, articulate child and learned about Buddhism from one of his great uncles.



- He then studied with two Buddhist priests and became devoted to Buddhism.



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- At the age of 20, Shotoku became Japan's crown prince.
- His early teachings of Buddhism strongly influenced his leadership.
- He introduced political and religious reforms that help build a strong central government in Japan, that was modeled after China.



# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- At the request of his aunt, the empress, Shotoku often spoke about Buddhism and the process of enlightenment.



- He also wrote the first book of Japanese History.




# Prince Shotoku's Reforms

- When Prince Shotoku died, the elderly people of the empire mourned as if they lost a dear child of their own.



- A written account describes their words of Grief: ***“The sun and moon have lost their brightness; heaven and earth have crumbled to ruin: henceforward, in whom shall we put in trust?”*** (Eifukuji Temple, final resting place for Prince Shotoku)



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- **Then and Now:**

- Answer the following questions with a well structured 1-2 paragraph open ended response.
- **Think of a recent leader or public figure whose death caused people to mourn as if they knew that person well. Who is it? Why do you think people identified with that person? Why do you think Japanese people identified so closely with Shotoku.**