

Lecture 05 The Taika Reforms & Institutional Revolution

0. Intro

- Ordering domestic society through foreign models (cont.)
- Political ideal and socio-geographic reality in Japan.

1. Prince Shôtoku's "Constitution"

- a. Prince Shôtoku (d. 621) as iconic Japanese culture hero
- b. 17-Article "Constitution" or 17 Injunctions (see *Topics* 21-22)

2. Political Coup and The Great Reforms (Taika)

- a. Civil conflict in early 7th century: Soga vs. **Nakatomi** (= **Fujiwara**)
- b. **The Taika Reforms** of 645; continues through **Taihô Code** of 702

Extremely important development in social-political organization:

- i. reorganized rice-producing land by placing it in the public domain of the **tennô** and in theory ending private ownership
- ii. initiated a census to systematically impose taxes
- iii. assigned official administrative and court posts to the nobility
- iv. later divided the land into more rational administrative units (provinces, districts, and villages).
- v. old uji-no-kami got the new title of "**uji-no-chôja**" (chief head of the uji) from the Heavenly Sovereign (emperor, tennô).

c. The "**ritsuryô**" ("penal and civil") codes

d. The Taihô Code (702)

- Made official the post of **dajô daijin** (chancellor, head of the **Dajôkan** or Grand Council of State)
- Initiated military conscription
- Established checkpoint barriers (**sekisho**) to restrict movement
- Etc.

3. Deviations from the Chinese Model