

# Japanese history



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Japanese History and its influences The history of a country maximally differs from the history of other nations in various aspects. But if there is interaction among the people belonging to different countries, there are chances that the one nation's history may be influenced by other nation or nations. One nation's history which has been influenced by the history and activities of other nation is Japan. Japanese history and its culture has been largely influenced by the Chinese history and culture since ancient times. In this paper, we will analyze the Chinese influence on the Japan, focusing on the events and developments before the World War II.

The system of governance adopted by the Japanese was influenced by the Chinese system of government. The Imperial Court of the Japan was based on the working of the Imperial Court which existed in the ancient Chinese culture. The ranks and titles in the bureaucracy were structured around the Chinese pattern. Although numerous Japanese rulers during the sixth and seventh century included the Chinese system in their governing system, Prince Shotoku was prominent among them, as he was more inclined towards a complete adoption of Chinese system. “ Prince Shotoku a major political figure at that time, was credited with formally adopting major elements of Chinese culture, including Buddhism and Confucianism, as well as the system of government and calendar.” (Hong, 2000). The Chinese system of governance was based on the ideals of Confucianism. As Confucianism had already entered Japan and influenced the religious beliefs and attitudes of the Japanese people, the Japanese aimed to incorporate the Confucian ideals in their governing system. During the Tokugawa period, Confucianism influenced the working of the political organizations of the country.

The Japanese adopted the Chinese system of government but they also placed all the administrative powers in the hand of the emperor. The final decision regarding governing policies rested with the emperor. Along with bureaucratic policies, Japanese also followed the Chinese system while planning their cities and irrigation system. The Chinese style of architecture was adopted by the Japanese while building their temples and monasteries. The cities in Japan resembled Chinese cities in various ways, as both of them were built following a similar pattern. This period saw a strong Chinese pattern to the government, Chinese style buildings with tile roofs, Chinese writing, and expansion of Buddhism throughout Japan. Japanese ancient capitals in the 8th century, Nara and Kyoto were designed according to the Chinese method of urban planning with streets arranged in a checkerboard pattern. (sfusd. k12. ca. us)

Among the numerous Chinese influences on the Japanese history and culture, the impact of Chinese language on the Japanese language and its writing style is substantial. The development of trade relations between China and Japan resulted in the contact of Chinese people with the Japanese people. This interaction led to the changes in the Japanese language. During 4th century A. D. the Japanese language was influenced by the Chinese pattern of writing. The Chinese characters were included in the writing of the Japanese language during this period. “ Writing with the Chinese characters.... great difficulty to the Japanese language, made it possible for the Yamato to begin to build a real bureaucracy and thus more firmly establish their control over vassal clan heads and the peasantry.” (Stearns, 2000). The use of Chinese characters in the Japanese language aided the Japanese rulers to maintain their hold on the people.

## References

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