



Bushido the Soul of Japan

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Bushido, literally "the way of the warrior", is a Japanese word for the way of the samurai life, loosely analogous to the concept of chivalry. It originates from the samurai moral code stressing frugality, loyalty, martial arts mastery, and honour unto death. Born from Neo-Confucianism during times of peace in Tokugawa Japan and following Confucian texts, Bushido was also influenced by Shinto and Zen Buddhism, allowing the violent existence of the samurai to be tempered by wisdom and serenity. Bushido developed between the 9th and 20th centuries and numerous translated documents dating from the 12th to 16th centuries demonstrate its wide influence across the whole of Japan, although some scholars have noted "the term bushido itself is rarely attested in premodern literature." Under the Tokugawa Shogunate, aspects of bushido became formalized into Japanese feudal law.



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