Sam Gest

October 14, 2011

*Bushido, the soul of Japan*

By Ianzo Nitobe

In this article the author presented the idea that the largest part of the Japanese way of life is Bushido. Bushido is the “way of the warrior”, it is a code of conduct, and annotates the chivalry expected of a Samurai. Bushido stresses frugality, loyalty, mastery of martial arts, and honor even unto death. Under the bushido ideal, if a samurai failed to uphold his honor he could only regain it by performing, seppuku, a ritual suicide. These guys are nuts.

The author centered himself in the article. He is Japanese, and he feels that the way the Japanese culture is heading toward is far from Bushido. He is a little puzzled why his own people are losing their grip on Bushido. The author thinks that the world is developing too fast for the “old world” to keep up. He is puzzled how his own people can give up their beliefs so easily and without a fight.

I think the topic of Bushido would be a great research topic for anyone interested in Japanese culture and/or history. Nitobe does a good job of describing the difficulty it is for an authentic Japanese person to convert over to a Western mindset; just the difficulty in translating from Japanese into English is inherently difficult. Many aspects of language and meaning are lost in translation.

This article is potentially very valuable to anyone unknowledgeable in Bushido. The author does a good job in explaining who, what, and why bushido affects Japanese as a people and the decisions they make.