
Comparison Of Samurai And Knights

Although the samurai and the knights shared their differences, they both came around to be very similar in various aspects of their daily lives. Both tribes had the following in common; code of behaviour, weapons and armour all in which contributed to shaping what society is today. Weaponry and armour were similar in most aspects, a more detailed explanation on why can be found below.

Both the Samurai and the Knight's used intricate weaponry. Although weaponry used by the Samurai's were very different to the weaponry used by the Knight's, both were still effective in battle. First of all, let's start with their differences in combat. The samurai would use a various amount of weaponry all in which go under the category of "swords/blades". Most samurai would use their traditional "wakizashi" for protection and suicide whereas in battle, they would use their traditional Katana to fight against opponents. The Knights were different as they did not use their weapons for battle but rather in a sport called jousting. Jousting is a martial game or hastilude between two horsemen wielding lances with blunted tips. Weaponry such as long swords, wooden lances, maces, battle axes and daggers were used in most of their activities. Therefore, after research it has been made clear that both the samurai and the knights used different weaponry in both battle and their sporting activities but still produce the same amount of effectiveness as each other.

Although the samurai and the knights differed in many aspects of life, they both went by a code of behaviour which in some countries, these codes still exist. The samurai went by the "Bushido Code".

The Bushido code is a Japanese collective term for the many codes of honour and ideals that dictated the samurai way of life. The Bushido code included 7 key virtues (Integrity, respect, heroic courage, honor, compassion, honesty and sincerity, duty and loyalty). These virtues were to be followed at all times by the samurai. The Knights went by the "code of chivalry". The code of chivalry was established in 1170 and 1220 but never decided on or summarised in a single document. There were 10 key commandments. (Thou shalt believe all that the Church teaches, and shalt observe all its directions. Thou shalt defend the Church. Thou shalt respect all weaknesses, and shalt constitute thyself the defender of them. Thou shalt love the country in the which thou wast born. Thou shalt not recoil before the enemy. Thou shalt make war against the Infidel without cessation, and without mercy. Thou shalt perform scrupulously thy feudal duties, if they be not contrary to the laws of God. Thou shalt never lie, and shalt remain faithful to thy pledged word. Thou shalt be generous, and give largesse to everyone. Thou shalt be everywhere and always the champion of the Right and the Good against Injustice and Evil.) These commandments were to be followed at all times by the knights. Therefore, it is evident that both tribes used a code of behaviour and they were both significantly similar in terms of their virtues.

Armour for both the samurai and the knights played a crucial part in their daily lives and how they would have survived the numerous battles against their enemies. The samurai warrior suits incorporated armour plating which was used to deflect swords and arrows, a helmet for head and skull protection, sleeve shields to ensure appropriate arm and leg protection, lower armour

and an arrow quiver. Body armour was made from thick leather, and was covered in lacquer to help the samurai with humid climate. Rarely, body armour would be made out of 250 yards of silk and over 3000 pieces of leather but it was still used in specific scenarios. During the dark ages, the knights wore heavy armour which consisted of metal. The Knights had two types of armour; chain mail and plate armour. Armour such as chain mail was made from thousands of metal rings. They wore a padded cloak underneath their armour to help support and carry the weight of the armour. In some cases, chain mail would not be suitable for battle as it can be easily pierced through by an arrow or a thin sword. By the 1400's most knights were appropriately safeguarded by full plate armour. This type of armour had offered a lot better protection, but was less flexible and heavier than chain mail. A complete set of plate armour weighed around about 60 pounds. A list of the different pieces of plate armour and what they protected can be found below. Greaves - ankles and calves, Sabatons - feet, Poleyms - knees, Cuisses - thighs, Gauntlets - hands, Vambrace - lower arms, Pauldron - shoulders, Breastplate - chest, Rerebrace - upper arms, Helmet - head. Therefore, although the samurai and the knights used various different armour all in which served the same purpose, it is evident that armour was essential to both the samurai and the knights daily lives. Without it, they would not have survived near as long as they did.

In conclusion, it has been made clear that the samurai and the knights came across to be different to each other but still shared many similarities in areas of work such as code of behaviour, weaponry and armour.