

The ideal of a soldier as someone of exceptional bravery, physical prowess, and strategic brilliance appears in literary sources dating back to the [Heian period \(794–1185\)](#). An early example is the following account of the eleventh century warrior Minamoto Yoshiie:

[Yoshiie] was a warrior of peerless valor. He rode and shot arrows like a god. Defying naked blades, he broke through the rebels' encirclements, appearing first on their left and then on their right. With his large-headed arrows, he shot the rebel chieftains in rapid succession. He never wasted an arrow, but mortally wounded all those he attacked. Known throughout the land for his godly martial ways, Yoshiie rode like thunder and flew like the wind. The barbarians scattered and fled before Yoshiie, not one willing to confront him.

*Mutsu waki*, quoted in Paul Varley, *Warriors of Japan as Portrayed in the War Tales* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994), 38.

Source: <https://education.asianart.org/resources/samurai-way-of-the-warrior/>