

外国語要旨

学位論文題目 A Consideration of the “Justice” Concept in the Genroku Ako Incident

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This manuscript considers the Japanese people’s concept of “justice,” as seen through the events surrounding the Genroku Ako Incident. The vendetta enacted by the “47 Ronins” involved in the incident is perceived to be so ethically correct and “just” that these 47 samurais exist as models demonstrating the morality of the Japanese people.

While the image of the 47 Ronins as “loyal/moral retainers” has been established in the *Chushingura* early modern theatrical works, such as in *Kanadehon Chushingura*, whether the retainers were to be deemed “moral” or “immoral” was widely debated by the Confucians of the time. However, the ethical definition of this concept of “justice” has, to date, never been clarified.

This manuscript delves into the ideological background to this concept, in terms of the type of corresponding value system recognized by the Japanese people. The objective of Chapter One is to understand the basic concept of “justice,” considering examples of justice from early modern Bushido texts.

Chapter Two begins with the analysis of the representation of “justice” associated with the Genroku Ako Incident. Chapter Three takes the concept of “justice” treated in Chapter Two, which is the concept evoked by the 47 Ronins themselves, and examines the debate over “justice” in the Incident.

Chapter Four examines two plays, the *Goban Taihei Ki* and *Kanadehon Chushingura*, to highlight the image of “moral retainers.” These literary portrayals clarify features of the value system that considers the 47 Ronins to be “just.” The two *Chushingura* works take the perspective of the samurai and of the general public, yet create what is arguably a common value system. The 47 Ronins are recognized as “moral retainers” who pursued a form of “justice” shared by the common citizens.

As the times changed, however, the ethical awareness of a “debt of gratitude” presumed in master–servant relationships did not necessarily continue to be functional; yet, the 47 Ronins continued to be called “moral retainers.”

Chapter Five considers Seika Mayama’s play *Genroku Chushingura* to clarify the background of this paradox. In Mayama’s work, there is a scene that depicts the Kuranosuke Ooishi group scrutinizing the 47 Ronins’ ethics, which is contradictory to all of the *Chushingura* works that had, up to that point, not

inquired about right and wrong and considered their actions “justice.”

These chapters survey the changes in the image of the “moral retainers” acting in the Genroku Ako Incident. Diverse research has been conducted to date on the Incident. It has, however, tended to separately treat assessments of the historical facts of the Incident, assessments of the debate about the Loyal Retainers, and assessments about the *Chushingura* theatrical works. This separate treatment is probably the reason that the type of value system behind the corresponding concepts of “justice” has not been clarified.

For common people in the early modern era, “justice” was not the unambiguous notion evoked in the traditional Bushido code. In trying to highlight changes in the image of the “moral retainers” and to specify the definition of “justice” that is fundamental to those changes, one must pursue the complex ideological background of the period, and the on-going transformations brought about by the period. This manuscript elucidates one facet, through an analysis of the debate over the Loyal Retainers and of early modern and modern *Chushingura* works, though further study is still necessitated.