

Lecture 9

Loyalty and Honor

Q: What are the 3-4 notions of loyalty present in 47 Ronin (readings)?

- there's the Confucian sense of relationships that require loyalty
- master-vassal relationship (two types: loyalty to the house, and "samurai loyalty" – loyalty to your immediate lord)
- loyalty to the shogun (societal implications)

ichibun: (shame)

hitomae: (reputation)

In *47 Ronin*, there was the Incident | Waiting Period | Attack and Judgment
Issues surrounding the Incident of Asano attacking Kira:

- disobeying shogun
- poor swordsmanship (for not successfully killing Kira)
- Kira is a coward; should he have been punished?

Waiting period:

- ronin had different ideas about how to restore Asano's honor

Attack and Judgment:

- controversy over whether the samurai deserved death
- why didn't the ronin commit seppuku immediately? Opportunism?

The shogun banned this story!

Q: Who do you side with in this story?

- You can understand both sides of the story (both the shogun and the ronin); but from his modern viewpoint, killing someone over an insult is ridiculous

Q: Why didn't the shogun execute the ronin like common criminals?

- might have created unrest
- does not fit with their status, and this is a very ordered society (Tokugawa)

Three different ways of the warriors can be categorized broadly as such:

Kamakura Period | Muramachi Period | Tokugawa Period

Categorize what we've read/watched into each:

Kamakura:

- *Heike*
- *Kwaidan*
- Some pre-Heike readings

Muramachi:

- *Seven Samurai*
- *Throne of Blood*

- Zen (begins)

Tokugawa:

- “Bushido” (Yamaga Soko)
- Zen (cont’d)
- Hagakure
- *47 Ronin*

[screening of the rest of *47 Ronin*]