

A Study of *Seiyashi*

– Refer to the text and interpretation in China –

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Seiyashi, written by Rihaku, is used as introductory Chinese poetry teaching material in Japan and China as it is well-known and uses clear expressions. In fact, they are so simple that it tends to seem that the study needs not be deepened. In this thesis, I want to consider this poetry from a new aspect.

First, the texts of the poetry as they are known in Japan and China are different. The word *meigetsu* is used twice in the Chinese text. The word *sangetsu* that Rihaku had used was changed to *meigetsu*. From here we can see the attachment to *meigetsu* of the common people in China.

Secondly, it is general to perceive references to the “moon” as predominantly being a symbol for homesickness. However, here I want to focus on the word *yuka*. There are three meanings of *yuka*, bed, *kosyou* (stool), *seisyou* (a well crib). By studying Tang dynasty construction and the image of wells in folk traditions, it was discovered that *yuka* in this poem means “well crib.” In fact, “on seeing the moon, one thinks of that person” and “on seeing the well one thinks of one’s hometown” are expressions used in classical Chinese literature.