

Article

The Japanese-Language Newspaper Novel Abroad

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Abstract: This article presents initial findings about the history of the publication of serialized novels in Japanese-language newspapers published in North and South America. An under-studied publishing venue for literature to begin with, even less is known about the serialization of novels in these diasporic communities despite them being the most widely circulated fiction. Focusing on what can be reconstructed of the history of these works and their publication, this study focuses on five newspapers and their serialized novels during the 1930s, with a particular focus on the novel *Constellations Ablaze* by Ozaki Shirō and the lesser-known author Nakagawa Amenosuke. This preliminary survey suggests an industry that navigated international copyright law, reader's tastes, and the interconnection of different local readerships.

Keywords: Japanese literature; newspaper novels; diaspora

1. Introduction

Scholars in Japan such as Takagi (1976, 1983) and Seki (2007) have written about the phenomenon of serialized fiction in newspapers, a publishing modality that is often given less critical attention than its prominence and profitability suggest it deserves. It is likely that this limited attention is due to a presumption that the works are unlikely to have been of high literary merit, having been chosen to please the largest number of newspaper readers. It might also be because the source materials—the daily installments of the stories—are sometimes hard to find, having appeared in a form that was not designed to be preserved, and in some instances are no longer extant. What Takagi, Seki, and others have shown, however, is that newspaper novels are worthy of study not only because many have gone on to be recognized for their literary merit (consider the works of Natsume Sōseki), but also because of their importance as a broadly shared cultural event. Even when the works may be judged as excessively sentimental or formulaic, they were also among the most widely disseminated works of fiction written in Japanese.

Scholars have argued that serialized fiction in newspapers may have been what drove people to develop the daily reading habits that newspapers required to be viable. Readers returned day after day for new installments because these works meant something to them. The stories were so important to some readers that they ended up preserving them despite their disposable format. Consider the reader-bound collection¹ of cut-outs of the installments of the novel *The Slums of Edo* (お江戸裏町), by Nakagawa Amenosuke, as it was serialized in the *Yorozu shinbun* in 1932–1933 (Figure 1):² The handmade volume, which was recently sold in an online auction by an antique dealer based in Ibaraki Prefecture, reflects the importance of the story to at least one reader, who went to great efforts to preserve the work, for him or herself if for no one else.



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Figure 1. Reader-bound collection of *The Slums of Edo* installments. Image from Yahoo Auctions.

Much remains to be known about serializations in regional newspapers within Japan itself, despite the extensive work of scholars like Takagi, which we might mistake as comprehensive. Some regional newspapers and newspapers throughout the Japanese Empire, for example, have yet to be surveyed despite having carried serialized fiction. An even lesser-known part of the history of Japanese-language newspaper novels is their appearance throughout the Japanese diasporic community. For example, *The Slums of Edo*, preserved by the reader from its 1932–1933 serialization in Tokyo, was also serialized in San Francisco’s *Shin sekai nichinichi shinbun* in 1934–1935.

Scholars of the Japanese diaspora have already noted the importance of locally produced Japanese-language newspapers to communities abroad. As Odo and Sinoto (1985) noted, “According to a popular Japanese saying, if there are as many as three Japanese living in the same place, a Japanese newspaper is published!”³ Detailed studies produced about these newspapers by such scholars as Ebihara (1980), Tamura (1991), Tamura and Shigehiko (1986) and Shiramizu (2004) have shown the import and impact of these newspapers, though with less attention given to the fiction contained in the newspapers.

Scholars of Japanese-language literature abroad, such as Hosokawa (2012–2013) writing about Brazil or Mizuno (2013) writing about the United States, have also paid relatively little attention to serialized works, focusing instead on works written by local authors writing. Perhaps the scholar who has paid the most attention to newspaper novels is Hibi (2014), who provides a list of all the fictional texts serialized in *Shin sekai* between 4 November 1896 and 24 May 1910; his conclusion, like mine, is that “research to-date has not been sufficiently conscious of the complex nature of the Japanese-language literary space in the emigrant communities” (pp. 76–80). Hibi divides the works he observes (during the thirteen-and-a-half years he surveys) into three types: works from Japan reprinted in the United States; works written by individuals from Japan who were in the United States for a brief period; and original works written by immigrants from Japan. Moreover, the works in the first category, Hibi continues, tend to be of a more “popular” (通俗的) nature while the works in the other two categories are more “artistic” (芸術指向).

In my experience, the distinction between “popular” and “artistic” works often over-determines (and hampers) the critical response to texts, even if it is prompted by the recogni-

tion of certain tendencies of those texts. Closer analysis of the texts in the former category might reveal more interesting elements than were initially apparent; it might also help explain why they may have held so much interest for their readers. Before such analyses can take place, however, certain basic historical questions must be answered: what texts appeared when, and where? That is the focus of this preliminary study, which will make an initial attempt to identify some key issues in the history of Japanese-language newspaper novels in North and South America.

2. Discussion

The attempt to explore that history might begin with another of those novels: *Constellations Ablaze* (燃ゆる星座), which was attributed to the author Ozaki Shirō (尾崎士郎, 1898–1964) and which the *Niigata shinbun* had originally serialized in Japan starting in June 1936.⁴ Ozaki had made his debut on the literary scene with two works published in 1921: *The Escape* (*Tōhikō*) and *From Behind Bars* (*Gokuchū yori*), the latter of which came in second place in a fiction competition held by the *Jiji shinpō* newspaper. He had achieved an even greater level of fame by the time *Constellations Ablaze* appeared, having serialized the first volume of his multi-volume work *Theater of Life* (人生劇場) in 1933 and seen it become a bestseller when published in book form in 1935.⁵

Over the course of its 178 installments, *Constellations Ablaze* tells the story of an aspiring novelist, Shishikari Tatsuya (猪狩達也), and his beloved Kishima Yukiko (木島由紀子), who later becomes a famous actress under the stage name Mizukami Yukie (水上雪枝). As one might imagine, the plot involves too many twists to be quickly summarized; suffice to say that Shishikari realizes his dream of becoming an author only to discover that the financial rewards of literary publication are not what he imagined they would be, and he and Yukiko do not end up together. Rather, they both end up heading abroad: Yukiko to the United States and Hollywood and Tatsuya on a three-year globe-spanning trip of discovery.⁶

Given that this a virtually unknown work by Ozaki, we must distinguish his novel from another a work of the same title by Takeda Toshihiko (竹田敏彦, 1891–1961) serialized in the *Ōsaka Jiji shinpō* a few years earlier, in 1930–1931.⁷ These are not the same works, despite their similar subject matter of the lives of young women in the film industry; Takeda's work is a "non-fiction novel modeled on the life of [the historical actress] Matsui Sumako [1886–1919]" (Hirooka 2011, p. 767). Despite this superficial similarity, the plot of Ozaki's story bears little resemblance to Matsui's life. The identical names of the works, however, is noteworthy, as it was quite unusual for works to bear precisely the same name, especially when both serialized in reasonably large newspapers at roughly the same time. This speaks to the limitations in distribution of regional newspapers at the time, a topic that is relevant to this study.

We might also note that a play by the same title was performed between 13–19 June 1946, at the Yasaka Gekijō in Kyoto. Whether one of these novels was the basis for it is unclear. The script is credited to Kakehi Kazuhiko (覚一彦) with Makino Shinzō (マキノ真三) directing it.⁸ The play, which was a melodrama in eight scenes (景), starred Miyagi Chikako (宮城千賀子), who was Makino's wife. It may have been one of the first performances by the new company they formed in June of that year, Makino Geinōsha (マキノ芸能社), and their theater company, Gekidan Nadeshiko (劇団なでしこ).

Returning to Ozaki's work, it should be noted at the start that it is not certain that Ozaki wrote *Constellations Ablaze* despite the attribution. It was not unknown for authors to publish ghost-written works under their names, and here it is also possible that a story written by another could have been attributed to the author without his knowledge. I have not found any authoritative confirmation that Ozaki is fact the author, as the work is not mentioned in his collected works (Ozaki 1965) or in his autobiography, *Shōsetsu yonjuroku-nen* (Ozaki 1964). For a variety of reasons, however, I suspect that he either wrote the work or outlined it, having another writer flesh out the details. The primary reason for

this speculation is the unlikely setting early in the novel: Ozaki's own middle school in Okazaki, Aichi Prefecture.⁹

While there are a number of elements within the story worthy of further exploration—not the least of which is the interactions between anarchists and film industry figures—what is of more concern here is the history of its publication. Though there is no evidence that it was ever published in book form after its initial serialization in the *Niigata shinbun*, it was reserialized again—more than once. In fact, it was serialized at least four subsequent times, three times in the United States and once in Brazil: *Hawai hōchi*¹⁰ (7 May 1937–27 November 1937), *Taihoku nippō*¹¹ (August 1937¹²–March 1938), *Kashū mainichi shinbun*¹³ (3 November 1937¹⁴–9 June 1938), and the *Burajiru jihō* (5 November 1939–30 July 1940).

At first glance, this might lead us to at least two tentative conclusions. First, that there was so little overlap in readerships that not only could newspapers in Honolulu, Seattle, and Los Angeles publish the same work, but also newspapers in Niigata and Ōsaka could publish works of the same (unusual) title less than five years apart. Second, that a system of some sort may have existed among Japanese-language newspapers in the Americas to share works, either coordinated among the newspapers or driven by a third party. In order to test these hypotheses, I conducted a preliminary survey of fiction serialized in North and South American Japanese-language newspapers during the 1930s. Perhaps surprisingly, the survey does not support these conclusions. In important ways it points in a different direction.

For the purposes of this survey, I focused on the following newspapers over the period January 1930 to January 1940: the *Hawai Hōchi* (1912–1942), published in Honolulu, Hawai'i; the *Taihoku nippō* (1910–1942), published in Seattle, Washington; the *Kashū mainichi shinbun* (1931–1942, 1947–1991), published in Los Angeles, California; the *Nichūbei shinbun* (1899–1942), published in San Francisco, California; and *Shin sekai* (1894–1932, then as *Shin sekai nichinichi shinbun* 1932–1935 and as *Shin sekai Asahi shinbun* 1935–1942), also published in San Francisco. Other newspapers published in North and South America, as well as in Japan and the colonies were also surveyed, though more superficially.¹⁵

It should be noted that by the 1930s, these Japanese-language newspapers in the Americas had already reached a high level of professionalism and consistency of production, both in general and as pertains to serialized fiction in particular. Elsewhere I have argued that the *Burajiru jihō*, published in São Paulo, Brazil, seems to have gone through three phases of fiction serialization prior to the Second World War: a first phase (1917–1933), during which historical works were published that may have been reproduced without clearing copyright; a second phase (1932–1934), during which the newspaper focused on local authors, and a third phase (1934–1941), during which the newspaper seems to have adhered to a more conventional (and legal system) in which the rights to reproduce works written primarily in Tokyo were obtained before serialization (Mack 2022). The period under consideration here, the 1930s, would appear to be most consistent with the third phase described above. This is unsurprising, as the history of Japanese-language newspapers in Hawai'i and the United States is longer than that of South America, and the companies there would have been under greater scrutiny.

That survey reveals that *Constellations Ablaze* was not the only work to be serialized in more than one of these newspapers, though no work that I have found appeared in as many venues as it did. *Oh, Blue Sky!* (おゝ青空よ), by Kitamura Komatsu (北村小松, 1901–1964), for example, was serialized in the *Kashū mainichi shinbun* (1937), the *Hawai hōchi* (1937–1938), and the *Taihoku nippō* (1938–1939). A few other works appeared in two or three newspapers, including the unusual example of the work *Songs of Genroku Chivalry* (元禄侠唄), attributed to Oki Tsūji (沖通二) when it was serialized in the *Taihoku nippō* (1937–1938) but to Nakagawa Amenosuke (中川雨之助) when it was serialized in the *Hawai Hōchi* (1939).¹⁶ As I mentioned, with this kind of overlap, one might imagine that editors thought their readerships discontinuous enough not to mind the duplication, yet given how rare the survey shows it to have been, the contrary might in fact be the case: the newspapers surveyed seem to have gone to some length to avoid overlap, even if it was not avoided

altogether. Of the roughly sixty titles surveyed, only five (including the ones mentioned above) appeared in more than one newspaper in the Americas.

One does see the same authors appearing across multiple newspapers, however. Certain authors who are less known today appeared with frequency, such as Nakagawa Ameno-suke, the author of *The Slums of Edo* and perhaps *Songs of Genroku Chivalry*. Works by Nakagawa appeared in the *Hawai hōchi* (1931), *Shinsekai* (1934–1935), the *Taihoku nippō* (1936–1937), and the *Kashū mainichi shinbun*. He was so popular in the *Kashū mainichi shinbun*, in fact, that three of his novels appeared there during the decade: *The Young Lord's Shanks' Mare* (若殿膝栗毛, 1937–1938), *Hanji the Strongman* (腕づく判次, 1938–1939), and *An Edo Man* (江戸姿男一疋, 1939–1940). While not part of this survey, the newspapers *Yuta nippō* (1925–1926 and again in 1942), *Rafu shinpō* (1933), and *Hawai mainichi* (1941) also serialized his works in the United States, just as the *Keijō nippō* did in Seoul (1923).

Little is known about Nakagawa. One of the few scholars who has written about him is Tomita (2017). According to Tomita, Nakagawa (dates unknown; real name: Nakagawa Kyōji [亨二]) wrote serialized twenty-three works of fiction (sometimes under other pennames) for the *Shin Aichi* newspaper in Nagoya until around 1942; he also serialized works in the *Nagoya shinbun*. Takagi (1983) lists at least five works, serialized in the *San'yō*, *San'yō shinpō*, *Keijō nippō*, *Taiwan shinpō*, and *Yorozu chōhō* newspapers; it is worth noting that the first two (which refer to related newspapers) were regional newspapers published in Okayama, the second two were colonial newspapers (published in Korea and Taiwan, respectively), and the last was a national newspaper published in Tokyo. Seventeen films were made based on his works. He was also a poet who wrote under the penname Ryūtei Ujin (柳亭 雨人). While this represents a great deal of notoriety in the Nagoya area, it does not immediately explain his popularity in the newspapers in the Americas. The frequent appearance of his works there but the limited repetition of specific works suggests some intention to avoid overlap of titles while still carrying the popular author, perhaps precisely because of his demonstrated popularity in other diasporic newspapers.

But what of newspapers on the main islands of Japan? To what extent were these newspapers in North and South America reproducing works that had already appeared there? Hibi's conclusion, mentioned above, is that all of the works of this type were published first in Japan and then reproduced in the Americas. One wonders if any works written by authors in Japan, however, might have been sold only to one or more newspapers based in the Americas. A complete record of novels serialized in newspapers in Japan does not yet exist, so it is difficult to say with certainty whether any given work was *not* published somewhere (including in magazines or books, rather than newspapers) in Japan first. We can identify a number using the work of Takagi Takeo, whose *Shinbun shōsetsu-shi nenpyō* (1985) lists works serialized in a good selection of newspapers, primarily from the largest urban centers but also including some regional newspapers. We should note (as Takagi himself does), however, that his *nenpyō* is thorough but not complete. Takagi's *nenpyō* notes, for example, that Takeda Toshihiko's *Moyuru seiza* appeared in the *Ōsaka Jiji shinpō*, but does not list the serialization of Ozaki's work in the *Niigata shinbun*. Other sources, including the National Diet Library's Kindai Digital Library, can help us track some additional titles.

From these sources, evidence for previous serialization (or publication in general) in Japan can be readily found for fewer than half of the more than sixty discrete titles published in the five newspapers surveyed. Unsurprisingly, the most common place of original publication was the national *Asahi shinbun*, which published eleven of the works prior to their appearance in newspapers in the Americas. In addition, there are a number of cases in which evidence of serialization is not immediately available, but we can identify that the works were published in book form in Japan. For example, Nagata Mikihiko (長田幹彦)'s *Ballad of Fog* (霧の小唄) appeared in book form at least as early as 1926, well before it began serialization in the *Kashū mainichi shinbun* on 5 November 1931. It may have been serialized elsewhere before being published in book form, but I have not yet discovered evidence of this. Unfortunately, without a comprehensive list of works published in newspapers in

Japan, it is difficult to say if any of these works were only published abroad after having the rights legally acquired. This is important, as works printed illegally would by definition have to have appeared elsewhere first (barring the theft of a manuscript, of course).

For reasons I have discussed elsewhere, it is difficult to know if these novels were published legally in the Americas during the 1930s (Mack 2022). In *Acquired Alterity*, I discussed a complaint filed by the author Masuda Hajime (益田甫) with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1925 claiming that his novel *Naraka* (奈落) had been illegally serialized in the United States. The *Nichibei shinbun* serialized the work, attributed to Masuda, starting on 13 February 1925, only a little more than two months after it began appearing in the *Miyako shinbun* on 8 December 1924 and before the serialization there concluded on 3 May 1925. Masuda's complaint seems to have been effective, at least in stopping the illegal reproduction: *Nichibei's* serialization ended on 25 June 1925 with installment 132, prior to the conclusion of the original work (which had spanned 147 installments). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had received the complaint three weeks earlier.

In his complaint, Masuda mentioned that it was his understanding that Nakazato Kaizan's novel *The Great Bodhisattva Pass* (大菩薩峠) had also been serialized illegally by the *Nichibei shinbun*. It is not clear which serialization Masuda was referring to. It may have been the serialization underway at the time of the complaint: starting on 11 April 1925 the first installment of the *Avidyā* (無明) volume was run, attributed to Nakazato Kaizan and identified as part of *The Great Bodhisattva Pass*. This volume had begun serialization in the sister newspapers the *Osaka Mainichi* and the *Tokyo Nichinichi* earlier the same year, on 6 January 1925.

Yet, this was not the first time the *Nichibei shinbun* had run part of Nakazato's novel. On 25 January 1918, the newspaper advertised its upcoming serialization, "Ai no Yama" (間の山) by "Nakazato-sei" (中里生); the first installment appeared on 27 January. *The Great Bodhisattva Pass's* fourth volume, it had begun serialization in the *Miyako shinbun* in Tokyo on 25 October 1917 and was still underway when serialization began in the *Nichibei shinbun*. It is possible that Masuda was referring to this earlier event. Though unlikely, this option may be worth considering because while the *Nichibei shinbun* ceased publishing *Naraka* soon after the Masuda complaint, it continued serializing *The Great Bodhisattva Pass* volume until its conclusion, on 18 July 1925. One wonders if an illegal reproduction would have been allowed to continue, given the attention brought to it by Masuda's complaint. It is possible that arrangements had been made for its legal reproduction this time, and the rumors that Masuda had heard had been concerning the earlier serialization.

Hieda (1994) has noted that illegal reproductions of works by famous authors in Japan was the norm around 1916.¹⁷ The Masuda case suggests that illegal serialization of newspapers novels was occurring in the United States as late as the mid-1920s. What of the 1930s, especially after the practice had been brought to the attention of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and had seemingly led to some degree of enforcement of copyright protections? It is possible that newspapers continued to reproduce works illegally. If that is the case, though, why not choose works of the visibility and popularity of *The Great Bodhisattva Pass*? Why choose authors who, while known in Japan, were not the most famous there, and works that were not particularly well known either? Perhaps it was because newspapers had begun to be more careful about obtaining the right to republish works.

There are a number of things that differentiate the 1918 serialization of the *Ai no Yama* volume from the 1925 serialization of *Avidyā* volume that suggest decreasing concern on the part of the newspapers to (possibly) obfuscating the origins of the works. Consider the advertisements for each novel that appeared in the days leading up to their serializations (Figures 2 and 3).



Figure 2. Advertisement for “Ai no Yama”. *Nichibei shinbun* 26 January 1918. Image courtesy of the Hoji Shinbun Digital Collection.

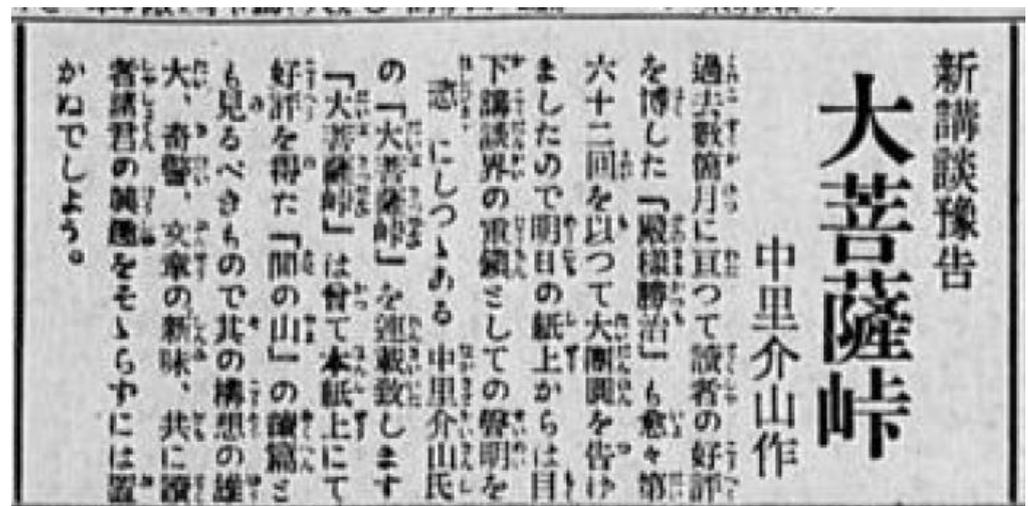


Figure 3. Advertisement for *The Great Bodhisattva Pass*. *Nichibei shinbun* 10 April 1925. Image courtesy of the Hoji Shinbun Digital Collection.

As mentioned previously, Nakazato’s full name was not given for the former while it was for the latter, nor was *Ai no Yama*’s connection to *The Great Bodhisattva Pass* clarified with the former as it was for the latter. The advertisement for serialization that preceded the second serialization not only identified the volume’s relationship to *The Great Bodhisattva Pass* as a whole, but to *Nichibei*’s earlier serialization of *Ai no Yama*, which it now identified as being part of the larger work. Neither advertisement, however, were particularly elaborate.

In both cases, though, these were relatively subdued advertisements. This was not the case for Ozaki Shirō’s *Constellations Ablaze*. The *Hawai hōchi* carried an extended preview on 5 May 1937 (Figure 4).

新小説豫告
燃ゆる星座
尾崎士郎氏近來の快作
來る七日から連載

暴動事件
追加起訴二件
並に警察記録

燃ゆる星座
一種

現在流行
シツダン
日本で

作者の言葉
手前味噌を云はせ
て置きます。これ
は平凡な小説であ
ります。平凡と云
ふ意味は大抵の新
聞小説が千層一律
の見本を示してゐ
るやうに明星を
あざむく美あり
眉目秀麗の天才青
年あり、愛國熱世の政治あり、恋色飽くところを知ら
ずいふことこれに類する好色飽くところを知ら

明日の紙上より
——寫眞は尾崎士郎氏——

Figure 4. Preview of Constellations Ablaze. *Hawai hōchi* 5 May 1937. Image courtesy of the Hoji Shinbun Digital Collection.

The *Kashū mainichi shinbun* carried its preview advertisement on 2 November 1937 (Figure 5).

次回新小説豫告
▽目下連載中の小説『青春』は豫選外の好評に本誌終結を告げる事となりました。引續き人気作家尾崎士郎氏の『燃ゆる星座』を掲載します。
▽作者尾崎氏は文壇一の文藝批評家として盛名を擧はれてゐる一方、純粹小説の第一人者として、新聞小説にも新境地を開拓し、歴々の好評を得る純文壇の重鎮、今度本誌の請を容れて會心の作を寄せられました。本誌の機軸的な奉仕をお認めの上、何卒愛讀を願ひます。
▽挿繪の新井氏は、華麗なる畫風を以つて知られる東都一流流麗の花形畫家、其の新聞挿繪もまた所界に新生面を拓いて作品に一層の光彩を添へるとも信じます。(寫眞は新井五郎氏)

作者の言葉
手前味噌を云はせて置きます。これは平凡な小説であります。平凡と云ふ意味は大抵の新聞小説が千層一律の見本を示してゐるやうに明星をあざむく美あり眉目秀麗の天才青年あり、愛國熱世の政治あり、恋色飽くところを知らずいふことこれに類する好色飽くところを知ら

尾崎士郎氏の快作
燃ゆる星座
(挿繪) 新井五郎氏

明日の紙上より
——寫眞は尾崎士郎氏——

Figure 5. Preview of Constellations Ablaze. *Kashū mainichi* 2 November 1937. Image courtesy of the Hoji Shinbun Digital Collection.

A similar preview appeared in the *Burajiru jihō* on 31 October 1939 (Figure 6).

Hawai hōchi editions, even though the *Hawai hōchi* seems to have chosen to use its own original language.

It is not yet clear what the source was for this advertising copy; if the rights to reproduce the stories were obtained legally perhaps through an agent, making it unnecessary for authors to know where their stories eventually appeared—then it is possible that these paratextual materials were included with the serialization. The one thing that we can say is that the newspapers were no longer obfuscating the origins of the stories as they may have been with the publication of Nakazato's *Ai no Yama* volume.

Another unusual thing occurred during the course of the serialization of *Constellations Ablaze* in the *Kashū mainichi shinbun*: serialization paused after 8 March 1938 (installment 120). The newspaper claimed that this was due to a shipping delay for the next installment (Figure 7).

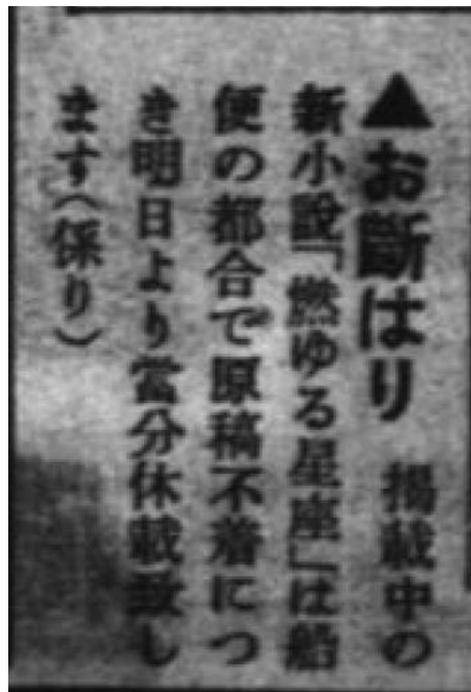


Figure 7. Announcement about delayed receipt of *Constellations Ablaze*. *Kashū mainichi shinbun* 8 March 1938. Image courtesy of the Hoji Shinbun Digital Collection.

Serialization restarted on 12 April 1938, but the explanation for the pause is odd. As we know, the story was not only complete when the newspaper had begun its serialization of it in on 3 November 1937, but in fact its serialization in the *Hawai hōchi* and the *Taihoku nippō* were either complete or nearly complete by the time of the hiatus as well. If we take the *Kashū mainichi* at its word, that would mean that the newspaper was receiving installations in chunks from Japan and that it did not know about the serializations elsewhere, did not have access to them, or was unwilling to reprint them illegally.

It is also possible, however, that the newspaper had other reasons to suspend the serialization and fabricated the shipping delay as a justification. What that other reason may have been is unclear, but this is not the only case of such an issue. As I noted in *Acquired Alterity* (Mack 2022), on 23 April 1940 the *Burajiru jihō* made a similar announcement, that *The Violent Daimyo* (暴れ大名) would pause because the manuscript had not yet arrived (Figure 8).

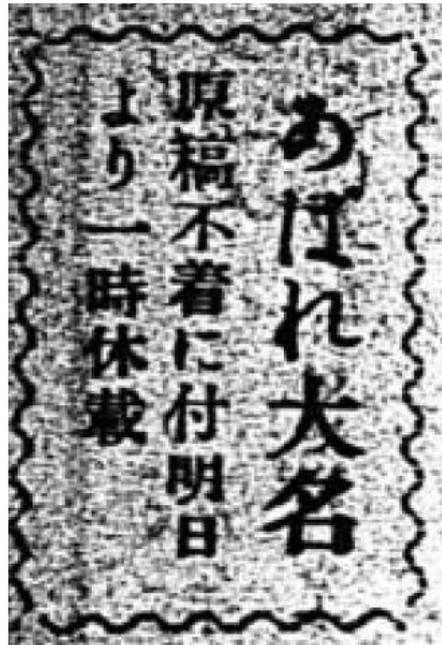


Figure 8. Announcement about temporary suspension of *The Violent Daimyo*. *Burajiru jihō* 23 April 1940. Image courtesy of the Hoji Shinbun Digital Collection.

These points raise more questions about the circumstances of publication for serialized novels than they provide answers. They can lead us to some hypotheses, however. If Japanese-language newspapers in the Americas were serializing novels illegally, at least theoretically they could have reproduced anything they wished. As the case of Masuda and Nakazato shows us, the more famous and profitable novelist Nakazato was not the one who caught wind of the serializations and filed the case, nor was it his publisher; this suggests that the newspapers might not have had to adjust their selections to manage the risk of discovery. If that is the case, why not publish the most proven works by the most popular writers? Perhaps it was the case that editors were choosing works that they liked themselves, or that they thought their local audiences would like. If, on the other hand, these newspapers were printing these stories legally by the 1930s, then we would assume that the choice of what works to publish would be based on what could be acquired, what the newspaper could afford, and how the paper thought its audience would respond. The appearance of some overlap does suggest that while the newspapers were not unwilling to offer content their readers might have seen previously in another paper in another community, they did avoid it but seem to have been aware when authors had been received well in those other communities. This would explain the frequent appearance of writers like Nakagawa, who did not appear with commensurate frequency throughout Japan.

If the rights were acquired legally, then we must wonder about the source of these texts. Did the newspapers negotiate directly with the authors? This seems unlikely; I have yet to encounter a case in which the author's note that appears in a preview mentions the unusual circumstances of the story being published in the Americas. It is possible that the stories could have been sold to the newspapers through agents, who may have travelled throughout these communities trying to sell the rights to works. If such agents did exist, did they merely peddle works that had previously appeared in print in Japan, or is it possible that also sold manuscripts that had not found publishers in Japan? Is it possible that any of these works were only published in these newspapers? The makers of the *Ozaki Shirō zenshū* did not include *Constellations Ablaze*; was that because it was unknown to them, having appeared only in Niigata, the Americas, and Brazil? What of the works of Nakagawa Amenosuke, some of which have no clear antecedents in Japan? More research is required to answer these and other questions of textual circulation of newspaper novels beyond the Japanese empire.

Reconstructing this history of the circulation of Japanese-language newspaper novels in the Americas and elsewhere holds out the tantalizing possibility that unknown works by known authors are extant and may be considered within the writers' complete bodies of writing. This possibility, however, is perhaps less valuable than the fact that the reconstruction would cast light on the fictional worlds that were offered to individuals on a daily basis, living in disparate and diverse communities, as they developed ever richer notions of themselves and their relation to the world around them. This is different from some sort of imagined spread of "Japanese literature", as the body of works that readers would have encountered was not uniform for any of these readers, nor would it have resulted in any simplistic or singularly "Japanese" cultural identity to which they would have subscribed. For these reasons, a reconstructed history of regional cultural consumption is essential for a fuller understanding of the Japanese diaspora.

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Notes

- 1 Item found in an online auction at <https://page.auctions.yahoo.co.jp/jp/auction/s1057914065> (accessed on 26 September 2022).
- 2 All titles of works have been given tentative English translations. Please note that Romanizations for the Sanskrit terms are given as the titles of two of the works, thus rendering (for example) "Naraku" (in Japanese) as "Naraka".
- 3 Odo and Sinoto, 145.
- 4 *Niigata shinbun*, (June 1936–12 January 1937, 178 installments). Installment #7 appeared on 1 July 1936, so I presume serialization began on or around 24 June 1936.
- 5 The work was serialized in the *Miyako shinbun* between 18 March 1933 and 30 August 1933. It was published in book form by Takemura Shobō.
- 6 These journeys abroad are mentioned at the conclusion and are not depicted in the novel, so it is unlikely they explain the work's popularity among diasporic readers.
- 7 This work was serialized in the *Ōsaka jiji shinpō* starting on 10 October 1930 and running until August 1931. The work was illustrated by Katsuta Tetsu (勝田哲, 1896–1980).
- 8 See the Kokuritsu Gekijō Kabuki Nenpyō *Hensan-shitsu* (1986), ed., *Kindai kabuki nenpyō Kyōto-hen bessatsu* (Tokyo: Yagi Shoten, 1986) 271. Thanks to Aaron Gerow for clearing up questions I had about this production.
- 9 When Ozaki attended the school it was the Aichi Kenritsu Dai-ni Chūgakkō; today it is known as the Aichi Kenritsu Kōtō Gakkō. While the school is not named in *Constellations Ablaze*, descriptions of its location seem to fit the location of Ozaki's school.
- 10 "Established in 1912 by Frederick Kinzaburō Makino as the voice of the Japanese migrant workers in Hawai'i, the *Hawai Hōchi* brought social activism in journalism to the Japanese community in Hawai'i. The paper increasingly supported nationalism in Japan in the 1930s". (From Hoji Shinbun Digital Collection) Honolulu, HI.
- 11 "Founded by the staff of Amerika Shinpō in 1910, Taihoku Nippō, the Great Northern Daily News in English became one of the major Japanese newspapers in Seattle, along with the *Hokubei Jiji*. After overcoming a conflict of interest with its financial sponsors, *Taihoku Nippō* gained full independence with the advent of the editor Kōjirō Takeuchi ca. 1913; it continued publishing until 1942". (From Hoji Shinbun Digital Collection) Seattle, WA.
- 12 Installment #38 appears on 1 October 1937. Installment #159 appears on 25 February 1938. Installment #121 appears on 12 January 1938 [misdated in the Hoji Shinbun Digital Collection as 13 March 1939]. Installment #122 appears on 13 January 1938. Installment #120 appears on 11 January 1938.
- 13 "The *Kashū Mainichi* was a daily newspaper first published by Sei Fujii in 1931 with the strong support from the Los Angeles Nikkei community to fill the gap left by the discontinued *Rafu Nichibe* and challenge the monopoly by *Rafu Shinpō* (*Rafu Shimpō*). The first chief editor was Isamu Inouye". (From Hoji Shinbun Digital Collection) Los Angeles, CA.
- 14 Installment #16 appears on 18 November 1937; an advertisement for it appears on 2 November 1937. Installment #111 appears on 27 February 1938. Installment #22 missing (maybe 24 November 1937 number, which is missing; November 25 also missing, but that would have been due to Thanksgiving.).
- 15 Primarily drawn from the Hoover Institution's Hoji Shinbun Digital Collection (<https://hojishinbun.hoover.org>, accessed on 26 September 2022) and from Takagi (1983).
- 16 I have not yet found enough information to clarify the source of this confusion.
- 17 Hieda 87. As cited in Hibi 322n8.

- ¹⁸ A comparison to the advertising in the *Miyako shinbun* is required. Takagi Takeo's reproduction of one such advertisement suggests that the volume was presently similar there, which would make the word choice here unremarkable. See Takagi (1976, pp. 30–31).

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