
Culture

Samurai, Spies, and Serialized Fiction

The notion of a national literature may be invoked in a variety of situations, in conjunction with a number of distinct claims. One such claim, be it explicit or implicit, is that the texts are related to a distinct, singular culture. In this case, the claim may invoke the notion of culture itself in a productively ambiguous way, referring both to a broad definition of culture—all the shared daily practices that are presumed to make one community of individuals different from another—and to a narrow definition of culture: the shared creative (in this case literary) products that (putatively) both reveal and reproduce the particular genius of that community. In many cases, the latter notion is treated as so self-evident as to require neither evidence nor a clear explication of what sort of relationships are supposed to obtain between the nation on the one hand and the works, the authors, and the readers on the other.

Frequently the focus is on the production side of texts, considering commonalities in authors' identification, experience, or environment to justify grouping their works together. In many cases a homology is then presumed between this production side and the consumption side, at least with a text's "original" readers, implying that they would have shared these commonalities as well. In the case of Japanese-language literature there seems often to be an operative assumption that the readers are "Japanese" in the same way the writers are "Japanese"; when the focus is on high-brow literary texts, there is an implication that the texts participate in a dialogue of a similar sort, together forming a literary culture (narrowly defined) and portraying a national culture (broadly defined). The shared literary culture then somehow simultaneously reflects a given community's particularities and, in the case of its literary canon, its most profound insights. As a result, the function of such a canon is alternatively imagined as both performative (reflecting

the national character) and pedagogical (molding national subjects to come into alignment with this national ideal.)¹

When we consider actual experiences of readers, however, we realize that reading does not adhere to an idealized canon as defined by a prescriptive winnowing of texts produced. A descriptive record of actual consumption reveals a far less disciplined model. Readers are exposed to a wide diversity of texts and may not interpret the texts they read through the lens—generic or national, for example—foregrounded by the literary historian. As one example, we might consider the case of Kiyotani Masuji (1916–2012). Born in Hiroshima, Kiyotani migrated to Brazil in 1926 at the age of ten. In his 1985 memoir he describes the reading he did as a young man in prewar Brazil, presumably during the 1920s and 1930s. He writes:

How many hundreds, thousands, of novels did I read? Starting with the *kōdan* in the Tachikawa Library series (if these can be called novels) and other juvenilia, magazines of all types, newspaper fiction, novels. In terms of types, I read lowbrow works, pure literature, and translations. There was practically never a day that went by without me reading some fiction of one type or another.²

Kiyotani's adult self retroactively applies the categories of literary analysis—particularly the pure/lowbrow divide that functions as a primary mechanism of canonization—but what characterizes the reading experiences of his youth is the inability of these categories to effectively discipline his consumption. It is likely that Kiyotani's experience, while perhaps exceptional in terms of the quantity of his reading, is not so in terms of its diversity.

In considering the Japanese-language literary activities of prewar Brazil, then, we must note important ways in which the production and consumption sides are asymmetrical. While the authors of (nearly all) the texts this chapter examines—the long-form “popular” literature serialized in locally produced newspapers—had no direct relation (or perhaps even awareness) of the community in Brazil, their texts were likely the most widely read Japanese-language fiction in that community. From the perspective of readers, it is inarguable that they played a central role in the Japanese literary activities of prewar Brazil, if we grant reading the same amount of attention as we do writing. Moreover, a preliminary analysis of the texts suggests that they do, in fact, seem to tell us something about the production side as well, and that they cannot be seen as simply the borrowed cultural objects of another, putatively central, monolithic community in Japan.

BACKGROUND

As noted in the last chapter, a 1939 survey of reading habits of the approximately 11,500 households located in the Bauru region found that nearly every household purchased a newspaper and that the vast majority were Japanese-language newspapers published in Brazil.³ What these statistics suggest is that if a

reader of Japanese in Brazil prior to the Second World War were to have access to prose fiction, rather than the books and magazines from Japan that were circulating throughout the marketplace described in the previous chapter, it would likely be in the form of the serialized novels carried in the locally produced Japanese-language newspapers.

The first Japanese-language newspapers produced in Brazil appeared less than a decade after the first immigrants arrived from Japan in 1908. As the historian (and emigrant to Brazil) Handa Tomoo (1906–96) wrote, not only did these newspapers provide news more promptly than imported journals, they also became a forum for immigrant intellectuals and opinion makers; as a result, they contributed to a growing consciousness among immigrants of themselves as “(Japanese) countrymen in Brazil” (在伯同胞).⁴ One major component of these newspapers was prose fiction, the diverse forms of which made up a literary ecosystem in their pages, though that metaphor suggests a greater level of organicity and interrelation than necessarily existed. Perhaps rather than an ecosystem, it would be better described as a cultivated field, with genres and works selected consciously (though with varying levels of care) to speak to different expectations and desires.

The forms of fiction these papers carried included realistic pieces set in Brazil, tales of swordsmen set in the past, stories of detectives and “poison women” set in the present, translated works from Portuguese and English (and perhaps other languages as well), comedic anecdotes, and accounts of the mysterious, just to name the most prominent. The few studies that thus far have been undertaken of Japanese-language fiction in Brazil have understandably focused on the first of these categories, perhaps assuming that the other categories were generic products of a cultural industry based in Japan.⁵ Such an assumption would be justified, at least to a certain extent. As will be discussed in detail below, most of these works were produced in Japan and ended up in Brazil after passing through a system of literary production and distribution that might be characterized as semi-industrial.

At the same time, however, ignoring these works means ignoring the vast majority of the fiction that would have been available to the readers in Brazil at the time. A closer look at these serialized works gives us a more complete understanding of the Japanese-language literary landscape of Brazil prior to World War II. Moreover, changes over the period examined reveal that this “industrial” system of literary production and distribution, while centered in Japan, likely did not result in a uniform literary culture throughout Japan itself, much less the Japanese-reading community abroad. Instead, it seems likely to have created particular local literary environments emerging from a concentrated (and thus perhaps somewhat homogenized) creative source. If this is in fact the case, it further problematizes the notion of a singular aggregate “Japanese literature” usually implied within the logic of national literatures.

By examining the literary texts most readily available to Japanese-language readers in Brazil, we find one example of a community possessing a potential

shared literary culture related, but not identical, to those in similar communities within Japan. What is perhaps more significant is the fact that this would not have made this reading community exceptional, despite the radical difference in historical circumstances from other intra-national (and intra-imperial) Japanese-language reading communities. Instead, it is likely that the reading community formed by this concrete medium of text circulation bore a close structural resemblance to local readerships outside of the largest metropolitan areas in Japan. Though some regional newspapers in Japan had begun to affiliate with the large, national newspapers prior to the Second World War—and thus often share works of serialized fiction with other newspapers within those networks—unaffiliated newspapers filled their pages using many of the same mechanisms that were used in Brazil at this time.

We can see in newspaper fiction both of the distinct mechanisms that Benedict Anderson describes: namely, the effect of simultaneity, as readers consume texts synchronously through the medium of the newspaper, and the effect of interpellation, as texts hail readers to a common national identity.⁶ The time-sensitive nature of these texts (readers wanting to know what happens next, as soon as possible, and in many cases doing so essentially simultaneously with one another) largely conforms to the synchronicity stressed by Anderson, even if there were also cases of asynchronous consumption. At the same time, these texts raise serious questions about the interpellative mechanism described by Anderson, in which there seems to be a tacit assumption that readers will respond affirmatively to (and recognize uniformly) forms of national identity-interpellation present in a given text. While it is impossible to know with precision how individual readers responded to identities implied by texts, it is possible to imagine alternate forms of identification (beside one associated with the nation) that would have been available to all readers, and perhaps these deterritorialized readers more than most.

With these questions in mind, this chapter considers one subsection of the literary ecosystem of Japanese-language newspapers in Brazil: the lengthy serializations, located in high-profile positions within the newspapers, which would conventionally be categorized as “popular fiction.” The focus will be on the *Burajiru jihō*, which both enjoyed the widest circulation over the period studied and provided the most literary content. While the resulting picture is incomplete, even for this one community, it nonetheless presents us with a sense of what may have been the widest read Japanese-language fiction in Brazil between 1917 and 1941.

JAPANESE-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS IN BRAZIL

The first newspaper produced in Brazil was the *Shūkan Nanbei*, a weekly mimeograph established in early 1916 by Hoshina Ken'ichirō. At the time there were roughly fifteen thousand immigrants from Japan in Brazil, most of whom (as described in the previous chapter) were working as agricultural laborers in the countryside, spread throughout the state of São Paulo; by contrast, only around

two or three hundred Japanese immigrants lived in the city of São Paulo. This was not the first newspaper that Hoshina had worked on, and Brazil was not his first home in the Western Hemisphere; he was a serial migrant, having originally emigrated to Hawaii, where he had run a Japanese-language newspaper, and then to Texas, where for many years he had been involved in large-scale rice farming. Nor was Brazil his first destination in South America: in 1909, prior to relocating to Brazil, he had moved to Argentina. Hoshina's *Shūkan Nanbei* ran for slightly longer than two years before folding.⁷ According to Kōyama Rokurō, the newspaper carried a variety of material, including a column dedicated to local literary production.⁸

The second major newspaper produced and the one that came to be the primary rival of the *Burajiru jihō* during the prewar was the *Nippaku shinbun* (日伯新聞), originally conceived of by Kaneko Yasusaburō and Wako Shungorō in April 1914. Their project was delayed as the two became involved with Hoshina and his paper, but ultimately they did launch on 31 August 1916 as an eight-page weekly. Feeling that a mimeographed paper such as the *Shūkan Nanbei* lacked authority, the two decided to use lithography for the *Nippaku shinbun*. It rapidly outstripped the *Shūkan Nanbei* in popularity, with a circulation of seven to eight hundred. In early 1917 Kaneko and Wako had a falling out, and Wako—who had been doing all of the editing—left for Mato Grosso. When Kaneko fell ill in 1919 he sold the paper to Miura Saku (also known as Sack.) Unlike the emigration company-funded *Burajiru jihō*, which was perceived as supporting the positions of the emigration companies and the Japanese consulate (more about this below), the *Nippaku* came to be seen as the popular, critical, unorthodox alternative.⁹ On 20 October 1931, *Nippaku* switched to a twice-weekly schedule. By 1933, the paper's circulation was estimated at over seven thousand.¹⁰ On 27 March 1936, it began publishing thrice-weekly, and then on 26 August 1937 it shifted to a daily printing schedule. The paper continued publication until 25 July 1939 (when Miura was driven out of the country), at which point its circulation was roughly 19,500.¹¹

The third major newspaper to appear was the *Burajiru jihō* (伯刺西爾時報), which was established in July 1917 as the official organ of the Kaigai Kōgyō Kabushiki Kaisha (KKKK) emigration company. Originally a weekly paper produced in São Paulo city, the paper launched on 31 August 1917; from the beginning it was printed with movable type in runs of 1,500, an ambitious quantity made possible by the support of the emigration companies. Kuroishi Seisaku was invited from the United States to run the operation; in 1922 he purchased the paper outright. The paper shifted to a twice-weekly schedule in October 1931, then to thrice-weekly in March 1936, and finally to a “daily” schedule (actually six days a week, taking Mondays off) in August 1937.¹² Its circulation in 1933 was 8,200; by 1941 it had climbed to 18,000.¹³

The *Seishū shinpō* (聖州新報) was the first Japanese-language newspaper published outside of the city of São Paulo. It was launched by Kōyama Rokurō on 7 September 1921 in the city of Bauru. At the time, it took more than ten days for the

São Paulo papers to reach readers in the most distant *colônias*, and their content was overwhelmingly focused on events of interest in the city. The *Seishū shinpō* provided a welcome contrast through its attention to rural affairs. Originally the paper was printed using hand-etched zinc plates, but movable type was adopted from 1925.¹⁴ The paper shifted to a twice-weekly schedule in September 1931, then to thrice-weekly in September 1935, and finally became a daily in August 1937.¹⁵ In the meantime, it had relocated to the city of São Paulo.¹⁶ Where it had begun with a circulation of 350, it rose to 5,300 by 1931 and 9,000 by 1941.¹⁷

While there were a few other papers, such as the *Nanbei shinpō* (南米新報), the *Ariansa jihō* (アリアンサ時報), and a wide variety of community and organization bulletins, the *Burajiru jihō*, *Nippaku shinbun*, and *Seishū shinpō* were the largest papers during the prewar period and are the newspapers we still possess in reasonable quantity (if not complete runs) today.

DUELS IN THE PRESENCE OF THE SHOGUN IEMITSU

Although fiction played a role in most, if not all, of these locally produced newspapers, it was most prevalent and conspicuous in the *Burajiru jihō*. As mentioned above, the newspaper launched on 31 August 1917, and fiction played a central part in the newspaper from the beginning.¹⁸ The inaugural issue included the first installment of the *kōdan* *Duels in the Presence of the Shogun Iemitsu* (寛永御前試合). The serialization continued for a little more than a year, until its conclusion on 13 September 1918. A close look at this work tells us a great deal about the processes by which serialization occurred in the newspaper; it also challenges any implicit beliefs that a national literature might be made up of texts that are themselves static and authoritative.

The basic tale in question was a famous one, based on a competition that was supposedly held during the Kan'ei period (1624–44) in the presence of the Shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu. The competition brought together legendary warriors from throughout the realm, who competed against one another to show the relative strengths of their special martial abilities. The story was not created for serialization in the *Burajiru jihō*; it was regularly performed by storytellers in Japan and had already appeared in print there. The version printed in the *Burajiru jihō*, originally performed by Takarai Bakin the fourth (1853–1928) and transcribed by Imamura Jirō (1868–1937)¹⁹, was one that had previously been published in two volumes of the Yachiyo Bunko (八千代文庫)—volume 32, *Kan'ei gozen jiai* (寛永御前試合), and volume 33, *Kan'ei yūshi bujutsu no homare* (寛永勇士武術誉)—both of which first appeared earlier in 1917.

This was not the only published version of the story in circulation at the time. One earlier version, told by Tanabe Dairyū, was published by Kyūkokaku (求光閣) in 1895. The version used by the *Burajiru jihō* was not even the first version published by Shūeidō Ōkawayaya Shoten (聚栄堂大川屋書店), the publisher

have been traced and re-etched by hand. Given considerations of economy, one might speculate that this was done locally, in Brazil.

What we can determine was done locally was the setting of the type. While the reproduction is nearly word-for-word, the page composition, script choices, and distribution of phonetic glosses are not identical. A few examples from the first installments illustrate this. The different page composition is immediately obvious; the beginning and ending of these installments does not match that in the book, and is accompanied by an installment title that does not appear in it either.²¹ Script modifications range from the substitution of *kanji* for *kana* (or the reverse) to the use of *hentaigana*, or alternate forms of *kana*, that are not used in the book version, but which were regularly used in the *Burajiru jihō*. Finally, phonetic glosses are added, removed, or differently positioned vis-à-vis the words they gloss.

What all of these changes indicate is that the type for the story was set as part of the composition of the newspaper as a whole. This also suggests that the more substantive changes present in the newspaper serialization would have been introduced locally. These changes primarily occur at the beginnings and endings of installments, where sentences are removed, divided, or (on rare occasion) expanded in order to allow breaks that are not present in the book version. This differs from the United States, where syndication services would often provide a complete stereotype of the story (and, in many cases, the remainder of the newspaper page, including advertisements) to the newspapers that carried it.

The *Burajiru jihō* serialization did not carry the complete contents of both of the Yachiyo Bunko volumes. The installments from 31 August 1917 through 21 June 1918 covered the first volume; the 21 June 1918 installment then moved on to the second volume. When the serialization of the work in the newspaper concluded, however, it had only reached page 50 of the second volume. On 7 September 1918, it was announced that because *Duels* “would soon reach a point at which the story could be paused,” the newspaper would begin serializing *Kume no Heintai* (桑平内) in its place.

In the absence of direct data concerning readers’ responses, one can only speculate about what such a work might have meant to them. Perhaps the tale of honor, strength, justice, cleverness, and achievement, depicting a Japan in its past glory days, dominated by its most powerful Shogun, would have been of great consolation to readers arriving in Brazil to find themselves not only in an unfamiliar landscape, but also in a marginalized position of material and psychological hardship. Such a generalization, however, is of limited usefulness given the fact that individual readers respond to literary works differently, and often in ways that cannot be predicted simply through textual analysis. What we can say about the reception of *Duels in the Presence of the Shogun Iemitsu*, though, is that it was perceived to have been a success, at least by one of *Burajiru jihō*’s primary competitors.

another roughly forty pages of the Yachiyo Bunko version, volume 32 (*Kan'ei gozen jiai*).²⁵ As with previous serializations, the newspaper showed little concern with the divisions present in the original version, breaking off mid-section when necessary (in all but two of the thirteen installments), eliminating section divisions altogether when an installment bridged two sections, and adding or altering text as necessary to provide clarity or coherence.

Just as we speculated about the attraction of this story for readers, we might speculate now about its attraction to editors: namely, that the collection of relatively autonomous sections— and perhaps flexible reader expectations about fidelity to a precise text—was useful. It would have provided a plasticity that allowed editors to adjust to the newspaper's shifting needs, rather than being forced to adhere to the story's precise structure. It allowed them to start, stop, and jump as they needed, filling available space with content that they knew would draw readers back for the next installment.

Clearly, the editors felt enough license over the text to intervene in ways they found necessary. This reminds us that we must consider at least two possible motivations for the ubiquity of fiction in the pages of these newspapers: its importance to readers and its convenience to editors for its dependable and malleable content. Undoubtedly the stories were carried partially because of the literary or entertainment value of their content; at the same time, however, we should acknowledge that for the newspaper's editors the texts had other forms of value that had little to do with that content. In this way, the *Burajiru jihō*'s and the *Seishū shinpō*'s use of *Duels in the Presence of the Shogun Iemitsu* functions as an introduction to the ways in which the newspapers utilized existing texts during these early years.

THE EARLY YEARS: HISTORICAL FICTION, 1917–33

Duels in the Presence of the Shogun Iemitsu was the first of six such works of historical fiction that ran steadily in the *Burajiru jihō* for the first fifteen and a half years of its existence. *Duels* was followed by *Kume no Heinai*, which ran for 116 installments over two and a half years, from September 1918 until January 1921.²⁶ The story—of a masterless samurai, or *rōnin*, from Kyūshū who, after having killed many men, becomes a monk in Asakusa in order to pray for their repose and expiate his sins—had appeared in print many times before, and in a variety of versions. Stories about the historical figure, who lived during the seventeenth century, had been produced since at least 1808, when Kyokutei Bakin wrote about him.²⁷ It had been serialized in a newspaper before (as early as 1904), had been published in book form (as early as 1905), and had been made into films (starting in 1911).²⁸ The version used for the serialization here, told by Koganei Roshū, originally appeared in book form from Hakubunkan in 1918.²⁹

As with *Duels*, the *Burajiru jihō* version replicated not only the text of this version, but also the illustrations. Unlike *Duels*, however, this serialization covered the full length of, and was almost identical to, the original, roughly three-hundred-page Hakubunkan text. The *Burajiru jihō* version changed phonetic glosses, *okurigana*, and other minor elements throughout the text, as well as made more substantial changes at the beginning and end of installments in order to clarify transitions. Beyond that, however, the text is functionally identical to the one it reproduces, which had been published five months earlier in Tokyo.³⁰

On 28 January 1921, along with the last installment of *Kume no Heinai*, the newspaper ran an announcement advertising its next serialized work, *Ōishi Kuranosuke* (大石内蔵助) as told by Nakarai Tōsui. In his history of newspaper fiction in Japan, Takagi Takeo describes Nakarai as one of the premier writers of historical fiction in the first decade of the twentieth century.³¹ The first installment appeared on 4 February 1921. This work ran longer than any other, continuing for 383 installments—nearly eight years—until 22 November 1928. The story revolves around Ōishi Kuranosuke Yoshio (Yoshitaka) (大石良雄), the leader of the forty-seven *rōnin* in *Chūshingura*. Nakarai's version of the story was originally serialized in the *Tōkyō Asahi shinbun*, from 29 August 1913 until 21 April 1915; as such, it ran concurrently with such works as Natsume Sōseki's *Kokoro*.³² After this serialization in Japan was completed, the Tokyo publisher Hakuaikan published it in four volumes between 1916–17. The *Burajiru jihō* version followed the original text precisely, dividing the story into sections based on the installments.

The three works that followed *Ōishi* were period pieces, but not explicitly *kōdan*. The first was *Ōkubo Hikozaemon* (大久保彦左衛門), which began on 29 November 1928 and continued for a year and a half.³³ Ōkubo (1560–1639) was a Tokugawa retainer who became an archetype of the rough but frank warrior. The *Burajiru jihō* serialization, which is unattributed, is clearly related to the version published by Tachikawa Bunko in 1911.³⁴ That version was attributed to Sekka Sanjin (雪花散人), one of the pen names used to indicate not an individual, but rather the group of writers/transcribers employed by the company. The *Burajiru jihō* serialization follows the specific phrasing of the Tachikawa edition closely but is far more aggressive in eliminating and condensing text than was the case with any of the earlier stories. This may reflect a shifting editorial posture, but it might also be the case that the serialization and the Tachikawa edition share an earlier source text; scholars have theorized that the earlier Tachikawa volumes (of which this was one) may have drawn from existing published *kōdan*.³⁵ If the Tachikawa Bunko version is the original, however, that will come as little surprise; it was widely available, already in its fourteenth edition by 1913.³⁶

It is important to note that while *Ōkubo* was the first story serialized by the *Burajiru jihō* that ran without attribution to an author, storyteller, or transcriber, it was not the last. The story that followed it, *Nihon jūdai kenkaku-den* (日本十

大劍客傳), was published without attribution either. The serialization, however, replicates the text of a volume by the same name written by Shimota Norimitsu, published in 1926 by Seibundō Shoten (誠文堂書店) in Tokyo; why it is unattributed is unclear.³⁷ The *Burajiru jihō* version, which was serialized from 5 June 1930 until 18 December 1931, hews even more closely to its source text than did previous reproductions. Although the newspaper was unable to reprint the long sections of the original book in single installments, it nonetheless maintained those divisions and made no modifications to address newly added breaks.³⁸ The only changes that I have found between the serialization and the source text involves the phonetic gloss.³⁹ The *Burajiru jihō* serialization reproduced the entirety of the body of the book version, eliminating only a preface, a short series of adages concerning swordfighting, and a chronology that appeared in the book version.

Starting on 20 October 1931, the *Burajiru jihō* shifted from its weekly print schedule to a biweekly schedule. At first, the serialization schedule continued unchanged, with installments of *Nihon jūdai kenkaku-den* appearing on the final page of each number. From Friday, 13 November 1931, the paper began running a “Literary Arts” (文芸) column in addition to *Swordsmen*, which continued to appear on the final page. The column was not limited to fiction; as early as 21 November 1931, a work of criticism titled “Nōmin bungaku no koto” (農民文学の事) began running there. From Friday, 4 December 1931, however, the column stopped appearing in Friday issues, and instead ran only in Tuesday issues; *Nihon jūdai kenkaku-den* continued to run in every number. This continues to be the case until what appears to have been the last number of 1931, which appeared on December 22 and contained no works of fiction in either conventional location.

The last of the six historical pieces that ran during this first fourteen years was *Kataki-uchi yari morotomo* (敵討鎗諸共), which ran for fifty-five installments from 1 January 1932 until 2 February 1933. Unlike the previous two works, this story was attributed to Hasegawa Shin. The work had originally been serialized in the *Sandee mainichi* between 8 November 1925 and 14 February 1926 and printed in book form by Shun'yōdō later that year.⁴⁰ The story was also the lead work in volume eight of the Heibonsha *enpon* anthology, *Gendai taishū bungaku zenshū* (現代大衆文學全集), which was published in 1928. The *Burajiru jihō* version ends with the phrase, “I don’t know if that was the case. . . .” (さうであらうか知らん), which did not appear in the *Sandee mainichi* edition but does appear in the *zenshū* version, suggesting that the newspaper may have used the latter as its source.

One of these six works appeared in practically every number of the newspaper for the first fifteen years of its existence, appearing on the back page with only rare exceptions. Even the shortest ran for over a year. All of them were works of period fiction involving warriors and their exploits. Not only were the subjects of the stories characters with which many of the readers would have had familiarity, but also the versions themselves were relatively high-profile, often produced by well-known publishers (including Hakubunkan, the Asahi Shinbunsha, and Tachikawa

Bunko.) Despite the size of these publishers and their presumable interest in protecting their intellectual property, it seems likely that these works were reproduced illegally; although that is a difficult claim to prove definitively, anecdotes about the time in Brazil treat it as a given.

ILLEGAL PRINTING

We know that some newspapers in the Americas did engage in this sort of illegal reproduction, thanks to well-documented incidents such as the one that follows, concerning a story that ran in Los Angeles at the same time that the *Burajiru jihō* was serializing *Ōishi Kuranosuke*. On 13 February 1925, the *Nichibei shinbun* began running the novel *Naraku* (奈落) by Masuda Hajime.⁴¹ In the pages of the *Nichibei*, the serialization seems unexceptional; a brief note on February 12 announced that the story would be starting the following day, and the serialization itself does not differ in any obvious way from those that preceded or succeeded it.

On 3 June 1925, Saburi Sadao, then head of the Bureau of Commercial Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, received a letter from Masuda regarding this reproduction of his novel, which had originally appeared in the *Miyako shinbun* between 8 December 1924 and 3 May 1925.⁴² Apparently an acquaintance of Masuda's who had been traveling in the United States had contacted the author upon his return and informed him that he had seen the story running there. Masuda contacted Saburi, he explained, because he had not given permission for the reproduction, and hoped that Saburi would intervene on his behalf, as the *Nichibei* had not responded to the author's queries. In order to further highlight the seriousness of the situation, Masuda mentioned that it was his understanding that the paper had also illegally serialized Nakazato Kaizan's *Daibosatsu tōge* (大菩薩峠).⁴³

While it has not been possible thus far to verify Masuda's claim that the reproduction was not approved by Nakazato, the *Nichibei shinbun* had indeed been reproducing *Daibosatsu tōge*. The multivolume novel ran in the newspaper for years. In the earliest number of *Nichibei* that I was able to check, 1 January 1919, installment 255 (from *Ai no yama*, volume [巻] 6 of the novel) appears.⁴⁴ This would suggest not only that the story had been running for some time, but also that *Nichibei* was reproducing installments fairly soon after they appeared in the *Miyako shinbun*. On the day Masuda wrote his letter in June 1925, *Nichibei* printed an installment of the *Mumyō* volume (21), which had begun publication in January of the same year in both the *Tokyo Nichinichi* and the *Ōsaka Mainichi* newspapers.

In his letter, Masuda asked Saburi to take three concrete steps: first, to declare this an infringement of his copyright and to order the newspaper to cease publication of the work immediately; second, to demand that the two newspapers (*Nichibei* and *Rafu*) pay twenty yen each for each day of serialization; and third, to convey that if the newspapers wished to complete the serialization, that they contact the author's representative and enter into formal negotiations. The demand

may have achieved some or all of the desired effect; *Nichibei's* serialization of *Naraku* concluded on 25 June 1925 with installment 132, prior to the conclusion of the original work (which had spanned 147 installments). Masuda's claim may have impacted the serialization of *Daibosatsu tōge* as well, which seems to have been suspended with the close of the *Mumyō* chapter less than a month later, on 18 July 1925.

Though much remains unknown about this incident, it does tell us a few things: first, that illegal reproductions seem to have existed in the Americas, even when the original texts were quite well-known and produced by high-profile publishers; second, that information about serialization overseas was sufficiently scarce that a coincidence of this sort was required for the original author to become aware that it was happening (and that authors either assumed their rights were being protected, or were unaware that these extranational markets existed in the first place); and third, that these markets were sufficiently meaningful for these authors that once the illegal printings became known, they felt compelled to respond. Finally, the incident grants some credence to the oral history that suggests that early serializations in the Brazil newspapers were reproduced illegally.

EXPERIMENTATION AND TRANSITION, 1932–34

The year 1932 saw a number of changes in the *Burajiru jihō's* literary offerings, even as it continued to run the last of the six long historical pieces. Though no fiction appeared on 18 January 1932, in the following number (January 21) an announcement appeared on “the expansion of the Literary Arts column.” In it, the paper revealed its plans to “open the column and make it available as a stage for the activities of literature lovers,” presumably among “the society of fellow countrymen” (邦人社会) that desired that access. Over the following numbers, Monday issues lacked any fiction, but Thursday numbers contained both a newly expanded literary section (on page 5 of 8) and the most recent *Kataki-uchi* installment. This schedule—fiction on both pages 5 and 8 on Thursdays, but no fiction appearing on Mondays, when the paper was four pages rather than eight—continued for some time, with only occasional adjustments. This lasted until 22 August 1932, when the paper began experimenting with mid-length pieces about war and other nonfiction topics. Throughout this time, the final long historical piece of this first period, *Kataki-uchi yari morotomo*, continued running, concluding on 2 February 1933.

Between 9 February 1933 and 6 April 1933, the newspaper serialized “Kuni-iri Sankichi” (國入り三吉) by Shirai Kyōji. Far shorter than the previous works, this story was explicitly marked as being short-form fiction. It had originally been published in the July 1931 special summer issue of *Shūkan asahi*.⁴⁵ For the remainder of 1933, the newspaper ran a series of short works, many based on *rakugo*. On 12 August 1933, the newspaper switched its publication schedule yet again, to a Wednesday/Saturday schedule. After the initial transition issue on that day, the

Saturday numbers became the shorter four-page format, containing no literary texts, and the Wednesday numbers became the longer eight-page format with literary texts both on an inner page (usually page four) and on the final page. The serialized fiction that appears on the final page of the newspaper during this year bore little resemblance to what readers would have grown accustomed to in previous years.

It is unclear what prompted this period of experimentation during the years 1932 and 1933, but one wonders if the pressures to acquire texts legally led the newspaper first to try to avoid purchasing long pieces. In addition to choosing shorter works, many only single installments, the newspaper experimented with a wide variety of genres and directed more attention to locally produced fiction, which it could acquire for free or for minimal expense. Given the brevity of the period, however, it would seem that demand for extended serializations was greater than the editors had realized. So great, in fact, that the newspaper then turned to lengthy pieces that they were likely not able to reproduce without proper compensation to their authors. This would help explain the new types of fiction serializations that emerged after this year of transition.

A NEW ORDER, 1934-41

Beginning on 17 January 1934, the distribution and nature of fiction in the newspaper changed noticeably. Page four of the Wednesday edition remained dedicated (primarily) to local literary production of various forms, but the amount of fiction on the last page was once again reduced. Unlike most serializations since the institution of the twice-weekly printing schedule, the novel that began appearing there, *Kinpatsu-ma* (金髮魔), ran initially in both the Wednesday and Saturday editions. Unlike the stories that had preceded it, this novel was set in the present day. It also brought even more visual appeal to the page, with a new large illustration accompanying Wednesday installments and the standardized illustrated masthead accompanying the work both days.

From this time forward, *rakugo* and other short, popular pieces were less common, often only appearing in special (longer) numbers, such as the New Year's Day issue. *Kinpatsu-ma* ran for 135 installments over one and a half years, from January 1934 until July 1935, followed by Ichiryūsai Teikyō's historical piece *Sanza shigure* (さんざ時雨), which ran for a similar duration, from July 1935 until January 1937.⁴⁶

When the newspaper went to its new thrice-weekly schedule on 27 March 1936, it began running an extended work of contemporary fiction on the front page of each number even as it continued to run a separate, historical work on its last page. This is the format—two pieces running simultaneously, one set in present day, one in the past—that the paper would eventually maintain until it was shut down in 1941.



FIGURE 6. *Kinpatsu-ma, Burajiru jihō*, 17 January 1934. Courtesy of the Museu Histórico Regional Saburo Yamanaka and the Kokusai Nihon Bunka Kenkyū Sentaa.

On 23 August 1937, *Burajiru jihō* became a “daily” paper, running Mondays through Saturdays. With each issue shorter, at four pages each, the literary column began appearing on Saturdays, sharing the back page with an installment of the contemporary work *Reijin aika* (麗人哀歌). In the closing months of 1937, fiction went on almost total hiatus in the newspaper, with only the occasional literary section or installment of *Reijin aika*. This continued until the New Year’s Day issue in 1938, which contained a *rakugo* piece, a *kōdan* piece, and a literary section, among other things. The first regular issue of the year, 5 January 1938, contained the next installment of *Reijin aika*, which appeared on the front page until January 26, when it was once again placed on the last page.

By 30 May 1938, historical fiction had returned to the front page with the tale that was then being serialized, the famous *Chūshingura* (忠臣蔵). At the same time, a new contemporary work was launched on the fourth (last) page: *Tōge on josei* (峠の女性), a work of contemporary fiction by Yamanaka Minetarō, which began on 27 May 1938.⁴⁷ Though the newspaper changed its “daily” schedule to a Tuesday through Sunday printing schedule on 5 June 1938, the distribution of fiction was not significantly altered. When *Chūshingura* concluded on 3 February 1939, its front-page spot was taken over the next day by another historical novel, *Shigure hakkō* (時雨八荒) by Hiki Takeshi. When *Tōge on josei* finished on 14 May 1939, its back-page spot was taken over the next day by Kikuchi Kan’s *Nishizumi senshachō-den* (西住戦車長伝). When *Shigure hakkō* ended its run on 3 December 1939, another period piece did not take its place; instead, *Moyuru seiza* (燃ゆる星座), which had been running on the back page, moved to

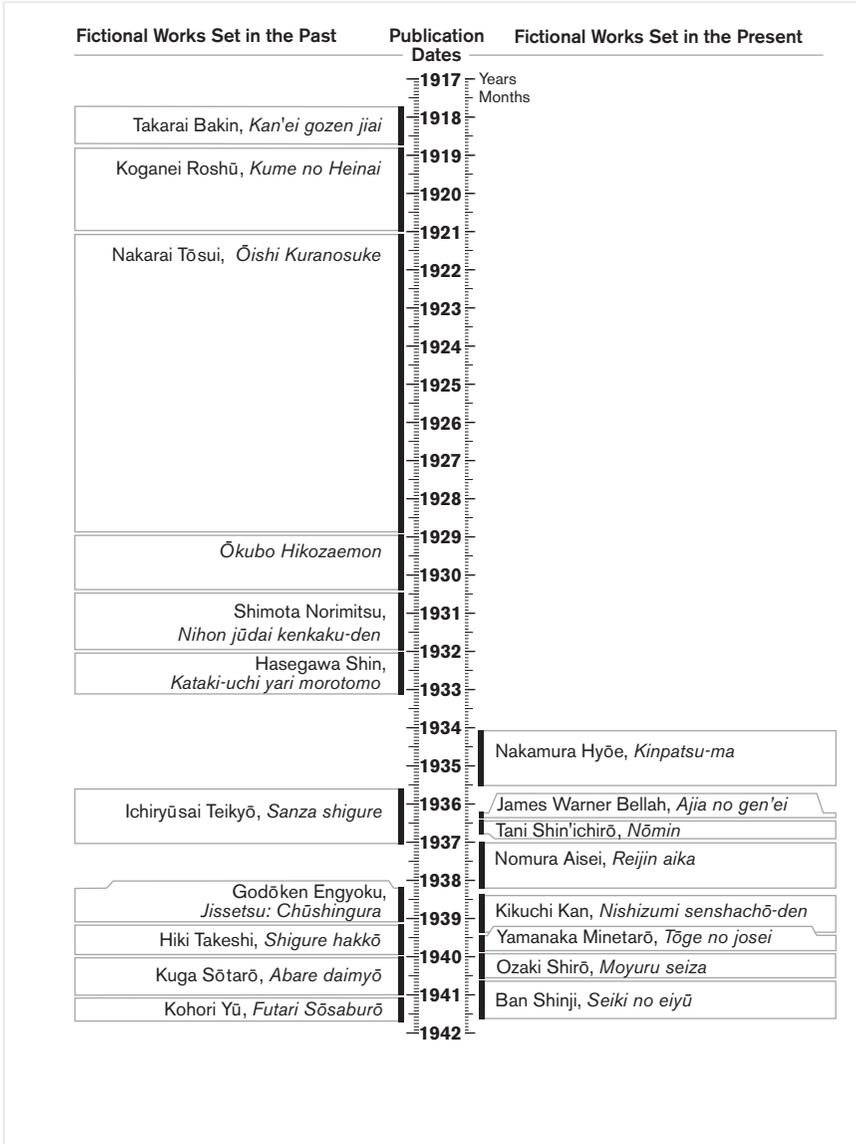


FIGURE 7. Extended serializations in the *Burajiru jihō*, 1917–1941.

the front page from 5 December 1939. No serialization took its place, presumably because it was so close to the end of the year. When the period piece *Abare daimyō* (あばれ大名) began serialization on 7 January 1940, however, *Moyuru seiza* returned to the back page. On 23 April 1940, *Burajiru jihō* announced that *Abare daimyō* would pause because the manuscript had not yet arrived, making

it clear that the newspaper did not always have complete works in hand when serialization began. During this hiatus, *Moyuru seiza* took its place on the front page and no serialization occurred on the last page. Because of a break in the collection of extant copies of the newspaper, it is unclear how long the hiatus lasted; based on installment numbers, it appears to have been about two weeks.⁴⁸ By 12 May 1940, however, *Abare daimyō* had returned to the front page and *Moyuru seiza* to the last.

On 30 July 1940, the newspaper announced the conclusion of *Moyuru seiza* and advertised the work that will replace it, Ban Shinji's *Seiki no eiyū* (世紀の英雄). It referred to the work as a "national-policy novel" (国策の小説), a work in support of the Japanese war effort. *Eiyū* ran fairly regularly until November and December of that year, despite the fact that *Abare daimyō* ran with great regularity during this time. Part of the reason may have been the expansion of Portuguese-language content in the paper, which usually ran on the back page. By the end of 1940, some days the entire back page would be in Portuguese. The serialization of *Abare daimyō* ended on 4 January 1941 and was followed by *Futari Sōsaborō* (二人草三郎). Neither *Seiki no eiyū* nor *Futari Sōsaborō* was complete on 8 August 1941, when the microfilmed collection of the *Burajiru jihō* concludes; it seems likely they continued until the newspaper ceased publication on August 31.⁴⁹

Between January 1934 and August 1941, when the *Burajiru jihō* was shut down, these thirteen works ran on the front and back cover pages. Each continued for significant periods, with roughly one to three hundred installments per work (spanning varying lengths of time, as the newspaper's printing schedule increased in frequency). As with the earlier period, all (but one) of the authors were from Japan; only one (Tani Shin'ichirō) was a local author. All except Tani (and perhaps Bellah) were known writers in Japan, though most were only second- or third-tier, recognized mostly for their newspaper fiction. The biggest difference in terms of content was the shift from exclusively historical works to a combination of works set in the past and works set in the present (though works set in the past seem still to have been given more prime placement in the newspaper.) This was likely due to both a shift in popular literary tastes and an increased demand for content, due to the more frequent publishing schedule. This difference in temporal settings, however, was not the only change from the earlier period.

ORIGINS OF THE SERIALIZED WORKS

Unlike works that appeared during the first period, which had been drawn from texts already published in Japan, I have not yet discovered any evidence that these later works (with the notable exception of Kikuchi Kan's *Nishizumi senshachō-den*) had been previously published in Japan.⁵⁰ In many cases, they seem not to have been republished there subsequently either.

This is not to say that the works appeared exclusively in the *Burajiru jihō*. First, the works may have appeared in regional newspapers that have not yet been catalogued. Second, the works may be known, but under different titles, perhaps with some changes. Third, the works may not be by the authors they are attributed to at all, perhaps with the author's knowledge and direction or perhaps not. We know in the case of the author Tokuda Shūsei, for example, that such practices did occur. Richard Torrance describes cosmetic rewrites that were given new titles and resold by Shūsei, and of translations of foreign novels that Shūsei presented as his own, both at the turn of the twentieth century.⁵¹ Similarly, Asaoka Kunio describes a case from 1910 in which it seems likely that the *Kyūshū nichinichi shinbun* borrowed both Tokuda Shūsei's name and title (slightly) modified for a work that he likely had nothing to do with whatsoever.⁵²

In the case of works that only appeared in the *Burajiru jihō*, it is possible that they were acquired by agents who offered such works to newspapers throughout Japan and the global Japanese-language community, and who did not hesitate to sell the same work to multiple outlets. Though few have researched this system, Asaoka has discussed the phenomenon in which a given work by a famous author would appear in different regional newspapers, either simultaneously or at different times.⁵³ While his research uses the specific case of Yamada Bimyō (1868–1910), he notes work done by two other scholars on the cases of Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939) and Tokuda Shūsei (1871–1943); in the case of Kyōka, Okazaki Hajime has shown that in one case the same work appeared simultaneously in multiple regional papers.⁵⁴

One of the details that emerges from this research is the fact that, at least at the end of the nineteenth century, newspapers and agents utilized the texts they purchased with great flexibility. Asaoka notes that from around 1887–1895, a side industry emerged that purchased previously published woodblock illustrations from the various illustrated newspapers in Tokyo, had unknown authors write new stories to accompany them, and then sold them to regional newspapers; later, the same industry began selling original works solicited from famous Tokyo authors and then selling them to multiple newspapers throughout the country.⁵⁵ Some of the authors that participated in this system were Hirotsu Ryūryō (1861–1928), Emi Suiin (1869–1934), Tayama Katai (1871–1930), and Oguri Fūyō (1875–1926).

The system grew more formalized in the first decades of the twentieth century. Asaoka cites a 1909 article that names a number of companies involved in this sort of work, including the Teikoku Shinbun Yōtatsu-sha (帝國新聞用達社) and the Genjikan (元治館), both based in Tokyo.⁵⁶ In 1910, Teikoku Shinbun Yōtatsu-sha, Genjikan, and Zuga Tsūshin (図画通信) merged to form the Tokyo-based Tōyō Bungei Kabushiki Kaisha (東洋文芸株式会社). An advertisement from the new company, published in 1911, claimed that the company provided fiction to more than three hundred newspapers throughout the country.⁵⁷ Kawai

Sumio writes about the company Gakugei Tsūshinsha (学芸通信社), founded in 1929, which was also involved in this system. The company was started by a former employee of Nihon Denpō Tsūshinsha (日本電報通信社), Kawai Yasushi (1900–63), as Shinbun Bungeisha (新聞文芸社). Kawai Yasushi later also launched the Nihon Gakugei Shinbunsha (日本学芸新聞社).⁵⁸ There certainly was a growing market for such a system; Ozaki Hotsuki describes how by the 1950s newspaper fiction was so popular that it was common for a newspaper to run three works each day, one appearing in the morning edition and two appearing in the evening edition.⁵⁹

In the early years of this system, authors were paid between one and two yen per installment, which the companies would then arrange to have illustrated.⁶⁰ The companies would approach larger regional newspapers, offering to sell them the finished blocks at a similar rate on the condition that the newspaper return the blocks after they had finished the printing process. These companies would then offer these works in a catalog sent to other newspapers throughout the country (and likely beyond as well.) For these subsequent printings, newspapers were only charged 25–35 *sen* per installment (or less, in the case of *kōdan*), again under the condition that they return the blocks.) In some cases, they sold these under the oxymoronic name of “New Works the Second Time Around” (二度目の新作). Yamada Bimyō discusses his dealings with Genjikan in his diary, and it is these entries that Asaoka draws on to understand how this business operated. The regional newspapers apparently had little or no direct contact with the authors, and in many cases the works appeared in the newspapers without the original authors even being aware that they had.⁶¹

A study conducted by the Asahi Shinbunsha in 1949 reveals opinions about the functioning of this system that can probably be considered representative. One critic, writing about the situation in Yamagata Prefecture under a pen name taken from a famous local bandit, Gando Tarō, described the basic logic of this system through which the newspapers acquired the stories they carried:

Most works of fiction carried in regional newspapers are ones written by the author completely unaware of what newspaper will eventually purchase it. Newspapers select and purchase works they like from a group of stories for sale, reproduced in printed form and sold to the highest bidder. The author’s fame and influence act as the brand informing the exchange, and no one questions the literary value of the [particular] work.⁶²

In much scholarship to this day, there is a faith in the economic rationality of this system, which would render works of lower literary quality less valuable, and thus cause these works to flow away from the center as their merit declines. In the 1949 study, a critic identified as Yokota Yūji wrote the following about newspaper fiction in Aomori:

Originally regional newspapers would inherit the poor imitators of the center, using a combination of contemporary and period fiction to fill in gaps and provide some

variety among the headlines. If one were to climb on a train, go to a neighboring prefecture, and buy a newspaper, for example, one would find the same story from some discount news service, with the same illustrations, totally bereft of either originality or sincerity of intent. Even if the regional newspapers would occasionally open their pages to local 'authors' in the hopes of introducing local color, the resulting works would be utterly devoid of vitality; at the very least, it left the pages covered with the most provincial of content. This is how things were prior to the War.⁶³

Commenting on this issue of local authors, Gando Tarō offered the following opinion:

I don't think that newspaper novels are so easy to produce that an unknown author could just knock one out. Still, compared to the stupidity of relying on works dumped by central authors on regional newspapers, it would be better for those [regional] papers to midwife the births of new literature and authors, even if they are unable to acquire great works in the process.⁶⁴

We know that local newspapers did in fact attempt to cultivate local writers; at the same time, on occasion they appear to have been able to bypass the system described above and contact famous authors through direct connections. Yokota (quoted above) acknowledged that at times the newspapers would shrewdly importune a famous author originally from the region, or catch one in the area on holiday, and ask him or her to write something for them.⁶⁵

Based on what appeared in the newspaper, one might suspect this to have been the case at least once with the *Burajiru jihō* as well: an advertisement that announced the upcoming serialization of Ozaki Shirō's *Moyuru seiza* in 1939 indicated just such an arrangement.⁶⁶ The advertisement claimed that the *Burajiru Jihōsha* had contacted the author directly to request that he write for the newspaper, and that he had readily agreed. The advertisement goes on to say that the newspaper had received the manuscript that he sent upon its completion. This was the first time that the newspaper printed a statement about the process by which it had obtained a work of fiction from Japan. While the fact that this is the only time that the newspaper makes such a claim seems to bolster its believability, the fact that the "author's words" included in a later advertisement did not mention the (presumably noteworthy) detail that it would be serialized in Brazil might have introduced some doubt in readers' minds.⁶⁷ They would have been right to be skeptical: the work had in fact been serialized two years earlier in three separate newspapers in North America, at least one of them with the same author's note.⁶⁸

At the beginning of this section, I noted that works from these later periods do not seem to have appeared elsewhere in Japan. The same cannot be said of the Americas. Ban Shinji's *Seiki no eiyū* followed the serialization of *Moyuru seiza* in Seattle's *Taihoku nippō* from 24 May 1940, just as it did in the *Burajiru jihō* on 1 August 1940; it also ran in Los Angeles's *Kashū mainichi shinbun* from 20 February 1941. *Reijin aikai*, which appeared in Brazil beginning on New Year's Day 1937,

had earlier run in the *Nippu jiji* newspaper in Honolulu, Hawaii, from 8 October 1932. *Abare daimyō* by Kuga Sōtarō was serialized in Seattle's *Taihoku nippō* in 1940, at the same time (or nearly the same time) it was being serialized in Brazil. *Futari Sōsaborō*, which began serialization in Brazil in January 1941, ran in Seattle's *Taihoku nippō* from 3 July 1940. It is not clear what business links existed between most of these newspapers, if there were any at all. Rather, this evidence seems to suggest the existence of agents like those described earlier, who specialized in selling works in multiple diasporic communities.

PERIODIZATION OF PREWAR SERIALIZATIONS

Although it is unclear how the *Burajiru jihō* acquired the long works by non-local authors that it serialized on the front and back pages of the newspaper, it seems possible that the works that appeared in the first period (1917–33) were reproduced locally and without legal permission, working from existing printed versions of the texts that the newspaper could have acquired through any number of channels. By contrast, it seems likely that after the brief window of experimentation and transition (1932–34), the works that appeared in the later period (1934–41) were acquired legally. To begin with, the authors and works printed in the second period are notably less famous than those in the first period; had all works been “free” for the newspaper, why not choose more proven works to reproduce? It seems unlikely that these lower-profile choices were made to avoid legal action, for though the authors and works were not as famous, neither were they unknown. The serializations also came with various forms of advertising paratext (words from the authors, as well as their photographs), which were standard advertising material that accompanied the stories rather than something created in or for São Paulo.

As noted above, the other transition—which seems more likely to have resulted from changes in tastes than economic motivations—was from exclusively historical works to a combination of works set in the past and works set in the present. Similar to the first period, all but one of the long works that appeared in these key positions in the newspaper were composed by authors who were not local. Finally, it seems likely that the authors (again with the exception of Tani) were not aware that their works would appear in Brazil. Statements by the authors included in the advertisements for the pieces, all of which are addressed explicitly to the readers, never mention the exceptional nature of the readership. Instead, they are entirely generic, even in cases that one might expect an author to draw a connection—as with *Reijin aika*, which involves migration to North America, or with *Seiki no eiyū*, which involves migration to Manchuria. This would have allowed each audience—in Honolulu, Seattle, Los Angeles, and São Paulo—to think it was the one being addressed, even when the works were being published in multiple venues throughout the Western Hemisphere.

NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS

Despite these clear patterns, three stories did deviate from them in some notable way. The first was Kikuchi Kan's *Nishizumi senshachō-den*, which ran from 16 May 1939 until 2 November 1939. Unlike any of the other works serialized during the second period, *Nishizumi senshachō-den* was serialized in the *Tōkyō Nichinichi shinbun* and the *Ōsaka Mainichi shinbun* from 7 March 1939 until 6 August 1939; this means that the serialization in the *Burajiru jihō* began while the serialization in the other papers was still ongoing. It also used, with proper attribution, the illustrations from the original version by Ihara Usaburō; the first installment shows the recognizable figure of Kikuchi reading on a train.

It seems unlikely that the *Burajiru jihō* would risk unauthorized reproduction of a work published in such a prominent venue, by such a powerful author. It is interesting to note, however, that this is the only work of this prominence that was published during this second period.

The second exceptional story was the work by Tani Shin'ichirō entitled "Nōmin," which appeared from 18 May 1936 until 12 October 1936. Tani, a writer based in São Paulo, also contributed to the local literary magazine *Chiheisen*.⁶⁹ This is one of only two serialized works of length by writers in Brazil that appeared in the newspaper during the prewar (the other being *Kyōhakushaku* [狂伯爵]), and the only one that appeared in the highly visible slots on the front and rear pages. This fact would be sufficient to make the work exceptional, but the content of the work is similarly singular. In addition to focusing on life in Brazil, rather than in Japan, this is one of the few works written in Japanese in Brazil prior to World War II that focuses on non-Japanese characters. In fact, aside from a passing reference to a Japanese in the third installment (of fifty), none of the characters are Japanese. This introduces the possibility that the story is a translation from a work originally written in Portuguese.

The third exception requires greater elaboration. On 27 March 1936, on the front page of the first Friday issue of the newspaper's new thrice-weekly schedule, readers of the *Burajiru jihō* encountered a new serialization, "Ajia no gen'ei" (亜細亜の幻影), attributed to James Warner Bellah (1899–1976). The serialization was marked by no particular fanfare, nor did it receive any special treatment; it is not marked as a translation, and the only thing that would have set it apart was the author's clearly "foreign" (non-Japanese) name (ジェームス・ワーナー・ベラー). The graphics that accompany this first installment are a map of North-east Asia with the flags of Japan and Manchukuo and a picture of the exterior of Frank Lloyd Wright's Tokyo Imperial Hotel.

James Warner Bellah is now known as the American author whose works became the bases for such films as "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon" (1949), "Rio Grande" (1950), and "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance" (1962). In 1936 he was publishing popular fiction in such venues as *Collier's*, *Redbook*, *Argosy*, and the



FIGURE 8. *Nishizumi senshachō-den, Burajiru jihō*, 16 May 1939. Courtesy of the Museu Histórico Regional Saburo Yamanaka and the Kokusai Nihon Bunka Kenkyū Sentaa.

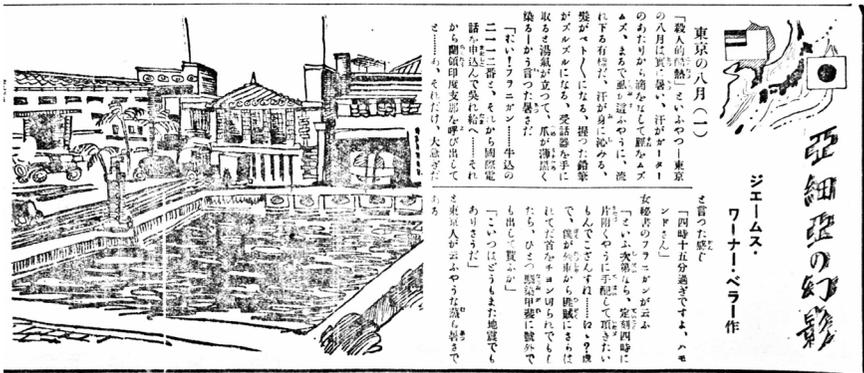


FIGURE 9. “*Ajia no gen’ei*,” *Burajiru jihō*, 27 March 1936. Courtesy of the Museu Histórico Regional Saburo Yamanaka and the Kokusai Nihon Bunka Kenkyū Sentaa.

Saturday Evening Post. It is not clear how Bellah could have come to write a story for a newspaper in Japan, let alone a Japanese-language newspaper in Brazil; even more surprising is the fact that no English version of the story seems to have been published. For this reason, and because of the content of the story, it seems possible that the story was written (in English, with the understanding that it would then be translated) for publication in Japanese.

Bellah himself served in the Canadian Royal Flying Corps in World War I, and then on the staff of Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten in World War II. It was in this capacity that he traveled to Southeast Asia. In his autobiography, *Irregular Gentleman*, he describes his time in Manchuria and his interactions there with George Hanson, who served as American consul general in Harbin.⁷⁰ Hanson, who was known as “Mr. Manchuria,” knew many in the expat community there, including the spy Amieto Vespa.⁷¹ Bellah describes one night on the town with Hanson during which they met two Russian girls at a club called the Fantasie. Bellah describes one’s aristocratic manner, and how Hanson told him, “No one in

Harbin has ever failed to fall in love with Nahta . . . nor will you fail, my friend.” Nahta met a gruesome end, however, with Hanson and Bellah discovering her body in the gutter, having “jumped or fallen or . . . [been] thrown from the car.”⁷²

These details from Bellah’s life match many of those from the fictional “Ajia no gen’ei,” which depicts a newspaper reporter based in Tokyo who travels to Manchuria, where he interacts with American consular officials, an Italian consular official, an aviatrix-turned-spy, a wheelchair-bound criminal mastermind, and a captivatingly beautiful Russian woman named Nahta. Although the story has some scenes set in Japan, they are limited to superficial descriptions of Ginza, the Imperial Hotel, and Tokyo Station—places that an American author might very well gain a passing familiarity with during even the shortest of stays in Tokyo. Although Bellah’s autobiography does not describe any travels to Japan, it is not unlikely that he would have passed through Tokyo at some point in his journey; he certainly encountered many Japanese during his time in Manchuria. It is hard to know how the arrangements would have been made for him to write a piece for a Japanese newspaper, let alone who would have translated it for him. There is no evidence that it was published anywhere beyond the *Burajiru jihō*, but it would come as no surprise to discover that it had.

TRANSLATIONS

Although the Bellah work was not marked as being a translation, works marked clearly as such appeared with some frequency in the newspaper, though usually not in the key positions on the first and last pages. One of the earliest and longest was a partial translation of the novel *A Escrava Isaura* (1875) by the Brazilian writer Bernardo Guimarães. *Dorei no musume* (奴隷の娘), translated by Sugiyama Hokage, ran for 117 installments from 19 January 1922 through 11 July 1924. The translation was not complete when it ended, though the translation did cover three-quarters of the more than fifty-three-thousand-word novel. In the postwar, another attempt was made to translate it into Japanese, in the pages of *Koronia shibungaku*.⁷³ Although the work is little known in English, it is a very famous work in Brazil and was the inspiration for a 1976–77 telenovela of the same name, which became a global hit broadcast in some eighty countries. There were also instances of summaries of works in other languages, such as that of Graciliano Ramos’s *Vidas Secas* (1938), written by Tani Kiyoshi.⁷⁴

JAPANESE LITERATURES

Returning to the idea of a singular Japanese literary ecosystem, we can see a substantial difference between the early and later serializations in the *Burajiru jihō*. In the early period, we see characters and stories—though not necessarily singular versions—that would have been broadly shared throughout the islands of Japan.

We note here, though, that this differs significantly from the implicit logic of modern literary studies, which usually presumes a (relatively) stable text by a single author; it is this logic that justifies close, stylistic analyses that are then linked to an historical creator. Depending on how we employ the terms, then, the argument for a shared culture might be more persuasive than one for a shared literature, narrowly defined. In the later period, we see the serialization of texts that are likely more stable (singular), but less common; most likely these texts would have only appeared in a few (and not the same few) regional newspapers, if not this newspaper alone. The literature that emerges, then, is one that cannot be generalized in terms of reception, even if there may be some homogeneity among the producers. In this sense among others, these serialized works in Brazil not only tell us about the interest in popular fiction that existed in that far-flung community, but also remind us of the Japanese-language *literatures*—in the sense of aggregations of texts that would have been available to given historical reading communities—that are elided each time a singular (national) *literature* is invoked.