

# The novel boom and newspapers : On the newspaper novels of Early Modern Japan

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The purpose of this paper is to reveal how newspapers responded to the novel boom occurring around the year *Meiji 20* (1887). This response can be summed up in three points :

(1) Newspapers began actively publishing Western-style novels that they once refrained from because of this style's prior unpopularity. The novel craze brought about a changing taste for reading among the commoners who made up the majority of their subscribers.

(2) Newspapers began to extend their aim to intellectuals, in particular students, presuming that these intellectuals would take an interest in newspaper serial novels.

(3) Newspapers started organizing novel-writing contests as a reaction to students' desire to write novels. The novel boom enhanced the social status of novel writers and enticed more students to engage in writing novels.