

Making Sense of Fiction: Social and Political Functions of Serialized Fiction in the *Daily News (Maeil sinbo)* in 1910s Korea
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Modern Korean newspapers played a decisive role in transforming the Korean fiction genre in the early twentieth century—a transformation that was carried out in two distinctively different cultural and political environments. In the 1900s, reform-minded Korean intellectuals translated and authored fictional works in newspapers primarily as a way to instigate Koreans to participate in the nation-building process during the Patriotic Enlightenment movement (*Aeguk kyemong undong*) period. When Japan annexed Korea in 1910, the *Daily News (Maeil sinbo)* continually used fiction as a vehicle to deliver the colonial government's assimilation policy, that is, to raise Korea's socioeconomic and cultural status, with the aim of civilizing the society. The rhetoric of civilization is a common feature in fictional works produced during the period. However, what characterized the works serialized in *Maeil sinbo* was their increasing focus on individual desire and domestic affairs, which manifested itself in the form of courtship and familial conflicts. The confrontation between private desire and family relationships in these fictional works represented the prospect of higher education and economic equity while invoking emotional responses to the contradictory social reality of colonial assimilation in the portrayal of domestic issues in fiction. Looking at *Maeil sinbo* and its serialization of fiction not as a fixed totality of the Japanese imperial force but as a discursive space where contradicting views on civilization were formed, this paper scrutinizes emotional renderings of individuality and domesticity reflected in *Maeil sinbo*'s serialized fiction in the early 1910s.