I still remember coming to Michigan as a fresh PhD student in 2005 and spending time every couple of weeks at the photocopier when it was my turn to distribute readings for our Meiji literature seminar with Prof. Ken Ito. At first, I didn't question why we were copying everything out of author-centric or thematid or chronology-based zenshū reprints rather than looking at first editions. Of course, it’s largely a practical matter: what library is going to be chock full of (often cheap) Meiji books? And on top of that, many stories and novels were originally serialized in newspapers and magazines. In the age before readily-available newspaper digital archives, we couldn’t be expected to consult the original source for our seminar.

I was in yet another Meiji seminar the next year (Prof. Jonathan Zwicker’s 1889), and this time we did start to look at the Yomiuri shinbun digital archive then only available on CD-ROM in a special library computer room. Prof. Zwicker had us take a look at a month of the newspaper each week of class and skim over it, trying to glean what people were talking about. My classmate Brian Dowdle took on January and identified Mori Ōgai’s essay “Shōsetsuron” on the front page, printing out for us when we read it from Ōgai’s kojin zenshū in class. Why do I bring up these memories? Well, the essay was completely different in the two sources: even the title was different. It had been heavily edited and rewritten between first publication in Yomiuri and its eventual reprinting in the zenshū. Yet we were assigned the reprinted version and read it as though that was what readers saw in January 1889. Without Prof. Dowdle's sharp eye this would have been the end of my engagement with the history of Meiji publishing.

However, this incident was the inspiration for my dissertation project, which interrogated where author-centric zenshū originated and how they shaped our literary history of the Meiji period and beyond. While I got away from close analysis of how works differed between the zenshū reprints and first editions in the end, my focus on the contrast between practices of
writing and publishing in Meiji versus what is preserved for us in *zenshū* brought to light the ways in which reprints, and by extension digital archives in the present day, shape our literary memories, history, and heritage. They dictate what we can readily and practically access, and the form and organization that contextualizes those works that are available to us now.

With this in mind, I’d like to address the economics, labor, and social networks that have driven reprinting and, later, digitizing, throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and how that work in making Japanese literary heritage available has ultimately constructed our canons of literature. As a librarian, I find myself purchasing countless reprint sets of magazines, newspapers, and early modern books, as well as *honkoku* transcriptions (that are naturally only one perspective on the orthography of a difficult text), annotated *zenshū*, and digital archives. Beyond library holdings, many students without easy access to Japanese print books are downloading texts from the online archive Aozora Bunko, which consists of hand-corrected texts painstakingly entered by volunteers. I base my presentation today largely on practical experience and examining primary sources rather than a theoretical approach, but hope my observations can spark a larger conversation about the implications of textual reproduction writ large for literary history and Japanese studies broadly.

First, I would like to look at what one might call the pre-history of modern textual reproduction: *zenshū* in the latter part of the Meiji period. When researching the inception of author-centric or *kojin zenshū* (what might be called an omnibus in the West, although the term doesn’t apply perfectly), I discovered, to my surprise, that the first ones were published in about 1894, with *Tokoku shū*, then *Kōtei Saikaku zenshū* and *Ichiyō zenshū*. These were followed rapidly by *Tōkoku zenshū*, *Kōyō zenshū*, and *Bizan zenshū* right at the turn of the twentieth century. In other words, a few titles seem to have sparked a *zenshū* boom that has not let up to the present day. However, it’s important to note that these were a far cry from the annotated
scholarly zenshū that most of us encounter in our literary studies in universities. While still lovely and high-quality books, these first Meiji editions were driven much more by both personal connections and economics, with the expectations that fans and those new to the authors’ work alike would buy them on the mass market rather than the books ending up in the hands of scholars. They contain no footnotes, glosses, or kaidai explications; rather, their prefaces reveal that they were compiled and edited by the friends and close colleagues of just-deceased young authors, crushed by grief and loss, who express those emotions in prefaces rather than focusing on the themes or context of the works contained therein.

Even Saikaku zenshū, despite being a compilation of a long-dead author’s works, focuses squarely on the passions of present-day editors and compilers. [SLIDE 6] The book stands out for including the contemporary provenance of each text (in other words, who owned the physical copy that was lent for the collection) and Ozaki Kōyō’s preface asserting the value of Saikaku’s work and its relevance for contemporary readers was written in the context of his widespread promotion of the author in various publications at the time. Kōyō, as well as colleagues Awashima Kangetsu and Kōda Rohan, were known as Saikaku fans at the time and so the compilation he edited along with Watanabe – soon to become Ōhashi – Otowa was not created in a vacuum. Those in the know would implicitly link the circle of Saikaku fans to the zenshū’s publication, thus embedding it in those social, literary networks in their minds. Moreover, this case reveals that Saikaku’s works stood much less of chance of being reprinted at the time without die-hard fans like Kōyō, collectors like Kangetsu and Miyazaki Sanmai who fervently sought out the works in used bookstores, and the fans’ personal connections to people like Otowa. He turned out to be a crucial part of the Saikaku popularization at this time, because he married into the Ōhashi family that owned Hakubunkan, one of the largest publishers of the Meiji period. It is no coincidence that Kōtei Saikaku zenshū was published and promoted by this
company, and also no coincidence that it enjoyed the success and sales that it was able to with Hakubunkan behind it.

Aside from Saikaku, the case of Higuchi Ichiyō stands out as the first “real” “modern” zenshū, or at least of the type that characterized the Meiji period. Rather than the English “modern,” perhaps it’s the term kindai that is more appropriate. Regardless, as you may know, Ichiyō died of tuberculosis at the age of 24 in the fall of 1896, and amazingly, her zenshū was published in January of 1897 by her surviving colleagues. Kōda Rohan features as the author of the preface and of course, the volume came out from Hakubunkan with Otowa as publisher, being the steadfast friend of the Meiji bundan. (Not incidentally, he was also the editor and publisher of Bungei kurabu, famous for publishing Ichiyō’s photo and creating a minor scandal while featuring women writers' works and likenesses in that special 1895 issue.) Once again we see social networks at work, as well as economics, for Ichiyō’s zenshū had undergone at least 30 printings by the time the second edition, which featured a separate volume containing her diary, was published in 1912. From there, Ichiyō has gone from a newly-popular author in the mid-Meiji period to appearing on the money in the Heisei period, and her Ichiyō nikki is now considered a crucial part of her oeuvre and of women's diary literature. Without her friends’ identifying it as a publishable literary work, it may have been lost to history and not part of any canon now. This, along with the case of the newly-identified Saikaku only a few years before, illustrates how crucial reprinting can be for possibilities of canon-making.

Moving on from Meiji publishing, I’d like to touch on the importance of newspaper, magazine, and literary journal reprinting and digitization in the library world today. I can’t overemphasize the sheer scale on which this is taking place, and reprints make up a huge share of what is advertised to academic libraries in North America, given the focus of Japanese studies programs on the humanities in this part of the world and relative lack of access to such
publications in their original form. Publishers are very aware of the demand for primary sources in academic research and are seizing the opportunity to market reproductions and reprints of items that they obtain from private collectors as well as institutions and repositories in Japan. These range from the major newspaper digital archives you may have encountered, representing *Yomiuri, Asahi, Mainichi, Japan Times,* and *Nikkei*; to digital facsimiles of magazines like *Taiyō, Tōyō keizai zasshi,* and *The Oriental Economist*; literary journals like *Bungei kurabu* and various pre- and postwar little magazines; to oversize paper reprints of the colonial editions of *Asahi* and the *Miyako shinbun.* And of course, *zenshū* continue to be produced on a literally industrial scale, both for academic and popular consumption.

All of this takes a tremendous amount of negotiation and infrastructure. I’ve often inquired with publishers about why they insist on reprinting periodicals on paper rather than digitizing them and making them available online. I would buy these for our library even without the potential for keyword search (which is currently impossible given the state of optical character recognition for pre-war Japanese texts, especially. The only newspaper archive with serious item-level keyword searching is *Yomiuri’s,* which was initially created for the journalists themselves. This accounts for the level of detail in keywords such as those even for advertisements, and contemporary (descriptive) words used to tag items that may not actually contain those words in full text. The publishers often cite lack of funds for digitization and maintaining online databases, even if they can charge libraries for access via purchase or subscription (and purchase does include a yearly nominal maintenance fee). With libraries’ physical space not expanding at the pace of print collections advertised by Japanese publishers, it is a complete mismatch between production and consumption at the present moment. Likely, publishers do not see enough of a profit opportunity to justify the cost of making the content available, although several such as Maruzen-Yushōdō and Yagi Shoten are using platforms such
as J-DAC and JapanKnowledge to load and sell digital archives, taking advantage of existing infrastructure. As for the newspapers, again, in some cases the motivation was not originally library sales but in-house research capability, with the potential for profit realized after the fact.

On the other side is the *Aozora Bunko* digital library, especially popular among those at institutions without extensive Japanese holdings and e-resources, or for those who are not a university at all. This is a free digital library of almost 16,000 public-domain works which are hand-corrected by volunteers, rather than relying on the thoroughly inadequate results of the OCR process. You may or may not be surprised to find that of *Aozora*'s holdings in June 2018, fully 7,200 of 15,800 items were created from *zenshū* of various kinds, including thematic, chronological, and *kojin* collections with publication years ranging from the early twentieth century to now. That's roughly half that are based in what I spoke about above: copies made accessible through, and perhaps only through, commercially reprinted anthologies and compendia. I didn't even search for other kinds of *shū* compilations, and one can imagine that when taking other anthologies and selections into account, we would come up with an even higher number. Thus, we are coming full circle with the *Aozora* canon, quirky as it is, being at least half dictated by the contents of *zenshū*. The rest of the archive typically won't come from first editions, either. We cannot know who the volunteers are given that they go by handles rather than real names, but this is a fascinating intersection of the commercial and non-profit worlds: the volunteers are doing this labor for their own reasons that certainly do not include monetary gain, given that they are not compensated for the time they spend on correcting texts and preparing them for *Aozora* publication, but their source materials depend on commercial profit to exist in the first place.

I would like to end by introducing a second volunteer endeavor that is freely available online, a true labor of love by its participants. I call it that because the *Minna de Honkoku* project
consists of crowdsourced transcriptions of kuzushiji documents about natural disasters, many taken from the digital archives of the Ishimoto Collection (administered jointly by the Earthquake Research Institute and Tokyo University Library System) but soon to be expanded through IIIF technology to accommodate just about any archive, including NDL Digital Collections. The top user on this site has transcribed over 787,000 characters, far and away the most prolific contributor; the second and third most prolific users also lead with over 650,000 characters each. As one of my students noted when I showed this resource in my East Asian Digital Humanities seminar, the names that some users sign up with reflect an older generation of Japanese men. (A survey of Honkoku users confirms this hunch, with many responding that they are retirees.) While again, we cannot know their inner motivations or even much about them, the sheer scholarly labor that this project requires creates a very high bar for participation in terms of time and knowledge. It is no surprise to hear that many volunteers are retired seniors who spent their professional careers using kuzushiji. Although it has only existed since January 2017, 464 of 472 included books were completely transcribed as of mid-August 2018.

The creator of Minna de Honkoku, Hashimoto Yūta, was a PhD student at the time he developed it along with his team, and on top of working on this site and its promotion, he and his team created the KuLA kuzushiji learning mobile app as well. The volunteers at Minna de Honkoku spend significant personal time and effort transcribing, and the team that created it has put a massive amount of labor into its creation as well as outreach, maintenance, and further development. Dr. Hashimoto's 2017 article in Digital Humanities Quarterly details the difficulty of maintaining user interest in opening and practicing with the KuLA app, and we can extrapolate this to the transcription project as well. He frequently posts about Honkoku achievements on Twitter, but recruiting transcribers is a different story from retaining them. We must see this the community aspects of the project, such as leaderboards, commenting capability,
and message board maintenance, as another essential part of the labor of making literary and cultural heritage accessible and literary studies possible.

What brings all of these disparate publishing projects together, linking the Meiji period to the present day? I argue that we can think of reprinting and digitization as having the same result in making literary heritage available to both scholars and the public, even if the motivations behind the endeavors range from memorializing a deceased friend, to making money from academic libraries, to the sheer pleasure of engaging with a favorite literary work or scholarly pastime and the gratification of creating something that contributes to the greater intellectual good. Moreover, reprinting and digitization involve labor and infrastructure, as well as motivations, that are often invisible and indeed overlooked or taken for granted. Yet these efforts result in what I call our contemporary ad-hoc canons: the canon of what is taught in classrooms (including in Japan as well as in upper-level Japanese language classes or seminars abroad); the canon of what Aozora volunteers or Honkoku organizers and participants enjoy reading, transcribing, and promoting; and the canon of academic primary sources available to those at university libraries for their research. This is not an exhaustive list of canons both academic and popular, but gives a concrete illustration of my argument that what we study, read, and enjoy is dictated by what others have made the (often significant and difficult) effort to replicate and thus preserve in some form. Without recognizing what is behind what we can access and thus use for our research, study, teaching, and pleasure reading, we cannot fully understand what shapes Japanese literary heritage and thus very fields of literary history and literary studies themselves.