

A Journey through Meiji Tokyo: Reading Nagai Kafū's *Fukagawa no uta* (1)

Phillip Brown

INTRODUCTION

In July 1908 (Meiji 41) the twenty-eight-year-old Nagai Kafū (Nagai Sōkichi) returned to Japan after having spent almost five years studying, writing and – somewhat reluctantly – working overseas, in the USA and France, where his well-connected father had arranged positions for him at Japanese banks in New York and Lyon. Determined to earn a living as a writer, Kafū published *Amerika monogatari* (American Stories) soon after his return, in August 1908. The following year was something of an *annus mirabilis* for the young writer. A number of essays, sketches and short stories appeared in periodicals in the first months of 1909, and in late March his second volume of travel-inspired tales, *Furansu monogatari* (French Stories), was announced, only for it to be banned prior to publication by censors offended by the book's salaciousness and the author's evident disrespect for Meiji institutions and values. In September a collection of short stories, *Kanraku* (Pleasure) was published – and, a few days later, also banned. The short fiction *Sumidagawa* (The River Sumida) appeared at the beginning of December, and later the same month, at the invitation of Natsume Sōseki, his novel *Reishō* (Sneers) began newspaper serialization.

The story translated here, *Fukagawa no uta* (A Song in Fukagawa), was first published in the magazine *Shumi* in February 1909 (Meiji 42), and was one of the pieces collected in *Kanraku* later the same year. It takes place 'after the twentieth of December', and is presumably based on an excursion undertaken by the author shortly before New Year. The autograph manuscript held in the Tenri University

library is dated December 1908, which suggests that Kafū must have composed it soon, if not immediately, after returning from his trip across the city.

The story recounts an afternoon journey by tramcar through Meiji Tokyo, from west to east, from the Yamanote ‘high city’ to the Shitamachi ‘low city’. Boarding a tram at Yotsuya-mitsuke, not far from the Nagai family home, the narrator describes both his fellow passengers and the view from the tram’s windows as he travels through Kōjimachi and around the inner moat of the Imperial Palace before passing through Hibiya, Ginza and Tsukiji, the journey punctuated by bridges, waterways and busy intersections. When the tram gets caught up in a traffic jam the conductor, unprompted, hands the narrator a transfer ticket to Fukagawa, east of the Sumida River. Recalling the visits he used to make to Fukagawa – location of one of Edo’s licenced quarters, and setting for the late-Edo tales of Kafū favourite Tamenaga Shunsui – the narrator changes trams, crosses the river, gets off, and walks to the Fukagawa Fudō-dō temple, where as darkness falls he comes across a blind shamisen player singing a traditional song – the song that gives the story its title. As he listens, the narrator sadly acknowledges his own fate. Although he would like to stay here forever, listening to the shamisen player, he must leave Fukagawa and its lingering traces of Edo, and return across the river to his home in the modern city he detests.

The tram that Kafū’s narrator boards at Yotsuya is travelling along the Tsukiji-Ryōgoku loop of the Shinjuku line, a service operated by the Tokyo Shigai Tetsudō company (or Gaitetsu) until September 1906 (Meiji 39), when the three private companies that initially provided electrified tram services in Tokyo merged into a single entity, Tokyo Tetsudō. The route of the Tsukiji-Ryōgoku line is described in the 1907 edition of the Japanese-language municipal guide thus:

Route: From Shinjuku to Yotsuya, Kōjimachi, Miyakezaka, Hibiya Park, Sukiya-bashi, Owarichō, Tsukiji, Kayabachō, Ryōgoku, Sudamachi, Ogawamachi and Kanda-bashi, returning via Hibiya Park to Shinjuku.
(*Tokyo annai* Vol. I, p. 209)

All of the place names as far as Kayabachō, where the passengers are forced to leave the tram, are mentioned in Kafū's text, as are many of the tram-stops that are also exhaustively listed in *Tokyo annai*. At Kayabachō the narrator changes to the Fukagawa line (another former Gaitetsu line), and crosses the Sumida at Eitai-bashi. He presumably gets off at Fukushima-bashi, the second tram-stop on the east bank of the river, from where the tramline turned north-eastwards towards Honjō.

The Tsukiji-Ryōgoku loop was one of three services that operated on the same line. The Kanda-Ryōgoku loop likewise ran from Shinjuku to Yotsuya, Miyakezaka and Hibiya, but then made a left turn at Hibiya, performing a clockwise circuit through Marunouchi, Kanda, Ryōgoku, Tsukiji, Ginza and back to Hibiya as it followed in reverse direction the route taken by Kafū's tram. The third Shinjuku line service ran back and forth along the shorter Shinjuku-Hibiya section of the line. Upon receipt of a transfer ticket from the conductor, passengers were able to change to other former Gaitetsu lines, such as the one that eventually takes the narrator to Fukagawa, or to one of the many other lines that crisscrossed Meiji Tokyo.

Navigating the rapidly growing city and its complicated tram network was, if we are to go by the struggles described in *Fukagawa no uta* and the work of some of Kafū's contemporaries, a bewildering and fretful undertaking. In Natsume Sōseki's *Sanshirō*, serialized between September and December 1908, the Tokyo University scientist Nonomiya confesses that he doesn't know how to transfer by himself. "The conductor has to help me. They've built so damned many lines the past few years, the more 'convenient' it gets, the more confused I get. It's like my research." *Sanshirō* himself 'had been making terrible mistakes on the streetcar' (Sōseki 2009, pp. 26, 39). Mori Ōgai's *Seinen* (Youth), serialized 1910-1911, opens with the protagonist Koizumi Junichi, like *Sanshirō* a young man newly arrived in the capital, attempting to cross the city. 'Despite the map of Tokyo he had with him, he kept bothering people about directions. At a Shinbashi streetcar stop, he caught a car for Ueno, and he somehow managed to make the rather

complicated transfer at Suda to another car.’ Even after he has become accustomed to the city, he still needs the conductor’s help: ‘It was not long before the streetcar made a sudden turn. It was at that moment Junichi realized he was headed for Asakusa.... He took out his return ticket and got a transfer to Ueno Hirokōji. According to the conductor’s instructions, he changed cars at Umayabashi-dōri’ (Mori Ōgai, pp. 381, 473-474).

Thickly strewn with place names, the Tokyo fictions of Sōseki and Ōgai at times almost function as topographical guides to the city. Sanshirō and Junichi take long and similarly detailed walks across the Meiji capital. They frequently get lost, ask for directions, seek assistance, retrace their steps. Ōgai’s *Kaijin* (The Ashes of Destruction, serialized 1911-12) begins with a painstaking description of the protagonist attempting, with some difficulty, to travel a short distance across the city in order to attend a funeral.

The map that the young Junichi takes with him as he sets out to explore the city in Ōgai’s *Seinen* is the *Tokyo-hōganzu* or ‘Grid Map of Tokyo’, published in 1909. Ōgai here is indulging in some playful product-placement, for he created the map – the first map of Tokyo to come with a reference grid and index – himself. Ōgai may have been influenced by the city maps that he would have seen and used during his studies in Germany, and the deep sensitivity towards urban space and the changing topography of the modernizing city that we observe in the Tokyo fictions of Ōgai and Sōseki is clearly influenced by the authors’ respective experiences in Berlin and London.

Likewise with Kafū, who in the opening lines of *Fukagawa no uta* has his narrator recall his travels around New York and Paris. Setting out by tram across the city, he brings to his observations the metropolitan consciousness – and metropolitan distaste – outlined by Georg Simmel in his 1903 essay ‘The Metropolis and Mental Life.’ As one of Simmel’s students writes (Benjamin, p.19):

...People had to adapt themselves to a new and rather strange situation,

one that is peculiar to big cities. Simmel has provided an excellent formulation of what was involved here. “Someone who sees without hearing is much more uneasy than someone who hears without seeing. In this, there is something characteristic of the sociology of the big city. Interpersonal relationships in big cities are distinguished by a marked preponderance of visual activity over aural activity. The main reason for this is the public means of transportation. Before the development of buses, railroads, and trams in the nineteenth century, people had never been in situations where they had to look at one another for long minutes or even hours without speaking to one another.” These new situations were, as Simmel recognized, not pleasant.

For Kafū, the unpleasantness of modern city life is tempered by the vestiges of an older, more graceful city that he encounters in less reputable, neglected corners of twentieth-century Tokyo. This deeply nostalgic exploration of the city and its pasts is Kafū's central theme, one he returns to again and again, in his tales set east of the river – *Botan no kyaku*, *Sumidagawa*, *Bokutō kidan* – and in the accounts of his urban perambulations collected in *Hiyorigeta*. This latter text, first published in 1915, established Kafū as Tokyo's representative flâneur, the urban explorer ‘who goes botanizing on the asphalt’ (Benjamin, p.19). More than sixty years after his death, Kafū remains the guiding spirit of both the countless enthusiasts who enjoy strolling around modern Tokyo armed with guidebooks that reprint the Edo-period maps or *kirie-zu* (切絵図) that Kafū preferred to Ōgai's modern grid map; and of the writers, critics, anthropologists, publishers and broadcasters who have created an industry devoted to the concept of *Tokyo kūkan* (東京空間, literally ‘Tokyo space’), the intersection of the city's culture, history, topography and urban fabric.

It is in the sketches and tales written in the months following his return to Japan that Kafū begins to cast himself in the role of Tokyo flâneur. This is most

notable in *Fukagawa no uta*, which like the late-Meiji fictions of Ōgai and Sōseki operates on one level as a kind of itinerary, with the protagonist-narrator obliged to navigate his way across the city in order to complete the narrative. Joining Kafū's narrator as he boards a tram at Yotsuya-mitsuke on a late December afternoon in 1908, we travel with him across the city, tram-stop by tram-stop, bridge by bridge, turn by turn, his route perfectly traceable on maps of Meiji Tokyo.

And yet, as the journey progresses, we find ourselves gradually transported into another city, one coterminous with the Meiji capital in space if not in time, as the form and structure imposed on the metropolis by the municipal guidebook and the tram-network map give way, under Kafū's watchful and sensitive gaze, to another version of the city, one informed by the woodblock panoramas and illustrated *meisho* gazetteers of Edo. This shifting back and forth between vulgar, utilitarian present and elegant but largely vanished past is a transmutation we experience throughout Kafū's work, and it is one we encounter for the first time in *Fukagawa no uta*.

Although Edward Seidensticker in his pioneering book on Kafū chose not to translate what he refers to as one of the author's 'peevish little essays' (Seidensticker 1965, p. 34), an annotated English version of this early and significant example of Tokyo flânerie may perhaps provide readers with further insight into the work of one of Japan's most important twentieth-century writers, and into his relationship with a city that he spent a lifetime observing.

Note on the text

Fukagawa no uta was first published in the literary magazine *Shumi* (Vol. 4, No. 2) on February 1st 1909. It was collected in *Kanraku* (banned upon publication in September 1909), and reprinted in the collection *Botan no kyaku* (July 1911), in both cases with slight revisions. It was revised again for publication in Volume 3 of the first edition of the collected works (Shunyōdō, 1919). Kafū made final revisions of the text for the Chūō Kōron edition of his collected works

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(Volume 5, 1948). The Chūō Kōron text was used as the basis for the current Iwanami Shoten edition of the collected works. The translation that follows is based on the text in Volume 6 (1992) of the second Iwanami Shoten edition of the collected works, *Kafū zenshū* (cited here as KZ). Textual variations are addressed in the notes. It should be pointed out that only the first section of *Fukagawa no uta* is translated here. It is hoped that the second half will appear subsequently.

Diacritics and hyphenation

Except for terms and names that are familiar in English (e.g. *shoji*, Tokyo), diacritics are given throughout the text and notes for Japanese words. Hyphens are used to indicate the suffix in longer place names (e.g. *Sakurada-mon*, *Sanjukken-bori*), and to distinguish bridges and canals (e.g. *Tsukiji-bashi*, *Hatchō-bori*) from toponyms (e.g. *Kyōbashi*, *Hatchōbori*).

A Song in Fukagawa [Part One]

by Nagai Kafū

I

At Yotsuya-mitsuke¹ I boarded a tram² heading for Tsukiji and Ryōgoku.³ It's not that I had a particular destination in mind; it's just that riding on something that moves, be it a boat or a rickshaw,⁴ and feeling my body being rocked by it, gives

1 The tram stop, Yotsuya-mitsuke-soto, was located outside one of the *mitsuke* or fortified gateways that in the Edo period guarded the approaches to the Tokugawa shogun's castle. The Yotsuya mitsuke stood on the main road entering the city from the west, the Kōshū-kaidō, where it crossed the outer moat (Sotobori) on a raised bank or causeway that dammed the waters of the moat. A hand-coloured postcard from the first decade of the 20th century (Shirato pp. 55-56; Ishiguro vol. 2, p. 64), shows two trams in the maroon and cream livery of the Tokyo Tetsudō paused on the roadway above the moat, close to the stone bulwarks that formed two corners of the old square gateway. Beneath the bank, Yotsuya railway station (opened in 1894) stands beside the moat, the tracks of the former Kōbu Railway (incorporated into the Chūō Line upon nationalization in 1906) passing through a brick tunnel cut into the bank. The photograph was taken before construction of a road bridge across the moat and railway line began in 1910. The embankment on top of which Kafū's narrator would have boarded the tram, and which carried the old road across the moat, has long since been replaced by a second, narrower bridge, with a bus stop close to where the tram stop would have been located. The Yotsuya moat was filled in soon after the end of the Second World War. Kafū would later begin one of the excursions recounted in *Hiyorigeta* at Yotsuya-mitsuke (KZ11, p. 130).

2 Kafū (autobiographical references in the text and use of the first-person pronoun *jibun* 自分 render any attempt at distinguishing author from narrator difficult and largely pointless) may have walked to Yotsuya from his family home in Ōkubo-Yochōmachi, two kilometres to the north-west in Ushigome Ward (now Shinjuku Ward). Since the line extended westwards to Shinjuku, he could have caught a tram closer to home on Shinjuku-dōri, west of Yotsuya-mitsuke.

3 Districts in the Shitamachi or 'Low City', near the Sumida River. Kafū's narrator has boarded a tram running the counterclockwise route, the *Tsukiji-Ryōgoku mawari* service on the Tokyo Tetsudō's Shinjuku Line (cf. *Tokyo annai* vol.1, p. 209).

4 According to the *Nihon kokugo daijiten*, in the Meiji era *kuruma* 車 (essentially, a wheeled vehicle) would usually have denoted a rickshaw, or *jinrikisha*. Kafū often uses it thus (for example in the opening paragraph of chapter 5 of *Udekurabe*). Although jinrikisha numbers had begun to decline as the tram network

me a certain pleasure. The elevated railway in New York, the upper deck of the horse-drawn omnibus in Paris, steamboats on the Seine – it would appear to have become something of a habit of mine.⁵

The weather is fine. It's warm, and it's not windy. As it's already after the twentieth of December, the main road along which the tram runs through Kōjimachi is festooned with New Year's decorations – pine and bamboo garlands,⁶ small red lanterns, big lanterns raised on poles, long drapes and multicoloured banners – all of which clash with the grimy rooftiles and the fresh wooden planks of newly built houses⁷ to create an unsightly confusion lit ruthlessly by the bright,

expanded, in 1908 there were still over 24,000 in service in Tokyo (Hayashi, p.134). Today the kanji 車 invariably indicates a motor car – a rare presence in late Meiji Tokyo.

5 The elevated railway appears in some of the New York tales in *Amerika monogatari*, such as 'Lodging on a Snowy Night', 'Ladies of the Night' and 'Midnight at a Bar'. Kafū's narrator observes horse-drawn omnibuses on the Boulevard des Italiens in *Saikai* ('Reunion'), one of the Parisian tales collected in *Furansu monogatari*.

6 *matsutake no shimekazari* 松竹の縄飾り. At New Year the front door or gateway of a Japanese home will often display a *shimekazari*, a garland of straw rope decorated with leaves of the *Gleichenia japonica* fern (*urajiro*), or a pair of *matsukazari*, decorated branches of green pine. The entrances and gateways of larger buildings are often flanked by a pair of freestanding *kadomatsu* (lit. 'gate pines'), an arrangement of pine branches and lengths of green bamboo set into a solid base. An illustration in the magazine *Fūzoku Gahō* (no. 376; December 30, 1907) shows the various kinds of New Year's decorations available at a Meiji year-end fair (*toshi no ichi*). In *Mon* (1910) Natsume Sōseki describes the *shimekazari* on Tokyo shopfronts at the end of December, and his protagonist buys a pine branch that he nails to his gatepost (Sōseki 2013, p. 151). A stall selling New Year's decorations can usually be found towards the end of the year near the site of the Yotsuya-mitsuke tram stop.

7 Tokyo experienced huge population growth in late Meiji. According to Tokyo Metropolitan Government data, between 1903 and 1908 the population of Tokyo prefecture (the former Tokyo-fu) increased by over half a million, from 2,171,100 to 2,682,000 (Tokyo Metropolitan Government Statistics Division, 2019). This growth fuelled a construction boom of often low-quality housing, as evidenced by writers of the period, such as Sōseki in *Sorekara* (1909):

Hiraoka's house was a good illustration of the tightening squeeze exerted on the middle class by a decade of inflation. It was an exceedingly crude, unsightly construction...

There were only about two yards between the gate and the entranceway and the same distance between the gate and the kitchen door. Next to this house, in every direction stood similarly cramped houses. They were the work of the smallest of financiers, who, taking advantage of

slanting rays of the late afternoon sun. Here and there troupes of advertising musicians⁸ play noisily and out of tune. The street is bustling with people.⁹

The tram though was surprisingly uncrowded, the only other passengers being an army captain¹⁰ in yellow uniform,¹¹ a couple of conscripts¹² huddled in the corner, a man – likely a building contractor – with a leather satchel on his

Tokyo's pitiful swelling, schemed to multiply their own meager funds two and three times by putting up these shabby structures, mementos to the struggle for survival.

In today's Tokyo, particularly in the outskirts, such houses were to be found everywhere. Moreover, like flies in summer, they continued to multiply every day at an extraordinary rate... (Natsume Sōseki 1978, p. 65)

8 Bands of musicians called *hiromeya* were introduced to Meiji Tokyo from Osaka to advertise goods and publicize commercial enterprises. They would later come to be known as *chindonya*. Chindonya troupes can still occasionally be seen and heard on the streets of Tokyo, where they are hired to perform at the opening of new business ventures.

9 'All along Akasaka's main thoroughfare, men were setting up pine-branch decorations for the New Year outside gateways and shopfronts.... All the sights and sounds of Tokyo at year-end melded together in a great flurry of activity – posters and signboards advertising year-end sales, red lanterns, purple banners, the muddled tones of brass bands, and the shrill strains of gramophones' (Okamoto, p. 54). Okamoto Kidō, writing in the Taishō era, was recalling Meiji Tokyo.

10 The army officer may have come from the Army Academy at Ichigaya (*Rikugun Shikan Gakkō*, now the seat of the Ministry of Defence and headquarters of the Ground Self-Defence Force), a short distance from Yotsuya-mitsuke. Although it is not clear where he gets off, he may have been heading for the army's General Staff Office (*Sanbō-honbu*), located on the palace moat by the Miyakezaka stop, or the adjacent Army Ministry (*Rikugun-shō*), to the north of which, across the road and tramline to Akasaka, stood the Army Hospital. Alternatively, he could have been heading for any one of the numerous army bases, depots, barracks and parade grounds that occupied much of heavily militarized Meiji Tokyo.

11 In 1906 (Meiji 39) the Japanese army uniform was redesigned, the uniform of navy blue with red piping worn by troops in the Russo-Japanese war (1904-05) giving way to a yellow or ochre version of the khaki uniforms recently adopted by the British and US armies. Due to a surplus of wartime uniforms, for a time some privates and non-commissioned officers continued to wear the old navy blue, while their senior officers wore uniforms of the new type. The captain may even have been heading for the terminus in Ryōgoku, where the army's uniforms were made at the military clothing depot (*Hifuku-shō*) across the river, now the site of Yokoamichō Park and the Earthquake Memorial Hall.

12 Conscription was introduced in 1889. If the enlisted men were wearing the old blue uniform, the narrator would have been able to distinguish them from the officer at a glance.

lap, three men who may have been bill collectors¹³ or tradesmen, two female students,¹⁴ and an old geisha¹⁵ from Yotsuya or some other Yamanote¹⁶ district. The low sunlight¹⁷ pouring in through the window shines directly on the captain's sallow and unshaven face, picking out every needle-like hair in his stubble. The overblown pompadours¹⁸ of the female students take on a reddish-brown tinge, the flecks of dust caught in their oily hair¹⁹ a revolting sight. Everyone sits in silence,

13 Professionals, unlike the maid sent across the city on an errand in Kafū's *Kaketori* ('The Bill Collector', 1912).

14 The late Meiji era saw women begin to gain access to higher education in Japan. In 1890 the Women's Higher Normal School (later Ochanomizu Women's University), the first higher educational institute for women in Japan, opened in Kanda. Japan Women's University was founded in Mejirodai, Tokyo, in 1901. These two students are more likely to be from Joshi Eigaku Juku (Women's English College; now Tsuda College), which opened in Kōjimachi, behind the British Embassy (and close to the route of the tram) in 1900.

15 Older geisha would often become teachers of traditional arts, especially dance and music.

16 Not a specific location, but rather the name given to the suburban districts located on higher ground to the west and north of the former castle, which were favoured by the Meiji city's emerging middle classes, as they had been by the samurai who were supplanted by the new order. While the Yamanote 'half' of the city became prime residential land, the low-lying and densely populated Shitamachi districts to the east and southeast of the castle remained home to the descendants of the Edo merchant and craftsman classes. And whereas suburbanization spread through the Yamanote districts in Meiji, parts of the Shitamachi became increasingly commercialized (Ginza, Nihonbashi) and industrialized (the banks of the Sumida and its tributary canals). In 1909 the overground railway line that now circles the city centre ran clockwise from Shimbashi, the city's first railway terminus, via Shinagawa, Shibuya and Shinjuku to Ueno. The line took its name from the less developed and as-yet unincorporated Yamanote districts through which it ran. The Yamanote Line's circular route would not be completed until the remaining stretch of track linking Shimbashi with Ueno, and passing through the Shitamachi districts of Kanda and Akihabara, opened in 1925.

17 The narrator sits on the right-hand bank of seats inside the tramcar, keeping the late-afternoon sun behind him as the tram first heads east towards Hanzōmon, and then turns southeast along the moat.

18 *hisashigami* 尻髪, a swept-back, bouffant hairstyle popular with middle-class Meiji women, especially students and teachers. 'In Japanese literature and visual culture, hairstyles were often used as shorthand for women's ages and socioeconomic status' (Freedman p. 52). Freedman reproduces a photograph showing a group of young women with the hisashigami hairstyle (p. 28).

19 Japanese women (and men) traditionally dressed their hair with camellia oil, produced on the island of Izu Ōshima south of Tokyo. Among the repulsive features of Meiji Japan listed by Kafū in *Akkan* ('A Bad Feeling'), the final chapter of *Furansu monogatari*, are 'ugly female students' (*'kiryō no warui joseito'*, KZ5, p. 298). The list, compiled by a despondent Kafū as the ship bringing him back from his overseas

lips parted; and with nowhere to turn their gaze²⁰ some of the passengers exchange glances. Others lower their eyes to look at the array of shoes and wooden *geta*²¹ on their fellow passengers' feet. No one so much as glances at the advertisements²² for a lottery²³ promising tens of thousands of yen. The elderly geisha twists her thin, pale lips, sucking at a decayed tooth with a loud squeaking sound. The contractor yawns and releases a little belch. Bending backwards almost to breaking point, the conductor pulls on the trolley-pole ropes²⁴ whenever a pole slips from the cable.

sojourn drew nearer to Japan, includes a number of other features encountered – or deliberately ignored – in *Fukagawa no uta*, among them soldiers and the 'brick buildings in Hibiya'. *Furansu monogatari* was banned upon publication in March 1909, a few weeks after *Fukagawa no uta* appeared in print. When *Furansu monogatari* was published after the war in the second edition of the Collected Works, this list was omitted from the text (KZ5, p. 413).

20 With the rapid development of mass public transport in Meiji Tokyo, Kafka's passengers had to adjust to the modern reorganisation of social space, and learn how to deal with 'the embarrassment of people facing each other in silence' (Schivelbusch, p. 75) in much the same way as did their contemporaries in New York, Berlin and London (Schivelbusch, pp. 74-76; Freedman p. 41).

21 下駄, wooden footwear with the sole raised on teeth that keep the foot high off the ground; worn to protect the low hems of kimono from mud and dirt. Sometimes translated as 'clogs', *geta* however do not enclose the foot, and are more similar in appearance as well as function to the pattens once widespread in Europe.

22 'Overhead, filling every available space, hung a variety of framed advertisements. Ordinarily these escaped his notice completely...' (Natsume Sōseki 1972, p. 13). The *nakazuri* advertisements that hang down over the aisles of train carriages in Tokyo first appeared inside horse-pulled trams in 1885 (Meiji 18).

23 Lotteries are an established New Year tradition in Japan. One of the biggest state lotteries, *Nenmatsu janbo* ('End-of-Year Jumbo') takes place on New Year's Eve. In January, Japan Post announces the results of a lottery involving the New Year's greeting cards that are exchanged in the same way many westerners send each other Christmas cards. Department stores' New Year's sales feature *fukubukuro* (lucky bags), and tombolas are often seen and heard in shopping centres at this time of year.

24 Housed on the roof of the tramcar, the spring-loaded trolley pole, with a trolley-wheel at its tip, connected the tram to the live overhead cable, and conducted the electrical current to the tram's motor. Each tram had a pair of adjustable trolley poles that angled backwards, opposite the direction of travel. A cord attached to the end of each pole allowed the conductor to raise or lower them by leaning out from the rear deck of the tram, a task that would have to be performed whenever a trolley-wheel slipped off the cable (which might occur when turning corners, switching tracks, or braking), or whenever the trolley-pole had to be lowered, for example when negotiating crossed overhead wires at a junction, as at Hibiya later in the journey. (See the illustration in Hayashi & Yoshikawa, p. 54; and pl. 48 in the 1909 souvenir album, *Saishin Tokyo meisho shashinchō*.) Although trolley-buses and some older tram networks still use trolley-poles, they have mostly been superseded by the more robust pantograph.

At Kōjimachi-sanchōme²⁵ an unattractive woman of around forty, with a baby on her back under her short padded coat,²⁶ and with a paper lantern in one hand and a large bundle wrapped in a plain cotton furoshiki in the other, boarded the tram, along with two boys²⁷ carrying baseball²⁸ gear. The boys start to chatter intently about the results of the previous day's end-of-term tests. The baby suddenly began to wail, drowning out the sound of the old geisha's tooth-sucking. Everyone looks at the crying baby's face. The mother undoes the cord of her coat, slips the baby into her arms, and, unabashedly revealing her brown papery skin, folds back the grubby collar of her kimono and gives the baby her breast. Just as the baby stopped crying, the conductor called out:

‘Hanzōmon! Hanzōmon!’²⁹ Change here for Kudan, Ichigaya, Hongō, Kanda and Koishikawa.³⁰ – You need to change here for Koishikawa. Quickly please.’

Thrown into a panic by the conductor's prompting, the woman, her dark breast

25 *Kōjimachi 3-chōme* 麹町3丁目, the stop before Hanzōmon. Buses following the route of Kafū's tram today stop at Kōjimachi 2-chōme, just past the Kōjimachi 3-chōme traffic lights.

26 *nenneko*, a winter coat, padded with cotton wadding, designed to cover both the mother and the baby strapped to her back.

27 Probably pupils of the Nihon Chūgakkō (Japan Middle School), located from 1892-1916 next to the Hanzōmon tram stop, facing the Hanzōmon gate of the Imperial Palace. (The site is today marked by a plaque.) Kafū attended this school from 1891 (when it was still located in Kanda, on the other side of the Imperial Palace) to 1897. The school later relocated to the western suburbs, and is now known as Nihon Gakuen.

28 The first Japanese baseball club was founded by railway workers in Shimbashi in 1878, and the sport quickly became popular in schools and universities. The annual baseball game between Tokyo's leading private universities, Waseda and Keiō, was first played in 1903. One of the photos in the souvenir album *Saishin Tokyo meisho shashinchō* shows Keiō students playing baseball. The children here were probably heading for the sports ground in Hibiya Park, where we observe schoolboys playing catchball in Kafū's story 'Pleasure' (*Kanvaku*), published in July 1909 (KZ6, p. 8). Seitarō, the protagonist's young nephew in *Sorekara* (1909) 'was completely absorbed in baseball' (Natsume Sōseki 1978, p.22).

29 The tramlane, following the course of the main road that heads into the city from the west, has arrived at the Hanzōmon junction, facing the Hanzōmon gate of the Imperial Palace across the palace's inner moat (Uchibori). The narrator's tram will turn southeast here and run along the outer bank of the moat. Another line turned left (north) here towards Kudan and Kanda. The Hanzōmon bus stop, next to Kōjimachi police station, probably lies close to the site of the tram stop.

30 Kafū spent his early childhood in Koishikawa.

swinging loose as she clasps the baby in one arm and the lantern and wrapped-up bundle in the other, hurries to get off. The people waiting at the stop, seeing an unexpectedly empty tram, scuffle even more than usual, and in the rush for seats³¹ they push the woman back inside. The baby starts bawling. Its nappy slips off. The woman shouts out frantically as the heedless passengers threaten to trample the nappy underfoot.

‘Please make sure to take all of your belongings with you.’ Having screeched out one of his stock phrases, the conductor catches sight of the soiled nappy. Unable to ignore it, he has no choice but to add:

‘Watch your step, please. Take your time.’

At long last the conductor pulls the chain, sounding the bell.³²

‘Now departing.’

A grey-haired woman, having failed to find a seat, stands next to a girl of eighteen or nineteen – her daughter, probably³³ – who wears an apron³⁴ over her

31 Overcrowded public transport is not a recent phenomenon in Tokyo, as the Meiji and Taishō souvenir postcards depicting *Tokyo meibutsu mannin densha* (‘A Tokyo Speciality: Packed Trams’) attest (cf. Hayashi and Yoshikawa, p. 172; Hayashi, p. 39; and Shirato, p. 4). In 1911 the city’s trams carried 580,000 passengers a day (Freedman, p. 40). Kafū’s experiences on the New York subway perhaps inured him to the mass scramble for seats (cf. *American Stories*, p. 107).

32 ‘Tokyo was full of things that startled Sanshirō. First, the ringing of the streetcar bells startled him, and then the huge numbers of people that got on and off between rings’ (Sōseki 2009, p. 17). The front-cover illustration of *Fūzoku Gahō* no. 362 (May 1907) shows the conductor taking hold of the chain as he ushers passengers aboard.

33 As Tokyo’s citizens adapted to the new reality of mechanized mass transit, conjecture about one’s fellow passengers may have been widespread. In *Mon*, which began serialization in 1910, Sōseki – perhaps influenced by *Fukagawa no uta* – sends his protagonist on a similar outing:

...he decided to see a little of the city and so boarded a streetcar. Despite the wonderful weather, there were fewer passengers than usual and he found the ride more pleasant than he had ever known it. Better still, the passengers all had an air of serenity; each one looked composed and relaxed. As he sat down, he thought of the daily struggle for seats...

Opposite him was an elderly woman with a girl of eight or so, probably her granddaughter... Near them another woman of about thirty, a shopkeeper perhaps, looked on with warm interest... (Natsume Sōseki 1972, pp. 12-13)

34 *maedaregake* 前垂掛け, a protective covering for the kimono, often worn by shop-girls and maids.

kimono, her hair done up in the butterfly style.³⁵ As the tram jerks into motion in response to the conductor, the girl totters and falls against the woman, and just manages to grab hold of a leather strap.

‘Ouch!’ exclaimed a workman dressed in a short coat and leggings.³⁶

‘Oh, I’m terribly sorry.’

Blushing, the young woman leans forward to make a slight bow, only to totter again as the tram jolts.

‘Oh dear,’ she exclaims.

‘Please take a seat, Miss.’

A man with a scraggly beard and wearing an Inverness cape³⁷ gallantly offered her his seat.

‘Thank you so much.’

But it was the grey-haired woman, the girl’s mother, who took the seat. Clinging to the leather strap with her white hand, the young woman, fully aware that her arm³⁸ would otherwise be visible all the way to her armpit, keeps the wide

35 *ichōgaeshi* 銀杏返し, lit. ‘turned-back ginkgo leaves’. The hair was turned back from the temples to resemble a pair of ginkgo leaves or butterfly wings, the chignon between them held in place with an ornate hairpin. This was a typical hairstyle for young Meiji women of merchant-class background, and for younger geisha.

36 *hanten* 半纏 and *momohiki* 股引, standard wear for workmen and rickshaw-pullers. The cover illustration of *Fūzoku Gahō* referred to above shows a workman in *hanten*, *momohiki* and *geta* attempting to board a crowded tram. The same illustration also depicts some of Kafū’s other ‘types’: the soldier, the conductor, the female student, and the tradesman or merchant.

37 *nijūmawashi* 二重廻し. A Victorian garment introduced to Meiji Japan by British merchants, the Inverness cape was quickly adopted by Japanese men, since it could be worn over a kimono in colder weather, unlike a western-style overcoat. Sōsuke wears one in *Mon*, as does the disreputable Yamai in Kafū’s Taishō-era novel, *Udekurabe*. We encounter a second passenger in an Inverness cape later in the text.

38 ‘[H]ow white her slender arms were as she clung to the straps in the crowded carriage’ (Tayama, p.170). Tayama Katai’s notorious *Shōjōbyō* (translated as ‘The Girl Watcher’), published in 1907 and describing the erotic fantasies of a commuter on what is now the Chūō line, would have served as a cautionary tale for the young woman, if she were not already aware of the presence of male ogles: ‘[She] stood right in front of him, reaching up for the strap with her white arm. It wasn’t that he didn’t think about standing up to give her his seat, it was just that, if he did, then he would not only be unable to look at her white arm, it would also be very

sleeve of her *meisen* kimono³⁹ closed with her other hand. Gently and quietly the tram goes downhill.⁴⁰ The workman whose foot had been trodden on suddenly starts to snore. Someone began reading aloud⁴¹ a news article from the Hōchi newspaper.⁴²

After passing the uncrowded Miyakezaka stop,⁴³ the tram runs along the moat beneath a line of gnarled and withered willows. On the right-hand side of the road three or four carts rest beneath the ever-verdant foliage of some ancient trees.⁴⁴ A

inconvenient to have to look down on her from above, and so he didn't get up' (Tayama, pp. 176-77). Then as now, female passengers on the city's public transport sometimes suffered more than ogling. One of the risqué postcards in the set of cards (*Ehagaki-sekai*, Vol. 15) published in July 1908 by the satirical paper *Kokkei Shimbun* shows a female passenger on a crowded tram holding on to a strap, her white arm visible down to her underkimono. The male passengers around her reach deliberately for the same strap, one of them grabbing hold of her wrist.

39 Bold-patterned kimono woven from *meisen* 銘仙 silk, a durable and comparatively cheap fabric produced in Ashikaga and Chichibu to the northwest of Tokyo, were popular with young women from Meiji through to early Shōwa. The illustrated prints inserted into late-Meiji and Taishō novels often depict young women in *meisen* kimono.

40 The gentle descent marks a geographical transition in the narrator's journey, as the tram leaves the Yamanote 'High City', and all it represents, for the Shitamachi 'Low City'.

41 *ondoku* 音読. '...when by chance we encounter an elderly person's idiosyncratic intoning of a newspaper, we begin to realize that the habit of silent reading became widely established perhaps only with the last two or three generations of readers.' (Maeda, pp. 223-224)

42 *Hōchi Shinbun* 報知新聞, founded in 1872 as the Yūbin Hōchi Shinbun, renamed Hōchi Shinbun in 1894. One of the leading newspapers in Meiji Japan, it went into decline after the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923, and in 1942 it merged with the Yomiuri Shimbun, which now publishes the Sports Hōchi tabloid. The passenger may have been reading the paper's evening edition, first produced in 1906.

43 From the junction at the foot of the slope a branch line headed west to Akasaka. The tram stop would have been near the Miyakezaka bus stop, which stands beside the moat, facing the National Theatre and the Supreme Court across Uchibori-dōri.

44 Photographs from the period (Hayashi and Yoshikawa, p. 48; *Tokyo Fūkei*, pls. 7, 10) show a line of large trees beside the road, below the government buildings that stand on the higher ground facing the moat. They would appear to be *sudajii* (*Castanopsis sieboldii*), an oak-like, evergreen broadleaf tree common in parks and along roadsides in Tokyo. Given their age, they may be the very trees visible in late-Edo depictions of this stretch of the Inner Moat, such as Hiroshige's *Soto-Sakurada Benkei-bori Kōjimachi*, in the *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo* (Smith, pl. 54). *Sudajii* still stand above the roadside here, behind the remains of the walls of the former daimyō residences that in Meiji became the location of the Army Hospital,

carriage pulled by a pair of horses overtook the tram. To the left, the view of the moat through the tram windows resembles a picture.⁴⁵ Crowned with stone parapets and green pines, the high ramparts on the other side of the moat dip back and forth before making a long curve that, hemming in the calm waters, glows vividly in the bright sunlight.⁴⁶ The murky green surface of the water acts as a mirror, reflecting

Army Ministry and General Staff Office, and which are now home to the Supreme Court, The National Diet Library, the Parliamentary Museum and the Diet Building.

45 *e no yō ni* 絵のように. The view from the road of this stretch of the moat was (and still is) one of the most admired sights in the city, and features in many woodblock prints, lithographs and early photographs. If Kafū was hardly original in pointing out the picturesque quality of the view, the fact that he perceives it as a moving panorama, the pine-studded ramparts unfolding as he passes in the tram, strikes a new note. Despite his distaste for 'moving pictures', Kafū is likely to have come across the early films of the Lumière brothers during his time in Lyon and Paris (or even in Japan, where they were first shown in 1897), including the 'panoramas' filmed from the window of a moving train, such as *Panorama de l'arrivée en gare de Perrache pris du train* (1896). We can perhaps read the intensely visual *Fukagawa no uta* as a panorama of sorts, an unrolling depiction of a journey across the city taken in a single, continuous take, a textual equivalent to those filmed around the same time in the United Kingdom, where, rather than the train, 'the electric tram was more often employed as a moving-camera platform' (Keiller, p. 167). Note how the moat here serves as a mirror, doubling the image, the narrator uncertain as to which version of the embankment-cum-screen visible through the lens of the tram window is in fact the real one, until the illusion is shattered by the wildfowl. Kafū may have preferred to have his way of seeing compared to that of the Edo artists who produced scroll paintings and illustrated books depicting panoramas of the city. In his 1920 study of Edo art, *Edo geijutsuron*, Kafū takes us page by page through Hokusai's great unfolding panorama of the banks of the Sumida, *Sumidagawa ryōgan ichiran*, first printed in 1806 (KZ10, pp. 171-174).

46 Apart from the clump of old trees under which the carts rest, the narrator's attention is focused solely on the view across the moat, a scene essentially unchanged since the Edo period. As one commentator notes (Sugawara, p. 117), the narrator keeps his back turned to the view behind him, on the other side of the road, where the western-style buildings of the Army Ministry and General Staff Office would have been visible above the treetops. Emblems of the Meiji imperial bureaucracy ridiculed by Kafū in *Akkan* ('Policemen, teachers, soldiers, government officials, the brick buildings in Hibiya'), they are wilfully ignored in favour of the vestiges of pre-modern, unwesternized Edo. Both aspects of the city appear in photographs included in the souvenir albums of the period, which show the Italian-designed General Staff Office (*Sanbō-honbu*) and, to the south, the brick buildings of the German-designed Justice Ministry (the former main building of which still survives) facing onto the moat. (See for example plate 7 in *Tokyo Fūkei*, published two years after *Fukagawa no uta*.) Since there were further tram stops at Sanbō-honbu and Sakurada-mon, passengers would have had time to enjoy the view.

clearly the grass on both banks of the moat, every last, thin branch of the willow trees, and even the clouds floating high in the sky. But then some of the waterfowl⁴⁷ gathered on the embankment fly into the water, shattering the mirror with the spray from their beating wings. The tram makes a turn as it follows the curve of the bank. The moat below us becomes much broader and more tranquil, and it is hard to tell if the white walls of the Sakurada-mon gate on the far side, reddening in the hazy late sun, are real or not, so vividly are they reflected in the moat's waters. We soon pass Hibiya Park.⁴⁸ Unwilling to wait for the tram to cross the wide thoroughfare and stop in the narrower side street⁴⁹ on the far side, two or three men jump off.

'Please wait until we come to a halt!'

One of the men immediately fell over, before the conductor had even spoken. Confident that the man was not seriously hurt, the conductor pays no attention⁵⁰ as he instead puts all of his effort into repositioning the trolley pole that has slipped from the cable, a frequent mishap at street corners. Proceeding with difficulty, the tram trundles across a series of tramlines,⁵¹ and when it reaches the stop a crowd of people are waiting. Among them were two or three tradesmen carrying a huge

47 Kafū here adheres to conventional notions of beauty. The portrayal of wildfowl on this stretch of moat, one of the city's 'famous sights' or *meisho*, was a stock seasonal device, depicted by Hiroshige in several of his *meisho* prints, and in Meiji by Yamamoto Shōun and Kawai Gyokudō (Yamamoto, p. 43; *Tokyo annai* vol. 1, inserted between pp. 468-469). The scene was so celebrated that it became a 'must-see' for western visitors to the Meiji capital: 'The moat here, with its green banks and spreading trees, and in winter the numerous wildfowl fluttering in the water, is one of the prettiest bits of Tōkyō' (Chamberlain & Mason, p. 123).

48 Tokyo's first western-style municipal park, opened in 1903 on the site of a former military parade ground.

49 The tram would have stopped on the far side of the intersection, where the Hibiya bus stop is located on what is now Harumi-dōri.

50 An aside in *Kanraku* suggests that people falling out of streetcars wasn't such an unusual sight in Meiji Tokyo (cf. KZ6, p. 8).

51 Contemporary city maps, such as the 1909 *Tokyo-shi kubun chizu* and the 1907 *Dai Nihon Tokyo zenkei no zu* (Bird's Eye View of Tokyo, Japan), show the complicated nature of the junction here. A tram traversing what is now Hibiya-dōri from the road outside Hibiya Park (Uchibori-dōri) would have had to negotiate a series of crisscrossing tracks, a procedure requiring the conductor to give his full attention to the trolley-poles, and probably taking too long for some impatient passengers. The busy crossing here is shown in *Tokyo-fu meishozue* (1912) and other Meiji photo albums, prints and picture postcards.

amount of baggage on their backs.

The usual crush of people getting on and off.

‘Please move down inside the carriage,’ shouts the conductor in a shrill voice. ‘I’m sorry, but a little bit more – the next strap, if you don’t mind. As the tram’s crowded, please watch out for your valuables. Now departing. Passengers who have just boarded please have your tickets ready for inspection. Next stop Sukiya-bashi.⁵² Are there any passengers requiring transfer tickets?’⁵³

‘Yes, over here,’ promptly called out an old woman, a retiree by the looks of it, her loose hair cut across the shoulders.⁵⁴ ‘I need to change. You have to change for Honjō, don’t you?’⁵⁵

The conductor, however, was busy working his way through the tram from the far end, clipping the passengers’ tickets one by one.

‘... A return ticket? That leaves one sen change from ten sen.’⁵⁶ No transfer

52 The intersection here retains the name of the bridge that was demolished in 1958 when the canal beneath, a stretch of the Sotobori moat, was filled in and built over. The Sukiya-bashi bus stop stands outside the Yurakuchō Marion building, to the north of the site of the bridge. The tram would have stopped here, and at a second stop, Soto-Sukiya-bashi, on the far side of the Sotobori. The *Tokyo-shi kubun chizu* shows another complicated meeting of tramlines here.

53 Prior to the 1906 merger, each of the three tram companies operating in Tokyo charged an exclusive flat fare of three *sen*, which meant that passengers had to pay a further three *sen* when transferring to a line operated by one of the other companies. After the merger Tokyo Tetsudō introduced a new flat fare of four *sen* (a proposed five-*sen* fare having met with fierce, at times violent, opposition), with a free transfer ticket available upon request from the conductor. Transfer tickets can still be obtained aboard trams in other Japanese cities, for example in Nagasaki.

54 *kami wo kirisage ni shita*. The *kirisage-kami* 切り下げ髪 hairstyle was associated in the Meiji era with widows.

55 Honjō, a Shitamachi district on the east (left) bank of the Sumida, became heavily industrialized in the late Meiji era. Since the woman would not have to change until the tram reached Ryōgoku, several stops after the narrator eventually gets off, the conductor appears to be in no hurry to respond.

56 Despite public discontent over the Tokyo Tetsudō company’s proposed fare increase, the government introduced a transport tax (*tsūkōzei*) in an attempt to alleviate the financial burden resulting from the Russo-Japanese War. A one-*sen* levy was placed on single and return fares, so that a single ticket in 1908 cost five *sen* (four *sen* before tax), and a return ticket nine *sen* (eight *sen* before tax). A year earlier, in 1907, one *yen* (100 *sen*) was equivalent to two shillings or 50 cents (Chamberlain & Mason, p. 4).

required.’

‘A transfer ticket! Quick!’ shrieked the old woman heading for Honjō, sounding as though she was being strangled.

‘Hey. A book of tickets. Thirty.’⁵⁷

A man who looked as though he could have been a bicycle-shop clerk, in cloth cap and laced-up leather boots, with the skirts of his striped cotton kimono tucked into his waistband, gave the conductor two one-yen notes. The conductor glanced backwards as he was handed the money, and rushed out⁵⁸ to the rear deck to announce the Sukiya-bashi stop. As the conductor still hadn’t brought him his tickets by the time we reached Owarichō,⁵⁹ it was now the clerk’s turn to get worried, instead of the old woman. But rather than call out to the conductor, he instead kept his eyes trained on him, glaring unblinkingly. Beyond the tram windows, plain and functional Western-style buildings⁶⁰ line both sides of the street, reminiscent of colonial India or South China. The sound of traffic⁶¹ suddenly

57 *kaisūken* 回数券. Whereas a return ticket was one sen cheaper than two single tickets, purchasing multiple tickets offered greater savings. According to the table in Hayashi (p. 153), a book of 30 tickets at this time would have cost one yen 20 sen, plus five sen tax, offering a saving of 25 sen when compared to the price of 30 single tickets bought separately. The shop clerk is anxious to receive his 75 sen change.

58 The conductor would have had to check the tickets of passengers getting off, to make sure everyone had paid their fare. He would also have had to ring the bell from the rear deck, and if necessary adjust the trolley-ropes.

59 尾張町, renamed Ginza 5-chōme in 1930. The tram here crosses the famous Ginza intersection.

60 Following a fire, the Ginza district was rebuilt in 1872 to plans drawn up by a British architect. The main thoroughfares around Ginza were terraced with balconied, two-storey row-houses built of brick, giving the district the name ‘Ginza Bricktown’. Kafū would have seen similar architecture in Shanghai, where he spent a couple of months with his family in 1897, and in Colombo and Singapore, ports-of-call on his return voyage to Japan in the summer of 1908. The 1907 Handbook refers to the buildings here as ‘European’. Ginza Bricktown was destroyed in the 1923 earthquake.

61 *kuruma no oto* 車の音. Although in Meiji Japan *kuruma* 車, as noted above, usually signified a rickshaw, it could also refer more generally to wheeled vehicles. The noise that Kafū’s contemporaries complain of was generated by trams. (In Meiji these, along with the city’s first urban railways, were referred to collectively as *densha* 電車 [electric cars], to distinguish them from the *kisha* 汽車 [steam cars] that travelled longer distances. The electrification of the rail network and the concomitant demise of the steam train saw all trains become *densha*, while trams or streetcars became *romen-densha* 路面電車, a lexical

grows louder. Another band plays its discordant music. Then, after crossing the main Ginza street,⁶² even more people – three of them country folk in straw sandals and sedge hats – jostle as the tram is about to pull away from the Owarichō stop,⁶³ the rear deck so packed that the passengers there can hardly breathe.

‘As it’s crowded, would you please form two rows in the aisle.’

All manner of hands hang on to the leather straps suspended from the ceiling, with not a single one left untaken. Next to a soft white hand with a glittering ring⁶⁴ protrudes a fat thumb with a hoof-like nail. The grimy cuff of a flannel shirt rubs against golden cufflinks. Amidst the headache-inducing hubbub – the demands for transfer tickets, the panicking country bumpkins – I notice the soothing tones of a Shitamachi woman’s voice.⁶⁵

As we came to a halt by the Kobikichō embankment⁶⁶ the conductor,

shift that occasionally confuses translators.) Thus Sanshirō: ‘the ringing of the streetcar bells startled him’ (p.17); ‘It was extraordinarily quiet. Not even the noise of the streetcars penetrated this far.’ (p. 21); ‘Don’t you hate those things? They’re so noisy!’ (p.26). Ishikawa Takuboku, a few months after the publication of *Fukagawa no uta*, refers to ‘the screech of some streetcar rounding a curve’ (Ishikawa Takuboku, p. 113). The noise could not have been generated by motor cars, since there were very few motor vehicles in Japan in 1908. None feature in the plates of the *Saishin Tokyo meisho shashinchō* album, published in March 1909, a month after Kafū’s story first appeared.

62 Today’s Chūō-dōri, known as Ginza-dōri. Contemporary photographs suggest that this street was busier than most others in the Meiji capital, the trams that crisscrossed at Owarichō sharing the roadway with rickshaws, handcarts, horsecarts and bicycles, as well as pedestrians.

63 Buses now use the Ginza 4-chōme stop on Harumi-dōri, outside the annex of the Ginza Mitsukoshi department store.

64 Japanese women did not wear rings – another imported fashion – until the Meiji era. Some of the modern women depicted in the prints of Yamamoto Shōun and Chikanobu display rings on their fingers.

65 Up until this point the narrator has had to listen to the voices of people from the city’s Yamanote districts, or from the provinces, rather than from Shitamachi.

66 The 1909 text has *Tsukiji no kashi* 築地の河岸 [the Tsukiji embankment] here. In volume 3 of the first collected works (1919) this is emended to *Kobikichō no kashi* 木挽町の河岸 [the Kobikichō embankment]. From Owarichō the tram on which the narrator is travelling would have crossed the Sanjukken-bori canal at Mihara-bashi, halting on the far (eastern) side of the canal by the Kabuki-za theatre, in what was then the Kobikichō district. After passing the theatre it would have crossed the Tsukiji canal – which looped around the Tsukiji district – at Mannen-bashi, before turning left (northeastwards) into Tsukiji. Presumably Kafū

discovering that someone – a man with a felt hat and briefcase – was trying to escape in the *mêlée* without paying his fare, chased after him into an alleyway. The conductor of the tram that had pulled up behind us got off to lend a hand, as a crowd of curious onlookers gathered on the roadside.

Some passengers leave their seats in order to watch from the rear deck. One of them shouts out:

‘Hey! Don’t be so tightfisted! Come on, let’s get going. You’re causing the rest of us, the ones who paid, a lot of bother.’

Thanks to the unscheduled halt, two or three people who had just missed the tram ran up and scrambled aboard. The last, so striking that she turned the head of every passenger, was a married woman of twenty-two or twenty-three, her hair done *marumage* style,⁶⁷ the chignon held in place with a decorative piece of red fabric.⁶⁸ The wide sleeve of her dark-green serge coat⁶⁹ reveals the elegantly overlapping red silk lining of her double-layered kimono, as, holding in one hand a bundle wrapped in a furoshiki of Japanese chintz,⁷⁰ which contained what looked to be a box of confectionery, she takes hold of a strap near the exit; at which moment a young woman of the same age, in the same attire, and with the same *marumage*

remembered that there were no tram-stops between Mihara-bashi and the Nishi-Honganji temple in Tsukiji, and corrected the text accordingly. The Sanjukken-bori canal was filled in soon after the Second World War with rubble left over from the firebombing of the city. The stretch of the Tsukiji canal beneath Mannen-bashi was drained to provide the roadway for the first branch of the Tokyo Metropolitan Expressway, which opened in 1962.

67 In Meiji Japan the *marumage* 丸髷 hairstyle with its raised chignon was popular with married women. Although Kafū seems to find the young women’s matching *marumage* acceptable, he objected to the fuller version of the hairstyle, the *dai-marumage*, including it in the list of Meiji monstrosities – ‘hysterical women who wear their hair in the *dai-marumage* style’ – in *Akkan* (KZ5, p. 298).

68 *tegara*, a length of brightly coloured silk or other fabric used to tie the hair into a chignon, fixed with a pin.

69 A woollen version of the loose-fitting *azuma* coat, worn over a woman’s kimono, fashionable from mid-Meiji through to the Taishō era.

70 *yūzen sarasa* 友禪更紗. In the first collected works (1919) the woman’s bundle is wrapped in a furoshiki of tie-dyed silk, *shibori no fukusa* 絞りの福紗.

hairstyle, addresses her from the seat below:

‘Oh, if it isn’t Yoshiko!’

‘Well I nev–’ faltered the standing *marumage*, apparently taken aback by the chance encounter.

‘It must be five years, Yoshiko – maybe more.’

‘That’s true...um, I don’t believe I’ve seen you since the Old Girls’ meeting at Mrs Fujimura’s.’

At long last the tram began to move.

‘Come and sit down, Yoshiko. There’s room.’

Crammed tight into the row of seats, the lower *marumage* pushed hard to her left.

The man she had shoved, an old moneylender in a motheaten collar, turned to give her an angry look; but, unable to say anything when he saw the woman’s white neck, he shuffled in turn along the seat, carefully tugging free the crushed flap of his ancient Inverness cape. The woman with the red fabric in her hair sat down, and placed her sleeves and her furoshiki-wrapped parcel on her lap.

‘I wonder what happened to the Old Girls’ meeting. No one has called to collect the membership fees recently.’

‘I expect Mrs. Fujimura has been busy too. What with it being such a large store.’⁷¹

‘Is your family keeping well?’

‘Yes, thank you.’

‘Where are you heading for? I have to get off just along here.’

‘At Shintomichō?’⁷² Well, I’m...’

71 From the few hints given – the elegant and traditional attire of the former school friends, the references to the Old Girls’ meeting and the large store – it would appear that the two women are daughters of well-to-do Shitamachi merchants who attended the same private school, together with a classmate or senior – Fujimura-san – who is now also married, and involved in running the family business (as well as the school reunions).

72 A Shitamachi district to the east of Ginza. Shintomichō station, on the Yurakuchō metro line, lies near the site of the Tsukiji-bashi tram stop. (Kafū would move to a house here in May 1915, after separating from his

Before she could finish, the conductor, working his way down the tram, came to collect their fares. The wife with the red fabric in her hair drew a small purse of thick silk from her coat pocket, and in a clear, soft voice said:

‘A transfer – Fukagawa.’⁷³

‘Transfer at Kayabachō,’⁷⁴ the conductor replied somewhat superfluously in his provincial accent.⁷⁵

Elegant lattice doorways⁷⁶ and board fences line both sides of the straight road,⁷⁷ with lamps of frosted glass by the doorways, the bough of a pine tree wrapped against the frost,⁷⁸ and drying on the railings of an upstairs balcony a yellow *Hachijō* robe⁷⁹ of coarse-woven cotton catches the eye, partly draped over

second wife.)

73 Title apart, this is the first mention of Fukagawa in the text. The word appears here in hiragana – ふかかわ – rather than the standard kanji – 深川 – as Kafū employs orthography (the hiragana syllabary has traditionally been associated with women) to visually convey the soft, gentle speech of the Shitamachi native. Fukagawa, the narrator’s eventual destination, was home to some of Edo’s more sophisticated geisha, who, fictionalized, feature in ukiyo-e prints and in the late-Edo sentimental love stories or *ninjōbon* that the young Kafū avidly read. If Fukagawa, along with the other districts east of the Sumida River in which Kafū would set some of his most representative fiction (*Fukagawa no uta*, *Botan no kyaku*, *Sumidagawa*, *Bokutō kidan*) epitomizes an aestheticized, nostalgic ‘other’ that counters the tawdry materialism of contemporary Yamanote Tokyo, this retreat from the present is also feminized, drawing on memories of tales told him by his Edo-born grandmother and mother, as well as on the romantic tales of Tamenaga Shunsui. This central motif of Kafū’s fiction, the journey into a romanticized, feminine other, in a sense begins here, with the soft uttering of ‘Fukagawa’.

74 This Shitamachi district lies to the north of Shintomichō, beyond Hatchōbori.

75 *chihō namari* 地方訛り. The text here tells rather than shows, rendering the conductor’s speech in standard orthography and thus providing no clue as to his origins. A little further on, however, Kafū gives us an example of his pronunciation, allowing us to guess where he comes from.

76 The doors and windows of Edo-style buildings are often decorated with wooden latticework (*kōshizukuri* 格子造り).

77 The road now known as Heisei-dōri, which divides Tsukiji 1-chōme from 2-chōme.

78 In Japanese gardens the lower trunks of pine trees are often wrapped with straw mats to protect against winter frosts.

79 A *yukata* 浴衣 made from *kihachijō* 黄八丈, a popular Edo fabric (usually silk rather than cotton) woven on Hachijō-jima, in the Izu chain of islands south of Tokyo. The island is named after the fabric.

a padded gown.⁸⁰ Here and there I can see paper lanterns with CHICKEN and BROILED EEL⁸¹ written on them in thick cursive strokes. Suddenly both sides of the street grew brighter as the tram climbed upwards onto a bridge.⁸²

A similar wooden bridge appeared off to the left.⁸³ Down below, the stone retaining walls of the canal run in a straight line and then turn at a right angle, the still, pond-like waters reflecting back the view in sharp detail, from the two-storey lattice-fronted houses on the embankment, to the shadows of the antiquated spikes that top the dark board fences on the far side. The tide must be in, for the rush-matting roofs⁸⁴ of the lighters moored in the canal have been lifted above street level, the blue smoke from their cooking fires⁸⁵ rising from the shadows straight up into a windless sky. At the gunwale of one of the boats a woman in a tight buttoned top,⁸⁶ a towel tied around her head,⁸⁷ rinses out a child's chamber pot. Across the

80 *dotera*, 'a kind of wadded dressing-gown' (Chamberlain & Mason, p. 22).

81 *kabayaki*, a classic Shitamachi dish since the Edo period.

82 The roadway still climbs slightly as it approaches the modern Tsukiji-bashi bridge. The branch of the Tsukiji canal that in Meiji Tokyo flowed under the bridge was filled in in the 1960s. The bed of the canal is now occupied by an expressway exit, beneath which lies the Shintomichō metro station. The Tsukiji-bashi tram stop was probably located closer to the bridge than the current Tsukiji 2-chōme bus stop.

83 A few dozen metres northwest of Tsukiji-bashi, Miyoshi-bashi (also once known as Aibiki-bashi) is now a three-way junction that carries local traffic over the expressway junction that occupies what was formerly a bend in the Tsukiji canal.

84 The narrator's eastward journey slowly returns him to the past. Mats of woven rush or sedge were a traditional roofing material for the narrow, shallow-draught cargo boats or lighters (*nibune* 荷船) that plied the canals, rivers and coastal waters of Edo, and which appear frequently in Edo *meisho* prints and illustrated books (including a dozen or so of Hiroshige's *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*), as well as in Meiji photographs.

85 The image of smoke rising from the cooking fires of boats moored by a bridge at evening is a familiar motif – a commonplace even – that goes back much further than Edo. Kafū, well-versed in the Chinese classics, would have known the famous poem 'Maple Bridge, Night Mooring' by the Tang poet Zhang Ji, and may even have visited the poem's setting, in Suzhou, during his stay in Shanghai.

86 *koikuchi-banten* 鯉口半纏, a buttoned, collarless, close-fitting cotton top with short, narrow sleeves, traditionally worn by maids and kitchen workers, for whom the looser sleeves of a kimono or hanten would be an encumbrance. Often seen today at festivals.

87 *mukō-hachimaki* 向鉢巻, a small towel rolled up and tied around the head (in this instance with the

bridge I can see a new white lantern with BOATS FOR HIRE written on it, the shopfront's reed blinds pulled up from the shoji-papered doorway, four or five fishing boats floating under the stone embankment, all neatly lined up with not a piece of timber out of place. The street is almost deserted. It must be after four o'clock. The low sun is no longer too bright to look at directly. Red with a strong yellow tinge, the light of the setting sun falls on every surface – the houses, the canal, the stone embankments – and picks out with a sharp clarity every angle; but the Japanese air, inevitably, possesses not the slightest hint of the depth of shade required to distinguish near from far, so that the whole prospect resembles nothing other than a flat, old-style theatre backcloth.⁸⁸ To me now, though, this seems all the more fitting, and it allows me to recall in perfect detail the plays of Mokuami, Kodanji and Kikugorō.⁸⁹ Those hire boats, those lattice doorways, those wall

knot at the front).

88 *hiratai kyūshiki no shibai no kakiwari* 平い舊式の芝居の書割. Sōseki perhaps references this image in *Sorekara* (which began serialization in June 1909, four months after *Fukagawa no uta* first appeared in print) as Daisuke strolls through Kyōbashi, not far from Shintomichō: 'The houses on the other side looked flat, as if they were part of a stage backdrop. The blue sky was painted right above the roofs.' The flat, perspectiveless portrayal of landscape on kabuki stage backdrops derives from the similarly flat depiction of the landscape prints of Hiroshige and other woodblock artists. The development of perspective, depth of field, and the play of light and shadow, experimented with occasionally by Edo artists, became a feature of Meiji ukiyo-e, notably in the *kōsen* prints of Kobayashi Kiyochika (about whom Kafū writes in *Hiyorigeta* [1915]) and his protégé Inoue Yasuji. It is interesting that, in the tension between these two 'ways of seeing', for both Kafū and Sōseki the flat, perspectiveless 'Edo' style connotes Shitamachi. At the same time, however, the lack of depth that Kafū here perceives in the urban landscape may have had something to do with the fact that he is observing it through the windows of a moving tram. In nineteenth-century Europe, writers had noted how the 'panoramic' nature of the landscape seen from the window of a moving train served to flatten the scene. 'The views from the windows of Europe have entirely lost their dimension of depth and have become mere particles of one and the same panoramic world that stretches all around and is, at each and every point, merely a painted surface.' (Dolf Sternberger, quoted in Schivelbusch, p. 61.)

89 Kawatake Mokuami (1816-93), leading kabuki dramatist of the late Edo and Meiji periods; Ichikawa Kodanji V (1850-1922), kabuki actor (or perhaps his more renowned predecessor Ichikawa Kodanji IV [1812-66], who worked with Mokuami, and of whom Kafū may have heard from his mother and grandmother); and Onoe Kikugorō V (1844-1903), who also worked with Mokuami, and who was regarded, along with Ichikawa Sadanji I and Ichikawa Danjū IX, as one of the three great actors of the Meiji era. Here for the first time since

spikes...⁹⁰

Just then we pass the tile-and-plaster walls⁹¹ of a theatre.⁹² The conductor says something.

‘*Suntomichō*,’⁹³ he pronounced it.

One of the *marumage*-coiffed women stands up and says:

‘Well, I must be off. Please give my regards to your family.’

‘You must come and see us when you have time,’ said the other. ‘Goodbye.’

The tram crossed the bridge at Sakura-bashi.⁹⁴ Although the canal is much wider than the one before, and busy with the coming and going of lighters, the densely packed little houses and shops with their New Year garlands make the street look narrower and meaner than the one in Tsukiji, the people milling around

the opening lines the narrative shifts into a reflective, self-conscious mode, a mode that will prevail once the narrator arrives in Fukagawa in the second half of the story.

90 *shinobigaeshi* 忍返し. For the writer (and friend of Kafū) Kubota Mantarō, the old spikes attached to the tops of walls and board fences to deter burglars, and the board fences themselves, likewise evoked Edo-period Shitamachi (Seidensticker 1983, p. 67).

91 *namako-kabe* 海鼠壁, ‘dark tiles laid diagonally with white interstices’ (Seidensticker 1983, p. 37; there is a photograph of the theatre on p. 147).

92 The Shintomi-za, founded as the Morita-za in 1660, and one of the three great kabuki theatres in the city of Edo. The theatre moved from Asakusa to Shintomichō in 1872, following the repeal of late Edo legislation that had forced the theatres from the centre of the city, and was renamed for its new location in 1875. It was regarded as the city’s premier kabuki theatre until its destruction in the 1923 earthquake. Kafū frequented both the Shintomi-za and the Kabuki-za, which the narrator’s tram would have passed earlier.

93 スントミ町. The conductor’s pronunciation indicates that he hails from northern Honshu. The expanding, industrializing capital exerted a huge economic pull over the provinces, and the relatively impoverished Tōhoku region, prone to bad harvests and consequent hardship, supplied Tokyo with a steady stream of economic migrants or *dekasegi* – especially after the Tōhoku main line reached Aomori, in the far north of Honshū, in 1891 – that continued into the Shōwa era. Where ‘Fukagawa’ is earlier rendered in ‘soft’ hiragana, the conductor’s (mis)pronunciation of ‘Shintomichō’ is given in ‘hard’ katakana. Traditionally used for loan words, the use of katakana here draws attention to the conductor’s accent, and at the same time distances him, indicating his outsider (or incomer) status, in contrast to the *marumage*-coiffed native of the city.

94 Here the tram-line crossed the Hatchō-bori canal (also known in Meiji as the Sakuragawa canal), which was filled in during the 1960s.

in aimless confusion. When we come to the stop at Sakamoto Park⁹⁵ the tram waits for a long time, but still shows no sign of setting off. More trams⁹⁶ have pulled to a halt behind us and in front of us. Without my noticing, the conductor and driver have gone off somewhere.

‘We’ve had it again. I bet the power’s out,’⁹⁷ observed a tradesman in a soft, twisted-silk⁹⁸ *haori* and leather-lined sandals,⁹⁹ as he turned to make conversation with a ruddy-faced old man wearing a sea-otter¹⁰⁰ muffler. A shopboy with a pale green package hung around his neck promptly jumps off.

‘Aargh! There’s a long line of trams. It stretches so far you can’t see the end!’ he shouts.

The conductor, his cap pushed back on his head and his leather bag pressed under his arm, comes running up, wiping the sweat from his brow.

‘I’m very sorry, but would any passengers wishing to transfer please get off here,’ he announced.

Upon hearing this, most of the passengers immediately stood up. ‘What’s the matter?’ asked one of them, pursing his lips. ‘Is it going to take long?’

95 A small park created in 1889, before Hibiya Park was laid out. Now known as Sakamotochō Park.

96 This was a busy stretch of track, since the Shinjuku line shared the Ryōgoku-Hibiya loop with trams running on the Mita line’s routes. The branch line to Fukagawa and Honjō joined the loop at Kayabachō.

97 The city’s rapidly growing transport system would continue to experience power cuts into the Taishō period. In Izumi Kyōka’s 1920 tale *Baishoku kamonanban*, source for Mizoguchi Kenji’s silent film *Orizuri Osen* (1935), Sōkichi’s fateful reunion with his former benefactor, the fallen Osen, comes about due to a power cut on the Kōbu line.

98 *itoori* 糸織.

99 *setta* 雪駄.

100 *rakko* 獺虎, nowadays usually written in katakana (ラッコ). An illustration in *Fūzoku Gahō* no. 307 (Jan. 1905) shows a man wearing what looks like a sea-otter muffler over his Inverness cape. (Around him are women with *marumage* and *ichōgaeshi* hairstyles, and a group of female students in *hisashigami* pompadours.) Overhunting of the sea otter for its warm fur by Russian, American, British and Japanese vessels led to the animal’s near-extinction in the North Pacific. In 1911 the collapse of the sea otter and fur seal populations led the four nations involved in the hunt to sign the North Pacific Fur Seal Convention, the world’s first international wildlife preservation treaty. In recent years sea otters have begun to return to Japanese waters.

'I'm afraid so,' replied the conductor. 'The trams are backed up all the way to Kayabachō.'

The attractive woman with the *marumage* hairstyle and the cloth-wrapped box of confectionery was the last passenger off the tram.

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明治東京を周る： 永井荷風の『深川の唄』を読む(1)

Phillip Brown

永井荷風は、現代日本文学の代表的な作家の1人である。荷風は常に「東京」という街を作品のテーマに据えてきた。随筆集『日和下駄』の中で、彼は東京を散策しながら、変わりゆく巨大な都市の歴史や地形について考察している。その一方で、小説『すみだ川』や『墨東綺譚』では、隅田川の東にある寂れた下町を舞台に、急速に現代化した大都市に幻滅した人々が、江戸の面影に安らぎを見出す姿が描かれている。

荷風は数年間アメリカやヨーロッパを遊学した後、1908年に日本に帰国する。その数ヶ月後に書かれた『深川の唄』は、彼の下町への郷愁と、東京の風景への興味が初めて結びついた作品だと言えよう。物語の前半では、主人公は路面電車に乗り、窓から見える景色と、車内の乗客の様子を子細に描写する。そして後半では、隅田川を渡り、かつてあった街の姿に思いを馳せる。

この作品の中で、荷風はドキュメンタリーさながらの細かさで、東京の街を描写している。この論文の目的は、これまで英訳されていない荷風の作品を、文化や社会的なコンテキストの中で考察することである。主人公が東京を旅しながら目にするものや聞くもの（人々の服装や髪型や持ち物、話す言葉、群衆の様子や街の建築など）を詳細に読み解くことで、我々は新進作家としての荷風の成長と、20世紀初頭の東京の肖像を垣間見ることができるようである。