1

Founding the Shogun's Capital

ON a clear day in the late summer of 1590, the ambitious warrior Tokugawa Ieyasu strode across the expansive Kanto Plain. Rimmed by mountains and the waters of the Pacific, this area in the eastern reaches of the Japanese realm had recently become his dominion – a reward for his contributions to the seizure of land from rival samurai. To consecrate this sizable acquisition, Ieyasu had planned his ceremonial trip for this particular date, considered auspicious for coinciding with the first harvest of new grain. Around midafternoon he stopped at a temple for a meal, and a short while later he made the approach to his new home. People had gathered along the route, and regional powerholders had assembled to witness this occasion: the ascendant Tokugawa Ieyasu's official entrance into the castle at Edo.[1]

When Ieyasu stepped foot in the castle, on the spot where the Imperial Palace now stands in the middle of what is now Tokyo, he laid eyes on a building that was more of a fort than a command center suitable for a warrior of his stature. He was, after all, a shrewd and skilled samurai who had amassed might and wealth by aligning himself with the preeminent warlords of the era, first Oda Nobunaga and then Toyotomi Hideyoshi. By 1590, Ieyasu was a principal vassal of Hideyoshi, who was well on his way to consolidating control over much of the realm and bringing an end to over a century of almost constant warfare between feuding samurai. But

while Ieyasu was bestowed much of the Kanto region by Hideyoshi, he didn't inherit an imposing castle that projected his newfound power. The footprint of what would become the three central enclosures of the castle did exist. But the fortification wasn't encircled by a stone wall, just an earthen embankment about three meters tall covered with grass. In a handful of spots around this perimeter, simple wooden gates allowed passage. The floors were made of dirt in some places; in others, the ground was covered with planks salvaged from old ships. And the roof wasn't tile, but a patchwork of wood shingles and thatch.[2]

Looking out from this modest fortress perched atop a bluff, someone other than Ieyasu might have found it difficult to envision this land as the site for their military headquarters and castle town. To the southeast was the Hibiya Inlet whose waters at the time lapped close at the castle's feet. Scattered along the shores of this inlet of Edo Bay were fishing villages of thatched-roof homes. To the northwest were hills and to the east marshy lowlands, leaving little space to house an army or build much of anything. And there was no abundant source of drinking water. It's hard to know from the scant sources on medieval Edo just how many people called it home, much less how exactly they lived. What's certain is that Edo was distant from the bustling capital in Kyoto and the centers of Hideyoshi's power. For Ieyasu, the granting of this land in the east removed him from the Tokugawa family's hereditary base to the west. Given all of these drawbacks to the Kanto region, Hideyoshi's transfer of Ieyasu may not have been a generous reward so much as a farsighted attempt to contain a potential competitor.[3]

But Ieyasu had his reasons for choosing to settle in Edo and not in the historical Kanto strongholds of Kamakura or Odawara further south. Perhaps he appreciated Edo's location at the innermost point of the bay, a strategic position that was easily

defensible and protected from naval assault. Or its link to other areas by way of major roads like the Tōkaidō that ran down the coast to Kyoto.[4] Whatever his rationale, Tokugawa Ieyasu treated the allotment from Hideyoshi as an opportunity to bend upward the arc of his career and transform Edo into a proper castle town befitting one of the realm's most powerful warriors.

• ● •

The breathtaking metamorphosis spurred by Tokugawa Ieyasu in the late sixteenth century was a pivotal chapter in the story of the place that would become early modern Edo and then modern Tokyo, but it was not the first. This sprawling area already had a long history of multiple lives, as people and things and ideas from elsewhere came and left their imprint on the Kanto Plain. In its very early incarnation, well before there was any sense of a politically organized realm, this land was the stomping ground of animals. Elephants and large deer came from Eurasia when the Japanese archipelago was still a crescent-shaped mass attached to the continent, and they tread upon the soil that hundreds of thousands of years later would sit below Tokyo. (In the mid-1970s, three elephants would be discovered more than twenty meters below ground by crews building a subway line near Hamachō Station.) Giant mammals like the Palaeoloxodon elephant were eventually overhunted by people who followed the same route from the continent as the animals and plants before them. And around the time that ocean waters severed the crescent from the continent and broke it into a string of islands, about 12,000 years ago, people became less nomadic and started to lead more settled lives on the Kanto Plain.

When the seeds of a political body were sown, it wasn't here in the east but in the west. And there the realm's administrative center of gravity would remain for more than a millennium.

Over the 600s and early 700s, an emergent state in the western region now known as the Kansai adapted Chinese legal codes as the basis for its rule, the monarch came to be called *tennō*, or emperor, and the nascent entity came to be known as Nihon, or Japan. Distant from this kernel of governance, the Kanto existed in its own sphere and followed its own rhythms, coming more gradually to agriculture, bronzeware, and political organization. But as the state's administrative apparatus developed, the province of Musashi was established and its borders defined to include almost all of today's metropolis of Tokyo as well as neighboring Saitama prefecture to the north and parts of Kanagawa prefecture to the south. The Kanto was still at the edges of the realm, but it was no longer beyond administrative reach.

In its medieval incarnation, Musashi province and the greater Kanto Plain became a prime arena for warriors jockeying for land, wealth, and power. These conflicts were part of a larger story of the rise of samurai, who came to challenge and would eventually usurp the political strength and authority of the state in the west. In the mid-800s to mid-1000s, these warrior families had emerged through military service to the emperor, who was the sovereign ruler at the apex of the governing imperial court in Kyoto. Court politics, culture, and intrigue were a world unto itself that revolved tightly around the capital. From this vantage point, the province of Musashi was a distant frontier, imagined as unpopulated and backward, beyond civilization and culture. Even the name Kanto, meaning "east of the barriers," was a description from the perspective of Kyoto. With some disdain for life outside of the capital, a court aristocrat who was appointed to serve as a governor was more likely to make his home not in the province but in Kyoto and to oversee his land from afar, hiring warriors to serve not just as guards but also as administrators. These empowered warriors came to eclipse the

court aristocrats in the provinces and became ever more powerful in areas such as the Kanto.[5]

One such Kanto warrior, a man named Chichibu Shigetsugu, decided at some point in the 1100s to set up residence in a strategic spot – on a bluff overlooking an inlet. Inspired by this location, he changed his name from Chichibu to one meaning "mouth of an inlet." And he conferred upon the land around him this new name: Edo. The Edo family became formidable warriors in this region after the first samurai government, or shogunate, was founded in the 1180s at Kamakura in the southern Kanto. The Kamakura shogunate tipped the balance of power away from the emperor and the imperial court in the long-established capital of Kyoto and toward the samurai, like the Edo family, of the Kanto region.

In the mid-1400s, the Kanto became the stage for a civil war between samurai in which one warrior family after another gained and then lost dominance. One such family was the Uesugi, who erected the castle at Edo that Tokugawa Ieyasu would claim over a hundred years later. In 1457, the Uesugi decided to shore up their position on the plain and commanded a chief retainer – Ōta Dōkan – to build and administer the fortress at Edo. For this, he would become a fixture in stories told about the history of Tokyo. In the mid-1950s, a bronze statue of Ōta Dōkan was created to commemorate the putative five hundredth anniversary of the founding of Tokyo. This likeness now resides in the soaring glass and steel trussed atrium of the Tokyo International Forum, a strangely incongruous reminder of the medieval past. In Ōta Dōkan's day, Edo Castle was both a military fortification and a social hub. The fortress had three enclosures that were separated by a deep moat and encircled by a barrier. There were archery grounds where warriors gathered each morning to test their skills with the bow and arrow. And Dōkan hosted gatherings for guests

who together composed *renga* or linked verse poetry. Near the castle, fishing boats and merchant ships would dock, bringing wares from other provinces and even overseas. There was rice from Awa, tea from Hitachi, bamboo arrows from Echigo, and copper from Shinano, as well as fish, lacquer, and medicines.

As the civil strife of the mid-1400s stretched into a prolonged period of almost unceasing war, the Kanto continued to witness the fortunes of competing samurai families wax and wane. It was the Hōjō of Odawara who were losing their grasp of Edo and its fortress when Toyotomi Hideyoshi launched his campaign to wrest control of the region. In early 1590, as his forces advanced and dealt one crushing blow after another, the castle at Edo fell quickly to the Toyotomi assault.[6]

• ● •

After Tokugawa Ieyasu received the surrendered Hōjō provinces and officially took claim of Edo in 1590, he oversaw its transformation from a strategic outpost into a full-fledged medieval castle town, designed to function as his military headquarters and the administrative center of his territory. Over the next ten years, Edo pulsed with the efforts of those who came to remake this modest place into a regional powerhouse.

One of the first orders of business was to tackle the shortcomings of the built and natural environments by repairing the castle and laying the groundwork for the town. The footprint of the castle's core was expanded, and over a dozen Buddhist temples to its west were relocated to make room for the construction of its western compound. Paired with these renovations were infrastructure projects, many of which sought to control the water of this swampy land crisscrossed by rivers. To create more buildable soil, the Hibiya Inlet was partially drained and filled with dirt from the excavation of a moat around the castle's new western

enclosure. To ease the transport of goods by boat, new waterways were dug. Prime among them was a canal called the Dōsanbori that connected the Hirakawa River to the center of Edo, making it possible for things like rice to be sailed down the river and through the canal to arrive near the castle's main gate. To ease travel over land, bridges were built. And to provide drinking water for the town's residents, Ieyasu ordered the development of a system of waterworks.

The town that developed around the castle was shaped by the logics of military defense and the societal supremacy of samurai. At a time when Toyotomi Hideyoshi was demanding that clearer distinctions be made between samurai, farmers, and townspeople, areas of Edo came to be designated for particular occupational groups and began to form distinct identities. Direct retainers of Ieyasu charged with defending the castle lived on its northwest flank, lower-ranking vassals were placed close around the castle, and those of higher rank were given larger estates on the periphery. Townspeople who catered to the various needs of the samurai set up shop and home along the Dōsanbori canal, with specific neighborhoods specializing in certain goods and services like lumber and shipping. There was a periodic market where people could shop, and a brothel. Townspeople also took up residence in already established villages and squeezed around the samurai homes, temples, and shrines in the periphery.[7]

As laborers, lumberers, boatmen, and merchants set the pillars of the castle town, Tokugawa Ieyasu protected and strengthened Edo through a combination of adept management of his relationship with Hideyoshi, administrative skill, and a dose of good luck. In the years following their defeat of the Hōjō, Ieyasu continued to prove himself a dependable vassal to Hideyoshi. He spent a year and a half in Hizen province, on the island of Kyushu, which was a base for Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea in 1592. Ieyasu

helped organize the massive number of soldiers and laborers mobilized for the assault but avoided deployment to the peninsula as one of the half million soldiers who fought against Korean and Chinese troops in the devastating six-year conflict. Instead, he spent some of this time with Hideyoshi in Osaka and near Kyoto. When in Edo, he tended to ceremonial responsibilities like holding banquets and to administrative tasks like promoting vassals, issuing licenses, and distributing fiefs.[8] When Toyotomi Hideyoshi died in 1598, Tokugawa Ieyasu was well positioned to fight for the reins of power and emerged as the leader of one of the two camps competing for control of the realm. At the decisive Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, Tokugawa Ieyasu's "eastern army" defeated the rival "western army." The consolidation of power started by Oda Nobunaga and advanced by Toyotomi Hideyoshi culminated in the victorious Tokugawa, and Japan was as unified as it had ever been. In 1603, Ieyasu was granted by the emperor the title of shogun (literally "generalissimo"), making him the foremost military ruler of the realm and ushering in the era of the Tokugawa shogunate and the elevation of Edo from a castle town to the shogun's capital.

• ● •

The triumphant Tokugawa family cast the foundation and frame of early modern Edo. Doubling down on Edo as their base, the Tokugawa reenvisioned it as the seat of their rule – Edo was to be the military headquarters, administrative nucleus, and political hegemon of a unified realm. For the first time in over a thousand years, the political and administrative center of gravity would unequivocally be in the east. Power was to be concentrated in the Tokugawa family and its warrior government at Edo, drawn away from the imperial court in Kyoto and from the daimyo lords around the country. A daimyo was a samurai who governed one

of the 260 some domains across the land, ostensibly serving the shogun but also exercising autonomy and amassing power through rule of his domain. The Tokugawa shogunate sought to control and weaken the daimyo not just to assert its political supremacy but also to ensure that its newly established order would endure. We now know that Tokugawa rule would last for over two and a half centuries and that this period would be characterized by relative peace. But in the early 1600s, after over a century of almost constant warfare, the stability so recently won seemed fragile. To prevent disorder and assert authority, the first few Tokugawa shoguns – Ieyasu (r. 1603–1605), Hidetada (r. 1605–1623), and Iemitsu (r. 1623–1651) – built mechanisms and symbols of their power into the city of Edo.

The consolidation of power in the shogun's capital created a tremendous centripetal pull toward Edo that was felt across the realm. People, money, natural resources, and goods streamed into the town, sometimes by government coercion and sometimes by sheer magnetism. This potent combination of force and opportunity propelled the construction and growth of a city that was, in these early Tokugawa decades, a very male and quite rough and tumble place to be. There were the many samurai who were called to the military capital to serve as warriors and government bureaucrats, as well as thousands of masterless samurai who, without a lord to employ and pay them, came in search of work.

Edo Castle was the lodestone of the shogun's capital: a visual symbol of the shogunate's power, authority, and centrality. The very process of building this castle served as a way for the shogunate to control daimyo, drain domain coffers, and generally flex its muscle, mobilizing people and resources on a vast scale. Laborers were requisitioned by the shogunate for its various engineering and construction projects, with each domain's contribution calculated by its tax base. These men dug canals, built

bridges, leveled Kandayama hill in the north, and used that soil to completely fill the Hibiya Inlet and create today's area of Nihonbashi from Shinbashi to Hamachō. Peasants came to work as day laborers, and carpenters, painters, lacquerers, stonemasons, plasterers, and metalworkers spent decades renovating the castle. With stone scarce on the Kanto Plain, major daimyo further west were ordered to provide 1,120 pieces of large stone for every hundred thousand *koku* of rice capacity in their domains. To send a single large stone to Edo, stonemasons first had to extract the block, weighing up to several tons, from a quarry in the mountains; then about a hundred laborers pulled it to the port where it was loaded onto a ship that could carry only one or two stones per trip; seamen took a week or so to transport this cargo to Edo; and laborers met the stone at the recently created wharves at Edo Harbor and pulled it to the castle, directed by men who rode atop the block, waving flags and beating drums to coordinate the whole effort. The expense of paying and feeding thousands of men, the cost of the stone itself, and some of the burden of procuring the 3,000 or so transport ships were borne by the daimyo.

Most of the timber for the castle was also provided by daimyo. Carpenters would first determine the dimensions of the logs they needed; given the immense scale of the castle, some of the logs had to be more than thirty meters long and over one-and-a-half meters in diameter. Foremen then found the right trees and lumberers cut them, in places like the northern Kanto and to the west in present-day Nagano and Shizuoka prefectures. A log might then be carried over land by hundreds of men to a river, perhaps one that had been dammed to create a current strong enough to carry such weight. The timber was then rafted right into Edo or else to a spot where it could be loaded onto a ship that traveled the last leg of the

journey to the city. This tremendous undertaking – the labor and sheer amount of lumber required for Tokugawa construction projects – depleted both the financial and natural resources of domains. It has been estimated that three Tokugawa castles alone, in Edo, Nagoya, and Sunpu where Ieyasu retired, exhausted about 6,800 acres of prime forest. By the mid-1600s, the flurry of building in Edo and elsewhere had consumed forests across the archipelago from the southern island of Kyushu to the northern reaches of Honshu.[9]

From the work of many thousands of men emerged a castle that emanated the strength and ensured the defense of the shogunate. A stunning addition to the main compound was a five-story keep measuring over fifty-seven meters in height from the base of its stone foundation walls, which still exist today, to its iron-tiled roof. Taller than any ever built in the realm, the keep towered over the expanded, multiple enclosures of the castle which included decorative reception halls, the shogunal residence, and the "great interior" or inner chambers for the shogun's wife and concubines, and female attendants.

With the castle at its center, a spiral pattern spun outward and ordered the space of the city, its rough shape influenced by topography as well as cosmology and military strategy (see Figure 1.1). Giving this shape some structure were the canals-cum-moats that radiated outward to an outer moat roughly fifteen kilometers long. Along this canal system at over thirty strategic points were huge, heavily guarded and fortified gates which served as both monumental structures and defensive checkpoints.

The spiral pattern informed where people lived and how the character of their neighborhoods developed, with samurai of higher status closest to the center and townspeople of lowest status on the outskirts. In the innermost part of the curve, to the east of the castle, were the mansions of those domain lords considered

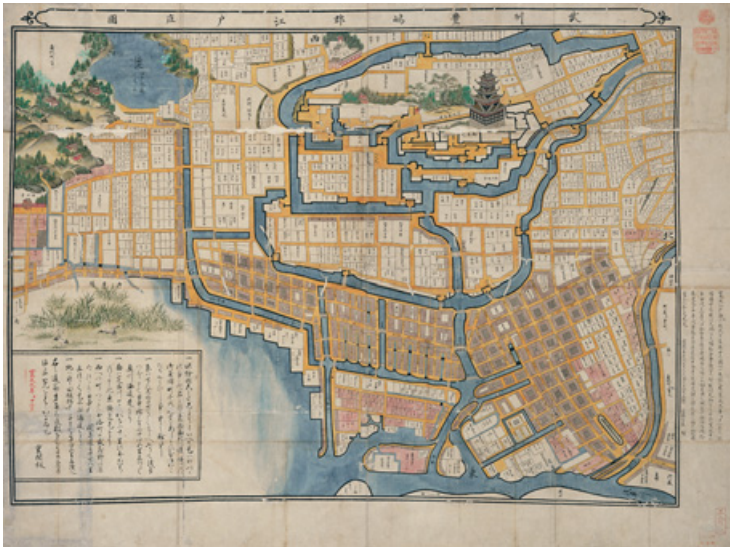

Figure 1.1 Map of Edo spiral. *Bushū Toshima gun Edo no shō zu*, 1632, hand-colored manuscript copy of printed map. Courtesy of the Tokyo Metropolitan Library.

most trustworthy by the shogunate; these were the so-called *fudai* daimyo who had been on the side of Tokugawa Ieyasu even before the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600. Next, moving clockwise to the south of the castle in what is today the area from Marunouchi to Kasumigaseki, were the domain lords whose loyalty to the shogunate was suspect; these were *tozama* daimyo who had fought against Ieyasu at Sekigahara and had since acceded to Tokugawa rule. Mirroring the way that domains were distributed across the realm, the dependable *fudai* were kept closer than *tozama* to the seat of power. Then, to the west and north were samurai of lower rank than the domain lords, mainly bannermen and housemen who, as direct retainers of the Tokugawa, were tasked with shoring up defenses on this vulnerable flank of the castle. Finally, in the

outermost part of the spiral were the townspeople, the artisans and merchants who lived and worked in the crowded neighborhoods on the lowlands by Edo Bay.[10]

The daimyo who inhabited the inner ring of the spiral had been drawn to Edo first by Tokugawa enticement and then by shogunal coercion. Shortly after the Battle of Sekigahara, daimyo who came to Edo to win Ieyasu's good graces were rewarded with grants of land close to the castle on which to build their residences. After Ieyasu assumed the position of shogun, it became customary for daimyo to split their time between the capital and their domain, often leaving family members in Edo while they were away as an act of deference to shogunal power. In the mid-1630s, the shogunate made this system of "alternate attendance" mandatory, requiring all 260 some daimyo to spend every other year in Edo in service to the shogun. To ensure that a daimyo would not misbehave while back in his domain, he was compelled to leave his wife and most of his children in the capital under the gaze of the shogunate. The alternate attendance system swelled the population and fueled the physical growth of the city. Wives and daughters of daimyo, and sons who were not heirs, spent most or all of their lives in Edo. A permanent staff and their families were also kept in the capital. For small and medium-sized domains, this might be several hundred people; for larger domains, at least 1,000 and up to several thousand people. There were also 250,000 to 300,000 people, a quarter to almost a third of the city's population in the early 1700s, who traveled with their daimyo and stayed for the year in Edo.

To house all of these people, perhaps as many as a thousand daimyo compounds were built in the city. On the land closest to the castle was the domain's main compound with its administrative facilities, spacious quarters for the lord and his immediate family, sprawling gardens, and residences for chief officials and high-ranking retainers (see Figure 1.2). The daimyo

Figure 1.2 Edo Castle and daimyo estates. *Edo zu byōbu*, seventeenth century, left screen of six-panel folding screens, color and gold on paper. Courtesy of National Museum of Japanese History.

mansions of the early 1600s were grand and ornate with extravagant gates and reception spaces, intended to display power and to impress the early shoguns who regularly visited the domain lords. The front gate to the residence of the *fudai* daimyo from Hikone, for example, was about eighteen meters long and glittered from the gold leaf on its roof eaves, ridge tiles, and rhinoceros sculptures. In addition to the primary mansion, daimyo also built a secondary compound further from the castle.[11]

Within its walls, a daimyo estate buzzed with the activity of a veritable army of people who kept the domain's outpost in Edo running smoothly. Retainers managed personnel, handled shipping, performed secretarial and budgetary work, dealt with purchasing and storage, and guarded the estate. There were food tasters, tea masters, hairdressers, stable masters, and doctors. The domain compounds also drew in and recruited people from Edo and outlying rural areas to work as servants. It may be that at certain points in the Tokugawa period as much as 10 percent of the city's population consisted of servants to samurai – men and

women who filled a variety of positions in the household. Young women worked as pages, personal assistants, and attendants. There were also servants who carried palanquins, gardened, cleaned, cooked, ran errands, handled correspondence, fought fires, and served as bodyguards.

Keeping and hiring so many people in Edo was a large financial burden for the domains, which also shouldered the lion's share of the costs for their trips to and from the capital. The financial expenses of alternate attendance consumed half to three-quarters of a domain's total disposable income. Travel alone amounted to 5 to 20 percent of a domain's budget, depending on its distance from the capital. On the route to and from Edo, the retinue paid for lodging at inns in post stations, food either brought with them or bought on the road, and a variety of miscellaneous expenses like river crossings, tips, and straw sandals that lasted only four or five days of the journey made largely on foot. To make purchases along the way, notoriously heavy cash boxes replete with metal coins had to be carried. So physically demanding was the task of going to Edo that some domains instructed their retainers to prepare by getting into shape; others gave the travelers a break from their regular work before and after the trip to rest their bodies. Exerting high physical and financial tolls, the alternate attendance system together with the construction of the city were mechanisms by which the shogunate sapped human, natural, and financial resources out of the domains and into its growing capital.[12]

In the outermost curve of the spiral was the city's commercial hub – the districts for townspeople. In one sense, this area inhabited by artisans and merchants was laid out like that for samurai, with considerable shogunate attention to occupation. Because the shogun granted land to those who served him and stipulated that people in similar occupations should live close

together, neighborhoods emerged based on trade. There were wards for smiths, coopers, carpenters, plasterers, sawyers, founders, gunsmiths, scabbard makers, and indigo dyers. But in most other ways, this space for artisans and merchants, in the lower rungs of the status hierarchy, was markedly and visibly different from that of the samurai elite. While the daimyo occupied the hilltops and high grounds of the city, or so-called Yamanote, the townspeople lived in Shitamachi, below the castle on the eastern lowlands and soil that had filled the Hibiya Inlet. While daimyo compounds sprawled across prime real estate and, with other samurai residences, claimed over 70 percent of land in the city, the commoner districts were densely packed. By the early 1640s, around 300 commoner blocks were squeezed into 10 to 15 percent of the city's land, from Kanda through the area around the Nihonbashi bridge to the Kyōbashi bridge. And while daimyo mansions were lavish, the houses of townspeople were modest in comparison even as they became more substantial over time. Commoners lived in simple structures with straw roofs, and then in two-story tile-roofed homes. Occasionally, a three-story building could be spied on the corner of a block.[13]

While some townspeople had called Edo home since the Hōjō days, others were pulled to the capital by its expanding commercial possibilities (see Figure 1.3). Among them were merchants from the western provinces of Ise and Ōmi who opened Edo branches of their retail stores to sell everything from tea to paper and cotton cloth. One such entrepreneur, Nishikawa Jingorō, hung out his shingle in Nihonbashi in 1615, offering specialty products from his native Ōmi like mosquito nets and the top layer of tatami mats. Other craftsmen and merchants were brought or called to the castle town by Ieyasu as purveyors for his samurai. One such man was a fisherman named Mori Magoemon from Tsukuda village, in today's Osaka prefecture, who was given

Figure 1.3 Activity around Nihonbashi bridge. *Edo meisho ki*, 1662, in Asai Ryōi, Ōno Hiroki, and Miura Jōshin, *Edo meisho ki: Zen 7-kan ao byōshi: zen, kō hen: Keichō kenmonshū: Zen 10-kan*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Edo Sōsho Kankōkai, 1916), 6. National Diet Library Digital Collection, accessed August 2, 2023, https://dl.ndl.go.jp/pid/952976.

by Ieyasu a small island as well as fishing rights in the nearby waters of Edo Bay. In return, Magoemon agreed to supply Ieyasu's men with fish, and in 1603 his family secured permission to sell their surplus catch to townspeople. A decade later he opened

a shop, and by the early 1640s his neighborhood of Nihonbashi bustled with people selling all manner of goods from the sea. Of the fourteen or so fishmongers who established themselves here, about half were affiliated with Magoemon's original group from Tsukuda village. For this, Magoemon and his men came to be regarded as the founding fathers of what would become the famed Tsukiji Fish Market. The goldsmith Gotō Mitsutsugu too was summoned to this eastern area of Edo, from Kyoto. Gotō was entrusted by the shogunate with minting and then inspecting gold coins in what was the earliest incarnation of the gold mint. To further address the shogunate's currency needs, in 1617 the Daikoku family from Izumi province, now in Osaka prefecture, was directed by the shogunate to establish in the Kyōbashi area the silver mint – or *ginza*.[14]

Sex work was given a specially delineated, and ordered, space in Shitamachi. To the northeast of Nihonbashi, farther from the city's center, a dedicated area for prostitution was created in 1618. An officially sanctioned "pleasure quarter" was the idea of a brothel keeper named Jin'emon who along with his fellow petitioners argued that granting them a plot of land and a monopoly on the sex trade would serve the shogunate's interests of maintaining social and political stability. Convinced, the shogunate allocated to these brothel owners some marshy land which they turned into a district named Yoshiwara, encircled by a moat and thick plaster walls and accessible only by its one entrance, the Great Gate. The women who worked within these boundaries were physically confined and legally defined, placed into the newly created category of "prostitutes" and so controlled differently than other women who, like the bathing girls in the many bathhouses across the city, sold sex outside of the regulated space of Yoshiwara.[15]

• ● •

From the prostitutes on the periphery to the shogunate officials at its core, the people who lived and worked in the spiral of Edo hungered for a whole array of goods that were brought into the shogun's capital from across the realm. Some necessities of the city's growing population came from relatively nearby, like the vegetables, fruits, firewood, charcoal, rice, and rice bran from the Kanto region. As the land just west of Edo was nourished with water from the Tama River carried by new irrigation canals, it became more fertile and yielded barley, wheat, millet, buckwheat, and *daikon* radishes. From beyond the city's backyard, regional specialties were imported to provide daimyo compounds with tastes from home like dried bonito from Yokosuka domain or fermented soybeans from Odawara domain. Forged too were economic links between the shogun's city and the imperial capital at Kyoto as well as the burgeoning commercial and financial center of Osaka. From Kyoto came combs, wigs, cosmetics, pottery, household furnishings, and military supplies. Some of these goods were transported and sold by merchants who kept their headquarters and did their wholesale purchasing in Kyoto but operated as retailers in Edo. One notable Kyoto-based merchandiser was the Mitsui family who, in 1673, opened in Edo their landmark Echigoya store, the forerunner of the Mitsukoshi department store. From and through Osaka came cotton, oil, sake, vinegar, and soy sauce. The young capital's growing consumption demands not only propelled the movement of goods and established economic connections across the realm but also had an impact on the fate of towns, cities, and regions well beyond Edo. Hand in hand with the alternate attendance system, the needs of Edoites helped stimulate the growth of castle towns and transform Osaka into the country's preeminent market and bank. And over time, the city's seemingly insatiable appetite prompted farmers to shift

toward monoculture for export to Edo, making them more vulnerable to hardship when their crops failed.[16]

Many of the goods that made their way to Edo were transported by sea, particularly on cargo ships that traveled between Osaka and Edo Harbor. Managed by shipping agents, these vessels doubled and then quadrupled in capacity as commercial relationships thrived. In addition to the water routes that connected Edo to the world beyond, and the newly created waterways that moved things within the city, the Tokugawa shogunate promoted the development of a network of highways and roads that linked its capital to the rest of the realm. The point of origin of this transportation system was the Nihonbashi bridge, constructed in 1603 in the area east of the castle over what was then the lower section of the Hirakawa River, later renamed the Nihonbashi River. From the Nihonbashi bridge radiated the system's main arteries that snaked down along the coast to Kyoto, westward through the center of the realm to Kyoto, and northward. By the 1630s, the shogunate had developed the main structure of this network and made clear its official character. Priority was given to governmental, rather than private, traffic and communications. And the highways were another means by which the shogunate exerted control over domains. Not only had they been built at the expense of the domains they traversed, but local residents were responsible for transporting Tokugawa officials and goods through their domain's territory. The Tokugawa also established checkpoints at strategic locations, designed to surveil everyone's comings and goings. Originally geared toward restricting the movement of those who had opposed Ieyasu in 1600, the checkpoints were also intended to contain the traffic of guns, prevent the wives and children of daimyo from absconding from Edo, and regulate travel. Travel permits were required for most people; this was especially onerous for women, who faced

stringent restrictions and so often took to side roads to avoid checkpoints.[17] With both people and goods, the Tokugawa allowed and even encouraged movement when it served their interests and imposed strict controls when it could undermine their power and authority.

The shogunate applied this logic not just to exchanges between Edo and the rest of the realm but also to Japan's relationships with the rest of the world. Tokugawa Japan was not isolated from or closed off to the outside world, as it is often described. Rather, the shogunate calibrated its approach to any given country based on an assessment of its threats and benefits. In this calculus, those countries perceived as a danger to the Tokugawa were treated with hostility and kept at arm's length. Especially worrisome to the shogunate were Western European countries with a strong Catholic missionary tradition like Spain and Portugal; their religion was seen as socially and politically subversive, so they were banned. Other places, viewed with some suspicion but not considered aggressive, were deemed acceptable trading partners. The Dutch, who had arrived in the early 1600s, were allowed to stay and serve as a conduit for European ideas and goods because they made it a point to highlight the potential gains from trade while downplaying their Christianity. They were, however, Christian nonetheless, so were restrained to a small manmade island off the coast of Nagasaki, far from Edo. Relations with China were approached with similar apprehension; the shogunate would not establish a formal diplomatic relationship with a country that insisted on displays of deference, but it did authorize trade with China through both Nagasaki and the southern domain of Satsuma. And the Chinese merchants in Nagasaki maintained a healthy trade in goods between Japan and Southeast Asian countries like Vietnam. With those places that demonstrated respect for Tokugawa authority and thus conferred legitimacy to the regime, the shogunate

didn't hesitate to pursue diplomatic and trade relationships. The Ryukyu Kingdom, or what is now Okinawa prefecture, dispatched diplomatic envoys to the shogunate and preserved its status as an active trading partner, contributing to the traffic of Chinese goods through Satsuma domain. Similarly, Korea sent major embassies of hundreds of people to Tokugawa Japan, bearing gifts and goodwill. The shogunate established a trading outpost in Pusan, and the domain of Tsushima handled the immense volume of trade between the two countries.[18] All told, even with its abundance of caution, the Tokugawa approach to foreign relations allowed European exchanges through the Dutch and trade relationships with much of Asia.

• ● •

Just before the retired shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu died in 1616, over twenty-five years after his official entrance into the dilapidated castle at Edo, he might have marveled at how his castle town was being transformed into his family's capital, the bastion of Tokugawa power. He might have sensed that Edo was well on its way to becoming the largest city in the realm, one that would eclipse the size of Kyoto and Osaka by the mid-1600s.[19] But it's hard to imagine that Ieyasu understood how various aspects of the city he helped mold would endure over the coming centuries – how topography, waterways, and the spiral layout would push against the imposition of a neat grid pattern onto the landscape; how the maze of houses would grow more dense; and how the building at the center of the city would remain an important political symbol. Even the farsighted Ieyasu couldn't possibly have foreseen how the hundreds of thousands of people who came to Edo would make the city their own, shaping its politics, fueling its economy, and creating its own popular culture, forever altering life in the shogun's capital.