Edo Castle as a Compilation

SENDA Yoshihiro

Most Japanese castles in the latter half of the Age of Civil Wars (mid-16th century) were made of earth, and they had various local features. However, the *Oda-Toyotomi* Line Castles which appeared in the Tokai and Kinki Districts had developed into castles of revolutionary structure, such as the use of stone walls and tiles. The *Oda-Toyotomi* Line Castle plan was then introduced into the castles of *Daimyō* (feudal lord) nationwide, as the *Oda-Toyotomi* Governments came to contain local *Daimyō* as their vassals in their unification of Japan.

It was the Tokugawa Shogunate that completed the unification of Japan at the beginning of the 17th century. The leading castle of the Tokugawa Shogunate was Edo Castle (Tokyo). Therefore, Edo Castle has been assumed to be the castle to which the *Oda-Toyotomi* Line Castle plan was developed to the maximum extent. However, since several reconstruction works were carried out to the castle, it has been difficult to know the initial plan. This being the case, the author examines in this paper the structure of the early Edo Castle, how it changed, and what can be learned from the plan of Edo Castle.

As a result, the following became clear. The Edo Castle of the *Keichō* era, which was completed around 1607, was built for maximum practicality in actual battles, and it was the strongest castle in Japan. Then, in the Edo Castle of the *Kan'ei* period, which was remodeled around 1629, military functions became somewhat weaker, and the *Tōshōgū*, a large shrine devoted to the ancestors of the Tokugawa, was established within the Castle. Furthermore, in the Edo Castle of the *Manji* period onwards, remodeled around 1659, militarily practical functions were lowered considerably, and the function of the castle as a palace greatly expanded.

Edo Castle was originally built as a castle for battles. However, as the society of the Edo period which was without wars, was stabilized, militarily practical functions were no longer required. Instead of military facilities, a grand palace for politics and ceremonies, and a shrine to show the rightness and tradition of political authority became necessary. The plan of the castle gates shows to best effect these transformations of Edo Castle. After the latter half of the 17th century, the gates were rebuilt as a symbol of the people living inside the gates, and of the authority of the place, rather than for their usefulness in actual battle.

The transformation of the plan of Edo Castle can be judged to be a reflection of the fact that the Edo Shogunate showed its authority by means of ceremonies, and not actual battles, while having military power at its back. Edo Castle was gradually transformed from a castle into a palace.