Composition of Space in Castles in the Sengoku Period

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Research on castles in Japan has seen the completion of the stage of the accumulation of information on their basic location and details about their remains, and has entered a new stage in which new historical research can be initiated on the basis of these results. In the past, it has been not uncommon for research into castles to be undertaken separately, despite the best efforts of the lay researchers who were largely concerned with above-ground observations for their private research, and those of the government researchers who have undertaken archeological research.

However, in order to advance research using materials from castle ruins it is necessary to translate the military implications from the above-ground observation of castles into historical materials and translate information on the inner composition of castles gained from excavations into historical materials, and then analyze these data accordingly. It is also important that excavation findings be used to paint a fresh picture of castles from the Middle Ages.

This paper presents specific examples that show how to interpret the composition of space within castles through castle building techniques, the relationship between the shape of a castle and its internal structure, and battles, on the basis of the internal structures of medium-sized and small castles that have come to light through excavations.