A Realistic Portrait Concerning the Daily Use of Trade Ceramics by Samurai Families in the Warring States Period with a Focus on the Mid-15th to Mid-16th Centuries

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As an archaeological means to explore the different time periods of tower houses during the Warring States period, this study examined aspects of the archaeological finds of the mid-15th to mid-16th centuries with a focus on dining tableware that had the shortest life cycle among trade ceramics, and clarified the composition for each archaeological site.

Firstly three sites dated to the end of the early 15th century were studied, and it was confirmed that the types of ware were very limited, followed by studies of the Suwama Kogyoji Temple site in Fukui Prefecture, which is a standard reference material of the 3rd quarter of the 15th century. Then, to indicate the transition of trade ceramics in the relevant period, 12 sites were examined, including Miyauchi Horiwaki in Hyogo Prefecture, Rinsenji Temple and Yamashina Honganji Temple in Kyoto Prefecture, Maruyatsu Castle in Chiba Prefecture, Shitokuji Temple in Niigata Prefecture, in addition to Michikajima Castle in Ehime Prefecture, and Ichijodani Asakura Clan Ruins in Fukui Prefecture, both of which were discussed in the previous paper.

As a result, it was found during the 15th century, celadon porcelain accounts for an overwhelming percentage of finds. In the settlement period, from the first appearance of blue and white porcelain in the mid-15th century to the 1st quarter of the 16th century, some quality ware were owned by the highest political class, and the inflow levels of this type of porcelain ware did not reach those of the mainstream of trade ceramics, but it can be considered that its existence was generally known throughout Japanese society.

It was not until the mid-1500s that increasing quantities of blue and white porcelain were found widely spread throughout Japanese society, but white porcelain dishes account for a higher percentage of finds; this clarified that the period in which blue and white porcelain accounts for the majority of such archaeological finds was extended to after the 1570s.

From the 16th century, the main type of ceramic ware overwhelmingly found, were white porcelain, and blue and white dishes; china bowls shifted from celadon to blue and white porcelain, but it can be considered that lacquered bowls were more commonly used.

Moreover, high-grade articles other than tableware were also examined, and the result shows that many articles had not been owned or passed on for generations as claimed, and it is assumed that
ware produced in China was introduced directly.

Key words: samurai family, trade ceramics, luxury items, Yamashina Honganji Temple, celadon porcelain, blue and white porcelain