

総括：山口県中世城館遺跡総合調査を終えて

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A General Survey on Medieval Castles in Yamaguchi Prefecture

“A Report on The General Survey on Medieval Castles in Yamaguchi Prefecture——Suo Province”, run in 2018

A castle has three elements. They are height of the location, buildings and water. It cannot exist without any one of them. If it stands on a mountain, soldiers holding the castle can take advantage of the upper location. They use all the arms such as arrows, stones and guns downward at the enemies. On the contrary, the lower attackers cannot use those arms against the earth's gravitation.

By the way, were there any horses in the mountain castles? I mean, were there any horses kept in the castle stables? I know a place called “Uma-semeba”, meaning “drill ground for horses”. There was the famous story of washing horses with polished rice in castles under siege. They pretend to have enough water because polished rice looked like water from far. Ulsan-jyo castle in Korea has the picture of the siege with the horses. Judging from these facts, there were the horses in mountain castles or they had the castles for the purpose of using horses.

Horses are the best weapons, so to speak, the best battle vehicles. Without the horses, it is impossible to win the battles in level grounds. To accommodate castles with the horses means to fight back in case of being besieged. Some castles do not have the horses, so they are for the short-time defense bases. They cannot be the attack bases. The horse needs a lot of water to drink or to wash the hooves. It is necessary to have a reservoir (a large pond for washing horses) like the modern castles have. It is essential to have a sufficient water supply.