

A Castle Town Anticipating Combat

Shōji Moat

Here at the Kitata Ohashi Line intersection is a moat called Funairigawa (“Boat Entrance River”), which was created to pass straight through Otemae Street. In surveys of this moat, many large holes were discovered, dug deep into the bottom of the original moat that had existed from the castle town’s creation; this holed moat is called a shōji moat. By intentionally making deep and shallow areas, they were one defense technique for reducing the force of enemies who crossed the moat. Many such examples have been discovered in eastern Japan, but very few in western Japan.

Until now, it was known that the castle town of Matsue had anticipated warfare, through militaristic design such as hook-shaped roads and seidamari (crowded areas to absorb oncoming force). However, it is now understood that provisions against outside invaders included even the bottom of moats. The castle town was built around 1607~1611, a tense period after the Battle of Sekigahara, when the Toyotomi family still existed in Osaka.