**HAA 18j: Japanese Architecture**

Lecture 12: Azuchi Castle

**Historical Eras**

Muromachi period (1333-1573)

Warring States or Sengoku period (1467-1568)

Momoyama (Azuchi-Momoyama) period (1568-1615)

Edo period (1600/1603/1615-1868)

**Three Unifiers**

Oda Nobunaga (1534-1582)

Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598)

Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616)

**Terms/Sites Mentioned**

*tenshu*: the tower or keep of a Japanese castle

Gifu Castle, late 1560s or 1570s

Battle of Inuyama (1567)

Battle of Nagashino (1575)

Pope Gregory XIII and the Azuchi Screens

Mingtang: ancient Chinese imperial shrine

**Azuchi Castle**

Located on the shores of Lake Biwa to the east of Kyoto, Azuchi Castle was built between 1576- 79 by the warlord **Oda Nobunaga**, only to be destroyed three years after its completion in 1582 by fire. Its tower or **tenshu** was designed by the master builder **Okabe Mataemon**, and its stone foundation constructed by master masons from the nearby village of **Anō**, who traditionally maintained the stone foundations of the mountain temple-complex Enryakuji. The cycles of sliding-door paintings that adorned its interior were created by the leading painter of the period, **Kano Eitoku** (1543-1590). Azuchi Castle is notable for establishing the basic typology of castle architecture in Japan.

**Elements of Azuchi Castle**

• wooden frame and flooring with lacquered beams and thick white plaster wattle-and-daub

walls

• stone wall foundation (stone-faced earth embankment or free-standing)

• complex roof structure with triangular ("plover") gables and cusped gables

• *tenshu*, the main keep or tower

**Cusped Gable**

• invented in the late 12th century, possibly in the design of palanquins

• reflects a sophisticated use of the carpenter’s square and trigonometric calculations

• marks the center of a building façade or gate as a portal of particular distinction

• rapidly spreads among daimyo lords during the early 17th century for the main gateways to

their urban residences