Research on OHARA Yugaku Viewed from the "Bugyoshō-hon": a Historical Study Based on "Yugaku Zensho" and "Yugaku Zenshu"

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This paper is an examination of historical documents based predominantly on primary sources. Most research on the subject of OHARA Yugaku, an agrarian leader who was active in the Toso region of Chiba Prefecture, has been based on "Yugaku Zensho" and "Yugaku Zenshu," collections of his works. However, as has been pointed out, this has been a factor in misconceptions and misinterpretations concerning the true facts surrounding the time of Yugaku's capture by Edo authorities.

The purpose of this paper is to shed even a little light on the problems faced since the publication of Yugaku's "Zensho" and "Zenshu" as source books by checking the works recorded in these "sacred books" that today, some 50 years after their publication, have a huge effect on research on Yugaku.

The manuscripts referred to as the "Bugyoshō-hon," that have over the years been taken up for discussion only rarely, have been rediscovered. The Ushiwata Village Incident, when agents of the Kanto authorities forced their way into Kaishinro, Yugaku's education center, occurred in April 1852, and after undergoing investigations by the Kanto authorities in Choshi Honjo village Yugaku and his disciples were sent to the magistrate's office, a higher authority. Then in October that same year Yugaku was summoned to the Edo capital. Evidential documents were submitted at the time of this summons. It is believed that Yugaku took these documents with him back to the village he returned to when the magistrate's decision was handed down in 1857. And it is a number of these documents that have been specially put together and handed down to the present day. The personal writings of Yugaku, which would have been recognized by Yugaku's disciples as most important documents, are collected in what is known as the Bugyoshō-hon. In other words, they are fundamental materials that form the core of Yugaku's beliefs.

Thus, the objective of this paper is to form a new understanding of the course of events surrounding Yugaku's capture by authorities from a present-day perspective through a re-examination of the nine volumes of the Bugyoshō-hon, which are also recorded in Yugaku Zensho and Yugaku Zenshu, and extant papers and documents.