

An Engagement with the Scholarship on Mitogaku, from the 1930s to the Present

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This article traces the development of research on Mitogaku from the prewar era up until the present. Mitogaku, a school of Tokugawa thought that focused on historical studies and ethics, and which played a role in disseminating *sonnō-jōi* thought during the Bakumatsu era, is controversial and has long been marginalized in the field of Tokugawa intellectual history. The scholarly trends, however, which moved from an idealistic treatment of Mitogaku figures in the pre-1945 era through an empty period of neglect and then to a gradual renaissance of work, have shed light on the complexities and contradictions within this tradition. In addition to Japanese-language scholarship, the article traces the parallel trajectory of English-language scholarship, and critically engages with the major arguments and assumptions of both.