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WOMEN AS SUBSTITUTE,
WOMEN AS COMPLEMENT:
TWO STORIES ON THE GENDERED SHINTO
PRIESTHOOD IN POSTWAR JAPAN

IMAP LECTURE (VIA ZOOM)

REGISTRATION REQUIRED: [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/GENDEREDSHINTO](https://tinyurl.com/GenderedShinto)

JANUARY 22, 2021
10:00-11:30 AM

JAPAN STANDARD TIME

This presentation uses archival and ethnographic data to examine two narratives about the gendered Shinto priesthood in postwar Japan—one produced by the umbrella organization Jinja Honcho (the Association of Shinto Shrines) and one produced by female priests themselves. Jinja Honcho justifies female priests' existence within the framework of (male) labor scarcity, wherein women are subpar substitutes who bridge a gap in a patrilineal shrine family. They emphasize women's inherent difference from men, which disqualifies them from serving male roles without modification. Female priests, on the other hand, agree that men and women are inherently different, but argue that gender complementarity allows them to perform roles men cannot. They adapt, reinterpret, or ignore Jinja Honcho's directives in order to carve out space for themselves, but often do so by reinscribing the logic of their marginalization.

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This event is part of a series titled "Reiterations of the Past: Negotiations through Practice," which is made possible by a Kyushu University Progress 100 Strategic Partnership Acceleration Grant. Please visit our website to learn more about upcoming events.