EMPEROR MEIJI’S ROLE IN SUSTAINING SHINTO

Dr. Michiko Urita
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Dr. Michiko Urita is a Japanese researcher of Shinto music. She received her PhD in 2017 in the study of ethnomusicology from the University of Washington, Seattle. She wrote her thesis about mikagura secret songs (hikyoku) performed at specific rituals held at the Imperial Palace Shrine and at Ise Grand Shrine.

Dr. Urita is now a research associate at the Japan Women’s University in Tokyo and will be an associate professor at the Kogakkan University at Ise, Mie prefecture in April 2019.

Mr. Katsumasa succeeded the Miyake line, the clan of hereditary Shinto priests of Okayama prefecture. Mr. Miyake holds the second highest rank of a Shinto priest (meikai) and currently serves as Negi (deputy chief priest) of the ancient Himuro shrine (氷室神社) of Tenri in Nara prefecture, whose history goes back to the 5th century. He also serves at Ominato shrine (大和神社) in Nara, two thousand years old.

Mr. Miyake Katsumasa will conduct a short demonstration of a ceremony for divine protection and blessing of a guardian deity of land. The demonstration includes offering sake to a deity and reciting norito (ritual text). Mr. Miyake will conduct the demonstration wearing a traditional costume for Shinto priests, specially produced for him by a Kyoto family who had prepared the costumes for the enthronement ceremonies of the current emperor.

A demonstration of Shinto ceremony by Mr. Katsumasa Miyake

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