



# Shamanic practices in contemporary Japan: Local habits and national fascination

a virtual lecture by **Marianna Zanetta**

Contemporary Japan still cherishes a significant variety of the so-called *minkan fusha*, popular religions practitioners (often translated with the term “shaman”) who work as mediators between the world of the living and the dimension of the sacred. They are mainly women, and their role went through some significant transformations in the course of the last three centuries. Today, these shamans (heiresses of older traditions) are facing different challenges, while their profession is evolving to answer the new needs and questions of their clients. This talk explores the transformative and inventive process of these practices, and how in today’s Japan *minkan fusha* are regarded in the local communities and at a national level.



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**Marianna Zanetta** is an independent researcher at the University of Turin (Dept. Cultures, Politics and Society) and a visiting scholar at Hosei Daigaku (International studies). She obtained her PhD in 2016 at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (Paris Sorbonne) in co-tutoring with the University of Turin, in Religious Anthropology and Far Eastern Studies. The PhD project focused mainly on the *itako* practices of northeast Japan, and their connection with family and ancestors. Today, she is working on two different areas: funeral and ritual practices in contemporary Japan, and the phenomenon of *hikikomori* in a comparative perspective with the Italian situation.