It’s a (Gentle)Men’s World
Gendered Communities within Tenjin Matsuri
A hybrid u:Japan lecture by Carmen Săpunaru Tămaş

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https://japanologie.univie.ac.at/ujapanlectures
This lecture is a brief overview of one of Japan’s three greatest festivals, Tenjin Matsuri, from the perspective of the first scholar/non-Japanese national/female who was allowed to attend all the annual events (from organizational meetings and formal shrine visits to budget reviews and drinking parties) of Otori Mikoshi Group. Tenjin Matsuri is supported by 24 active groups (kô), but the most significant ones are exclusively male: Gohoren Kô, Otori Mikoshi Kô, Taiko Naka Kô. Tenjin Kô is one of the six groups who make the major decisions related to the festival, they do have numerous female members, but those members, however, do not become kômoto (group leaders). This presentation will focus on the role each traditional gender plays in the management and performance of the festival, in an attempt to provide a better understanding of the social and sacred mechanisms at play, as well as the changes (if any) that have occurred in contemporary society.