

*PPJS Presents*  
*Bandits and Woodsmen:*  
*Exploring Subaltern Governance in Early Medieval Japan*  
May 5, 2023 4:00-6:00 PDT ZOOM

*Professor Morten Oxenboell, Indiana University*

The voices of medieval Japanese peasants, fishermen, woodsmen and other provincial residents are only rarely encountered in early medieval Japanese sources since the daily management of the countryside rarely was of much concern for central powers. However, their silence belies their activism and organizational developments, and local communities were often left to develop autonomous institutions to manage their own safety and prosperity. Through wars and peace, rural communities thus had to operate within changing judiciary and political landscapes, often without effective protection by the state and centralized law, yet the general absence of centrally appointed law enforcement agents did not result in rampant violence or lawless chaos. In this workshop, we will discuss how bandit narratives can help us tease out some of the hidden voices of the rural population and 'reconstruct' village governance systems and local judiciary processes.



For details, contact: Prof. J. Piggott, Project for Premodern Japan Studies, USC  
[joanrp@usc.edu](mailto:joanrp@usc.edu)