

# Beyond Hypermobility : Skilled Migration, Urban Peripheries, and the Conditions of Staying in Japan

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**Venue:** Room 430, Center for Northeast Asian Studies, Tohoku University; online via Zoom (Hybrid)

Scholarship on Japan predominantly examines mobility in terms of government policy, entry and integration, focusing either on mobility in global cities or on narratives of rural revitalization. Staying – or rather, remigration – is treated as an inevitable or intended conclusion. This is particularly striking in a context of demographic ageing and population decline, where the ability to attract and retain residents has become an important economic and demographic concern. Yet urban environments in which staying is negotiated – including everyday infrastructures, social spaces, and the conditions of urban life – remain underdeveloped.

This presentation introduces a research project that conceptualises staying as a dynamically produced social and spatial condition, shaped by everyday encounters with urban spaces, institutions, and social relations. The project considers internationally mobile professionals within the broader dynamics of mobility, exclusion, and attachment. Sendai serves as a strategic case: as a designated major city with significant administrative functions and regional centrality, yet lacking the concentrated migrant infrastructures of metropolitan centres, it offers critical insight into how staying is negotiated in secondary urban contexts. Methodologically, the project takes an interdisciplinary urban ethnographic approach, foregrounding spatial and visual practices in order to analyse 'staying' as an urban condition rather than an individual achievement.

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