



Keynote 2

## Deconstructing the Rural-Urban Divide in Post-growth Japan: Emerging Paradigm Shifts

(ポスト成長期の日本における地方と都市の格差の解体-パラダイムシフトの発生)

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has enforced widespread changes that were already in the making well before 2019. Novel lifestyles and modes of working have been on the increase and rural areas that were previously seen as stagnant backwaters have been perceived as sites of experimentation. Hence, more young individuals have recently been interested in rural moves, and the line between short-term visit, tourism and lifestyle migration is more and more blurred. Hopes for a better work-life-balance coexist with self-exploitation, degrowth and competition all feature in rural communities. I will explore new forms of locality, tourism and entrepreneurship presented in my recent book *Urban Migrants in Rural Japan: Between Agency and Anomie in a post-growth Society* (SUNY Press 2020) and rethink conventional paradigms with regard to mobility, work and leisure in late-capitalist neoliberal regimes. What future awaits rural areas and its communities?



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Susanne Klien is Associate Professor at the Modern Japanese Studies Program, Hokkaido University. Her main research interests include demographic change and alternative forms of living and working in post-growth Japan, changing local traditions and rituals and transnational mobility. Her recent book *Urban Migrants in Rural Japan: Between Agency and Anomie in a Post-growth Society* (SUNY Press 2020) was awarded the 2020 CHOICE Outstanding Academic Title.

