

“State Violence and Technologies of Manipulation: North Korea and the Mediatized Voice of Victims”

Thursday 20th July 2017

13.15-14.45 (followed by coffee reception)

East Campus, Mercury Hall (Mercury Tower, level 7)

What is North Korea’s response to allegations about its rights abuses? Did the UN Commission of Inquiry Report of 2014 – which identified the North Korean state as responsible at the highest level for crimes against humanity – provoke any change in the way the state engages rights? To answer these questions, my talk draws on a huge corpus of web-scraped data, both video and print, from North Korea’s online media to examine domestic coverage of rights and international engagement on the topic. In this talk, I take you on a journey into the heady landscape of North Korea’s response to the UN report: from emotional news reportage, to defector-denouncing documentaries, to street demos, to interviews with the man-on-the-street (and one woman), to citizen-interviews with Will Ripley of CNN. The talk concludes by showing, discursively and forensically, the North Korean state as ventriloquist throwing its interpretation of human rights, and the UN rights report, into the mouths of citizens.

Sandra Fahy (Sophia University) earned her PhD in Anthropology from the School of Oriental and African Studies (UK) in 2009. She is currently Associate Professor of Anthropology in the Faculty of Liberal Arts, at Sophia University, where she teaches courses on Korean Studies, Human Rights, Visual and Discourse Research Methods, and Medical and Linguistic Anthropology. Fahy’s research has focused on structural violence and collective social suffering with particular reference to North Korea, and by extension South Korea, Japan and China. Her publications include: *Marching through Suffering: Loss and Survival in North Korea*. New York: Columbia University Press (2015), peer review articles in *Anthropology Today*; *Food, Culture and Society: an interdisciplinary journal* among others. Her second book *Human Rights and North Korea* is under contract with Columbia University Press.

