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The Centre for Korean Research is pleased to present:

“Discourses and Networks of North Korean Defector-Activists”



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3:30-5:00 pm

Room #120, C.K. Choi Building
1855 West Mall

Abstract: The article aims to explain the evolutionary patterns of international discourses on North Korean human rights and the roles of ‘defector-activists’ played in the process. It analyses how individuals (North Koreans) build their professional networks in the new political environment (in South Korea) and connect with other international state- and non-state actors to constitute and reconstitute their public discourses (on North Korean human rights). It is doing so by applying qualitative content analyses of 327 English and Korean text, audio and video materials, produced in 1998-2015 from a complexity perspective. The author focuses on the five most active North Korean defector-activists internationally, namely, Kang Chol Hwan, Shin Dong Hyuk, Kim Joo Il, Park Ji Hyun and Park Yeon Mi, and demonstrates how their respective networks have grown over the past decade.

Bio: Jiyoung Song is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the Singapore Management University, Research Fellow/Director of Migration and Border Policy at Lowy Institute for International Policy in Sydney, and Global Ethics Fellow of the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs in New York. Prior to her current positions, Jiyoung was a Lecturer at the National University of Singapore, Associate Fellow of Chatham House (Royal Institute of International Affairs, London), UN Consultant for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (Geneva), Post-doc Researcher at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society of the University of Oxford and Academic Supervisor at the Department of Politics of the University of Cambridge. She holds a PhD in Politics and International Studies (Cambridge, UK), LL.M in Human Rights (Hong Kong), and BS in Mathematics (Seoul, Korea). Her recent publications include *The History of Human Rights Society in Singapore, 1965-2015* (London: Routledge, forthcoming in 2016), *Irregular Migration and Human Security in East Asia* (London: Routledge, 2014), *Human Rights Discourse in North Korea: Post-colonial, Marxist and Confucian Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2010), “‘Smuggled Refugees’: the social construction of North Korean migration,” *International Migration* (2013). Jiyoung’s current research focuses on migration and human rights in East (South and North) Asia, using complexity sciences.