

“Fieldwork” North Korea: Observations of daily life on the ground inside the country 北朝鮮での「フィールドワーク」現場で観察する日常生活

Emma Campbell

Summary

This paper uses observations collected “on the ground” inside North Korea to argue that everyday life matters when researching North Korea and that one method of carrying out such research is to travel there as a tourist.

Keywords

North Korea, South Korea, DPRK, daily life politics, research methods.

Introduction

Looking out from my guesthouse window in Ch’ilbosan, the beautiful mountain region in the Northeast of North Korea¹, I watch a mother and father walk down a country road, each holding a hand of their small son and listening intently to his excited conversation. The tight grip with which the parents hold onto the little boy’s hands reminds me that in a few years’ time he will be leaving his family for mandatory national service of up to eight years in North Korea’s army². The family’s tanned skin, small frames and simple clothes betray their tough rural life in North Korea. The boy looks around ten or eleven, but North Korean children often appear much younger than their actual age, their physical development held back by chronic malnutrition and poor sanitation.

This family scene, witnessed during a recent visit to North Korea reminds us of the daily life that carries on inside a country better known for its bizarre leadership and nuclear programme. It also gives rise to a puzzling

question: When researching the lives of the people of North Korea, such as this family, can anything really be learned by travelling to the country? This paper describes observations of everyday life collected “on-the-ground” inside North Korea that help provide an answer to that question. It argues that everyday life matters when researching North Korea and that one method of carrying out such research, although not perfect, is to travel there as a tourist. This paper also shows how knowledge of the North Korean system and language can help to minimise or even neutralise the effect of state attempts to provide a particular image of the country and its people. Within that context, making on-the-ground observation is a useful methodological tool for the collection of data about this relatively closed nation.



Guest house in Ch’ilbosan

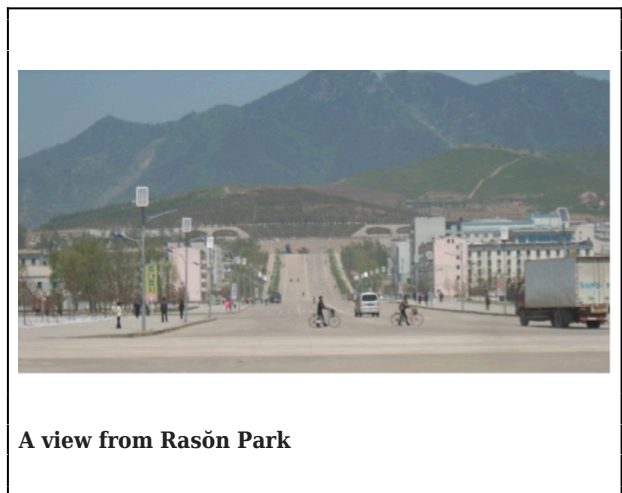
I observed this family in 2013 when I travelled

as part of a group to North Korea with the “Pyongyang Project”, an NGO that promotes exchange with the country and funds scholarships for North Korean students to study in Chinese universities. The 6-day “Program on Economic Development and Cross Border Interaction³” involved visits through cities and towns in the Northeast of the country including Rajin-Sŏnbong, T’umŏn, Kyŏngsŏng and Ch’ŏngjin. The itinerary took the group to a few more factories than normal, but it otherwise resembled two previous trips that I had made to North Korea as a tourist in 1997 and 2010 (on those occasions to P’yŏngyang and Kaesŏng). This time, however, I felt more prepared - my Korean was more fluent, I had additional years of Korea-focused research during a PhD and postdoctoral fellowship, and I had spent a year as a field worker in Africa with the charity Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) where I had honed the skill of “reading between the lines”.

Aside from these visits to North Korea, I have lived for a number of years in China and Korea and spent time on the China-North Korean border in both Dandong and Yanji. Using Korean and Chinese, I have been able to meet and interact with a variety of North Koreans, South Koreans, Chinese and Chinese-Koreans living in China, North Korea and South Korea. In these interactions it is the details of daily lives that have proved the most informative and insightful for me in my research and analysis and in critiquing the existing literature that informs current academic and policy discussion on North Korea. Furthermore, everyday life is too often neglected in discussion of North Korea, for example in the human rights literature or in the formulation of international policy toward the country, where the wellbeing of the general population should be of critical concern but is frequently overlooked. One of the aims of this article, therefore, is to contribute to the small and often ignored body of literature that tries to approach broader discussions of policy toward North Korea from

the perspective of its people and their lives, rather than from the often abstract and high-handed position of international politics and a small and non-representative elite⁴. Developing a better understanding of everyday life in North Korea is necessary to ensure that policy making toward the country is appropriate and effective and does not overly disadvantage the general population in efforts to curtail the activities of the elite.

This may seem an obvious point, but the process of researching daily life in North Korea is fraught with methodological difficulties that have led to the neglect of these aspects in academic research and policy formation. These methodological challenges can be summarised in two basic research questions: first, is travel to North Korea ethical? And, second, if it is ethical, can anything be learned given that the opportunities for researchers and journalists to travel to North Korea are normally limited to supervised and restrictive tours?



This paper seeks to address the second question. There is value, however, in briefly highlighting the ongoing debate on the ethics of travel to North Korea as a tourist or “engager”. This debate has grown in importance in light of projects such as the Kŭmgang mountain resort and as tourism from the “West” and China has increased⁵. This looks set to further expand - travelling through

North Korea there is an observable boom in construction projects that are expanding the country's tourist infrastructure. Moreover, with some limited exceptions, such as those who have worked inside the country as diplomats, aid workers or teachers (whose writing is anyway restricted), most researchers will have to enter North Korea as a tourist. A number of commentators challenge the ethics of travel to the country. Brian Myers has suggested that tourism to North Korea serves only to strengthen the hand of the regime. In making this argument, he claims that research on North Korea which requires access to the country, for example to study agriculture, tends in its analysis to be less critical and more diplomatic than research that can rely upon sources accessible outside the country, such as North Korean literature⁶. A number of North Korean defectors have also expressed their opposition to tourism to the country in its current controlled form suggesting that it extends the life of the North Korean regime, is a means for the government to make money, and does not expose North Koreans to information from outside because of the limited interactions between tourists and the general population⁷. Some commentators also oppose those who travel to North Korea for "engagement" activities. They argue that individual engagement in North Korea is of limited or no use due to the totalitarian nature of the regime⁸. Others, however, encourage travel to the country for its potentially subversive effects. Joo Sung-ha, the North Korean exile and a Tong-A Ilbo journalist, have said that "North Koreans pick up a lot from tourists" and that tourism "will help them realise how, under Kim Jong-Un, they are behind the world from both political and economic perspectives"⁹. Some exiles have expressed qualified support for tourism if it "enables direct contact with North Korean people and facilitates the arrival of outside news"¹⁰. This debate is certainly not settled. For my part, as a researcher of the Korean peninsula who has Chinese and Korean

language skills, I have made the decision to travel to the country with the hope of using the information collected to make a small contribution to inform debate and policy making on the country.



Rollerblading in Ch'ŏngjin

The main question that this essay seeks to answer is whether, once a researcher who travels to North Korea can learn anything of value as a tourist on tours that are necessarily accompanied and managed by trusted servants of the state. Certainly, the nature of such trips gives rise to very serious methodological challenges. Traditional research methods such as interviews or surveys inside the country are impossible. Free access to interview subjects is unlikely and even when discussion is possible visitors often self-censor, fearful of placing interlocutors in uncomfortable or unsafe situations. These methodological difficulties, however, are not unique to research on North Korea and interview techniques, the use of contextual data, and care in interpreting responses can yield valuable information from seemingly opaque, mundane or controlled interactions. Further, trips to North Korea no longer take place in a complete information vacuum, thus making it more difficult for the regime to manipulate the experiences of those

visitors who have a solid grasp of the available literature on the country. The quality of data that can be collected inside the country is also improving. As more tour companies run trips into North Korea, the market becomes more competitive. This has pushed down prices, extended the lengths of itineraries and forced organisations to differentiate their products with offerings that provide original and new experiences of the country. My trip, for example, was designed specifically for scholars of North Korea and had an emphasis on economic and international exchange. It included trips to a market, visits to factories, a hair cut in a local salon, one night in a 'homestay' (unaccompanied by guides), briefings by eminent Chinese academics and meetings with North Korean students and their accompanying professor in China. There were also multiple opportunities to interact with our guides, people in parks, on the street and at tourist sites without the usual restrictions placed upon visitors who could speak Korean.

Indeed, many scholars working on North Korea have shown that, despite the restrictive nature of travel or limited access to places and events, valuable information can be discerned and collected. Tessa Morris-Suzuki in her illuminating book *To the Diamond Mountains: A Hundred Year Journey through China and Korea* gives the reader an insight into North Korea by interweaving her experiences during a visit to the country with the memoirs of Emily Kemp, a British traveller in the early 1900s who travelled through the Japanese-occupied peninsula. Morris-Suzuki writes that "in a country like North Korea, there are some things that no amount of careful guiding can conceal - chance encounters, scenes glimpsed from train and car windows or down narrow back streets...Sometimes, information learnt outside the country, when put together with scenes before our eyes, can help to fill missing parts of the picture"¹¹. Rüdiger Frank in his fascinating analysis of the Arirang Mass Games argues for the value of investigating all types of

information and data relating to North Korea, including its propaganda. On the mass games specifically he posits "I do not argue that one single Arirang performance explains all aspects of the North Korea's system and its policies. But it provides another piece to this puzzle...we cannot afford not to use whatever chance we have to learn [about North Korea]". He also argues for the need in certain cases to be present in North Korea to collect data, pointing out that it was necessary to attend the games to obtain a complete recording of the event given that only edited versions were normally available¹². In addition to Frank and Morris-Suzuki, other scholars who have used observations made during visits to North Korea in their writing on the country include Aidan Foster-Carter, Peter Hayes, Andrei Lankov and, despite his criticism of tourism to the country, Brian Myers. Others including Hazel Smith, Andrew Natsios, James Hoare and Andrei Ibrahim have drawn upon their experiences working inside North Korea - often under restrictive conditions - to inform their scholarship. The work of all these scholars forms a credible and authoritative part of the literature on contemporary North Korea. As highlighted by Frank, observations inside the country contribute one (sometimes very) small piece of the puzzle, but these pieces help to build a broader picture of North Korean politics and society.

These insights - "pieces of the puzzle" - are particularly important for the type of analysis underpinning this article. This analysis uses an ethnographic approach to understanding political and social change. In looking at broader political issues and policy from the perspective of daily life, "political ethnography" is engaged as methodology. Ethnography is useful in political science research on North Korea because many methods used in this field, such as survey data, economic statistics or pooled expert opinions might "*register the occurrence of change; [but] they do not specify the mechanism of change*". Understanding

mechanisms of change is essential to the formulation of policy that aims to encourage reform and opening inside North Korea and anyway, in the case of North Korea, survey data and economic statistics are often difficult to collect or are unreliable. Furthermore, political ethnography and understanding of micro-level activity is essential to any macro-level analysis, because, “it is, after all the reproduction and transformation of daily lives that are observable, not ‘structural change’”¹³. Understanding daily life at individual level and at the collective level has been used by many scholars, such as Benedict Kerkvliet, who terms it “everyday politics”¹⁴, as a framework for analyzing and understanding social and political events, change and survival¹⁵. Thus, in the case of North Korea where there is a keen international interest in social, political and economic change, this framework for analysis should be considered valuable for contributing to understanding of the country.

This paper will describe the on-the-ground observations of daily life made during the trip to North Korea mentioned above. The paper is divided into three sections. In the first part, I note the conspicuous presence of China in daily life through imported goods, Chinese visitors and even media that give North Koreans in their daily lives a glimpse into a potentially different existence. In the second part, I present my observations on the role of propaganda and politics in daily life and in the final section I discuss my observations on quality of life for the general population in the Northeast of the country. In the conclusion, I suggest some areas for further research and some broader policy implications based on what I witnessed during my visit.

The conspicuousness of China’s modernity in daily life

The trip to North Korea began in the far North-eastern city and Special Economic Zone (SEZ) of Rajin-Sŏnbong (Rasŏn). This SEZ aims to

capitalize on its location close to Russia, China and Japan, providing as it does a year-round accessible port (it does not freeze in winter) and available cheap labour¹⁶. There are eight hotels, a Japanese-run taxi service and multiple restaurants open to foreigners. Many buildings are relatively well lit in the evening (compared to other North Korean towns), suggesting better electricity provision than elsewhere in the country. There was also evidence of solar power usage - street lights appeared to use stored solar power and solar panels were visible on balconies of many homes. In this relatively vibrant region of North Korea there are said to be 700 workers from Russia working in the SEZ on projects that include the expansion of the city’s port facilities and it was common to see Caucasian men walking unaccompanied on the streets of Rasŏn¹⁷.



City’s port facilities

The Chinese presence is even larger than the Russian one, and can be seen in the number of Chinese-registered trucks and cars; in factories equipped with new Chinese equipment; in a new Chinese foreign exchange bank; in minibuses full of Chinese tourists; and in the number of Chinese business people. As of 2010, over 70 percent of the foreign business in Rasŏn is Chinese¹⁸. At border crossings and at

markets, at internal checkpoints and at hotels, Chinese traders were numerous and generally happy to discuss their business with me. They were involved in activities including seafood processing, garment manufacturing, fishing (eight Chinese squid boats were docked in the Rasŏn port at the time of visiting), construction and shoe manufacturing. The large-scale presence of Chinese business suggests that there are many commercially-viable opportunities for Chinese operators in North Korea. When I asked one Chinese businessman (who said he processed fish and seafood in the country) whether he was making money, he replied rather bemused 'Of course! Why else would I be here!'



Brightly dressed children giving us an impromptu performance in the park

There were also many Chinese tourists, some of whom were not averse to sharing their low opinion of their travel experience in North Korea, often in front of (Chinese-speaking) North Korean guides. They complained about the quality of accommodation, poor hygiene standards, inflated costs and the lack of things to do and buy. This constant and open criticism made me wonder what North Koreans thought

of their Chinese neighbours and when I asked a guide whether he preferred hosting Western or Chinese tour groups I was not surprised to hear that he preferred Western groups – the Chinese were too *mafan* (troublesome), he replied to me in Chinese, “they go and do their own thing and don’t listen to their guides”. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese visitors travel to North Korea each year¹⁹ so the guide’s comment left me with the ironic image of these troublesome tourists spreading ideas of freedom and market economics at a time when the West was working hard to isolate the country.

The Chinese visitors are easy to tell apart from the general North Korean population. Not only is the Korean Workers’ Party badge missing from their jackets, but they are generally better dressed and bigger. The relative wealth of the Chinese is apparent not least because of their spending in places such as markets and casinos. The interaction with these richer neighbours must also reinforce the other imagery and experiences that remind North Koreans in their daily life of the relative wealth of China. On two occasions I encountered North Koreans watching Chinese DVDs, including one being played on a television set visible to the general public coming in and out of a hair salon. This DVD was an episode from a detective series, set in a major Chinese city, and showing the full cosmopolitanism and modernity of contemporary China with its skyscrapers, traffic, sophisticated restaurants and shops.

Of course, interactions with Chinese tourists constitute part of daily life for North Koreans who live in the key tourist cities and regions. Given the apparent efforts to grow tourism from China to North Korea, such interactions are likely to increase. Entering northeast Korea using the Chinese-constructed road from the Korean border post of Wŏnjŏng and moving onwards to other cities and towns in the Northeast region there is a visible construction boom with many tourist infrastructure projects

underway. These included a spa facility in Kyōngsōng and a resort hotel near the town of T'umōn. In addition, hotel construction was visible in the Ch'ilbo mountain region with plans displayed for ski resorts and other tourist facilities across this spectacular national park. These tourist facilities were all said to be aimed at the growing Chinese market²⁰. Chinese tourists dominate North Korea's nascent tourism sector - it is estimated that in 2012 around 10,000 Chinese tourists travelled to North Korea compared to only 4,000 Western visitors²¹.

workbooks were filled with notes and those called upon to answer questions had excellent Chinese language skills. Our guides told us that it was also common for people to teach themselves Chinese at home using textbooks available for purchase in markets (one of our own guides said that he had learned Chinese this way). I also encountered a number of rural children who told me they were learning Chinese at school, although admittedly some young girls we met on the street in Ch'ōngjin were much more interested in showing me their English language skills than their Chinese!



Chinese language class in Ch'ōngjin library

Aside from language, the presence of “China” in everyday life through the ubiquity of Chinese-made consumer goods is overwhelming²². The presence of Chinese goods is not unique to North Korea, but it does demonstrate how the once-closed North Korea has been drawn into the globalised system of trade in which China is a central player. Chinese-made mobile phones are pervasive in Rasōn as are women's fashion items including hair clips, make-up and jewellery, these latter also imported from China. Children are dressed in brightly coloured Chinese-made clothes, usually emblazoned with cute cartoon characters or carrying Western logos such as Super Mario, Adidas or Nike.

An observation that requires further inquiry is the apparent growing Chinese language proficiency among the general North Korean population. Without exception, every guide that I met in 2010 and 2013 was highly proficient in Chinese, including guides who had specialised in European languages. Fluency in Chinese among waitresses, shop assistants and officials, moreover, indicated the importance of Chinese language. On a visit to the city library in Ch'ōngjin, I attended an advanced Chinese language class, with approximately 100 students of mixed gender and age. Whether this was “daily life” or part of a show for us visitors is uncertain. However, the students'



A child shows off his singing skills and Super Mario jacket in Rajin-Sŏnbong

The accoutrements for a variety of leisure activities such as badminton, in-line skating, gardening and even pet rearing are available in the cities of Rasŏn and Ch'ŏngjin. Most of these products are imported from China. The Rajin-Sŏnbong central market is a showcase of China's trade with North Korea. It consists of two huge indoor halls, a large outside sales area as well as stalls set up in the streets around the market. Run by a Chinese firm, it has 54,000 square feet of floor space with plans to further extend this²³. The largest of the halls is full of consumer items - clothing, sports equipment, household items, cosmetics, shoes and electronic equipment - the overwhelming majority of which were imported from China. The other hall and the stalls in the adjacent outside sales area had locally made or grown food items as well as imported fruit and vegetables. This market and the pervasive presence of Chinese-manufactured goods everywhere in North Korea - from the furniture in our hotels to mobile telephones, from children's clothes to plastic buckets -

demonstrate the importance of Chinese trade in enhancing the quality of everyday life for many North Koreans. And the presence of Chinese goods, business people, tourists and television programs emphasises the limits of North Korean life and provides for the North Korean population through their daily lives, a glimpse into a different but obtainable reality.

Observations on the role of propaganda and politics in daily life in North Korea

As evidenced by its continued hold on power, the North Korean regime has successfully maintained its authority by controlling the lives of its population and suppressing dissent²⁴. However, as became clear in the accounts of life in former socialist nations of the Eastern-bloc, even under highly repressive conditions there exists space for individual expression and dissent²⁵. At the same time, evidence of discord inside North Korea is beginning to emerge from undercover reporting and interviews with refugees²⁶. When travelling in North Korea it was possible to observe authoritarianism in operation: repression in the form of controls around our movement; fear of speaking frankly and causing difficulties for our interlocutors; the cult of personality; ubiquitous ideological propaganda; and evidence of some "authentic" support for the regime based in political nationalism. But challenging and contradicting these experiences I encountered curiosity toward life outside of the country and signs of changing social relations and organization that may challenge the regime's social control and order. I also observed actions that hinted at the presence of political non-conformity.

It is clear that North Korea maintains the cult of personality under the new leadership. This was underlined by the propaganda displays that we passed during our travels. Even in the very rural areas we saw that, without exception, the last syllable "Il" of President Kim Jong Il had been replaced on all signage with the "Un" of his son and heir as president, Kim

Jong Un.



“Thank you General Kim Jong Un” at the entrance to a kindergarten in Ch’ŏngjin

A second image ubiquitous in the North’s propaganda was the Ŭnha-3 rocket. This was successfully test fired in December 2012 purportedly to launch the civilian Kwangmyŏngsŏng-3 satellite, but suspected to have been developed for military purposes. The launch of the rocket - even for its purported use - was in violation of current UN Security Council resolutions against North Korea. It attracted international condemnation and resulted in unanimous support in the UN Security Council for additional sanctions against North Korea. The Ŭnha-3 image was displayed in propaganda posters beside rural roadsides, walls of kindergartens and in the centre of towns. Its imagery was used alongside slogans that included “strong and prosperous nation”, “defend the country until death” and “a space-age nation”. It was interesting that among our North Korean interlocutors, the Ŭnha-3 rocket inspired immense pride and excitement.



Ŭnha-3 painting on the wall of a kindergarten in Ch’ŏngjin

The ability of the regime to inspire (or manipulate) nationalist sentiment was also in evidence during visits to factories in Rajin-Sŏnbong. We saw that “U.S. sanctions levelled against North Korea” were blamed by guides for silent production lines and empty factory floors. In factories that were operating, clothes manufactured in North Korea were labelled “made in China” thus giving credence to the claim of the North Korean government that the international community is preventing them from finding legitimate means of developing its economy, although there are no UN sanctions that directly prevent the export of manufactured goods. And there was also evidence of the manipulation of engagement efforts for domestic propaganda purposes. At the Ch’ŏngjin library we were shown foreign language books apparently gifted to Kim Jong Il by UNESCO, that he was said to have passed to the library “for use by the people of Ch’ŏngjin”.

But observing daily life in North Korea revealed

hints of political non-conformism. On the streets of Rasŏn in a city centre square and in a park, large television screens displayed programmes from the state television channel as people walked by. The content included news, documentaries and patriotic songs – political propaganda with ubiquitous images of the Kim family – which attracted little attention from those passers-by. In the park, children skated, families chatted over picnics and couples strolled together ignoring the screens. In the city centre, the broadcasts appeared to be a mere backdrop to peoples’ daily activities. One evening, however, a cartoon was broadcast on the city centre screen. Even under a light drizzle, schoolchildren crouched down and huddled together to watch, families stopped to take in the show and even adults took a rest or smoked a cigarette as they enjoyed some light entertainment. This cartoon had captured the attention of the majority of those in the square. As soon as the cartoon ended, however, and the evening news broadcast began, people immediately turned away from the screen and continued with their activities. I felt that it was a small and unconscious political statement – certainly no anti-government demonstration – but it hinted at the existence of dissent and non-conformity. People had not needed to feign interest in the government and its propaganda in public and that was an experience contrary to what I had expected despite being well versed in the literature on North Korea.

There were more telling signs of non-conformity in the face of authority. In Rasŏn young children carefully moved among the crowds in the market or approached foreigners when they were separated from their guides. Apparently unafraid of our guides who were familiar with them and their exploits, these children tried to communicate in Russian with the Europeans in our group. They showed their experience of negotiating and signalling for “tips” from visitors such as the Russians and Chinese who freely moved around the city. The quick movements of some of the children in the

market suggested that they may have been looking for more illicit opportunities to relieve North Korean and foreign shoppers of their money. We witnessed these children (often the same faces) on a number of occasions as they waited around areas popular with Russian, Chinese and other foreigners. They demonstrated a low-level political defiance – begging (and possibly stealing) from foreigners – and were without obvious fear in the face of official authority (in the form of our guides).



Alongside the small signs of political apathy and defiance in North Korea, travellers can encounter elements of the population enthusiastic to learn about “the outside”. It was possible to meet and talk to a variety of people. These include those most commonly in contact with tourists but also women working in markets, parents sitting in the audience at a school festival, fishermen, school children, passers-by in city and rural areas, general workers and North Korean tourist groups on holiday in the Ch’ilbosan area. Conversations were not always in the presence of guides and people were particularly interested in the topic of social norms and daily life in other countries such as prices of goods and services, marriageable age and women’s lives and

responsibilities. While conscious not to cause offence or endanger my interlocutors or guides, I did explain briefly that I had lived in South Korea, had learned the Korean language there and had even dated a South Korean man. This fact inspired delight and fascination among the women that I conversed with and led to many questions about intercultural experiences and relationships.



The Mass Games, Rajin-Sŏnbong style

Throughout these interactions, the normal human traits of embarrassment, curiosity, humour and empathy were clearly visible and a particularly interesting demonstration of these traits relates to a schools event to celebrate UN Children’s Day that took place in the main stadium of Rasŏn. At this UN Children’s Day celebration, a public holiday in North Korea, the audience enjoyed watching traditional sports day games that included tug of war and three-legged races. One less traditional event involved a relay race in which children holding a wooden replica rifle ran toward wooden cut-out images of U.S. and Japanese soldiers. The cut-outs had hinged heads that were knocked down by each child using their wooden rifle before they returned to the start to hand the rifle to the next child in their team. A teacher would replace the unfortunate soldier’s head to the upright position in time for the next child to launch their attack. Along with other

foreigners, I was watching the games surrounded by an audience of local residents and families of the children that were participating. It was a friendly crowd who we had got to know through conversation and the sharing of ice creams and coffee. However, as the relay race continued there was a palpable sense of embarrassment among our neighbours at the targeting by children of foreigners’ images, taking place in front of foreign visitors. When some Canadians jokingly explained that they were happy to see the heads of U.S. soldiers knocked down (and following an explanation of the competition between the two neighbouring countries), there was laughter and an easing of the atmosphere. A similar experience occurred when our guide showed acute embarrassment as he translated a particularly vicious and dramatic anti-U.S. slogan from a propaganda poster. The incidents that I report here reinforce the fact that even inside North Korea it is possible to engage at a personal level with ordinary North Koreans and the normal humanity, empathy and mutual interest commonly visible in personal interactions elsewhere is equally common when visiting and meeting people in North Korea.

A further socio-political phenomenon observable during travel in North Korea is the changing nature of social relations that exposes possible fissures within the country’s population. When visiting a Rajin-Sŏnbong factory we saw a sign posted on the wall which read *“tongchi tongmulako pulŭpsita”*, which can be translated into English as *“please refer to each other ‘as comrade’”*. This raises an intriguing question, namely, if indoctrination is so comprehensive, why do workers at the factory need to be encouraged or reminded to refer to each other as “comrade”, a political title that is so central to the identity of socialist systems?



“Please refer to each other as Comrade” sign in Rajin-Sŏnbong factory

There are a number of hypotheses that could explain the notice: personality clashes or division in the factory; a preference for using names or nicknames similar to those that might be used in China; or even the use of titles such as “older sister” or “older brother” as is common in South Korea. Whatever the answer, the display of such a poster suggests that traditional or alternative social relations are being (re-)established despite North Korea’s rigid political culture.

Challenges to prevailing social order can also be seen in growing class and regional differences. Interviews with North Koreans outside the country have already begun to document the change from political status to economic status as the main determinant of class and social position in North Korea or, at least, an intertwining of the two given that high political status frequently leads to increased economic opportunity²⁷. Class differences were observed during our visit. While we were eating in a restaurant in Ch’ŏngjin city, a party from the World Food Programme arrived in the company of a North Korean interpreter. They were seated at a nearby table. The interpreter was a tall fair skinned woman, well-dressed and who exuded a notable air of confidence. There was a palpable difference in her interactions and the way she presented herself when

compared to the manners of our own guides who came from the regions. Our guides commented on her sophistication, remarking that “she was from P’yŏngyang”, reflecting the class and regional differences seen in many developed and developing countries.

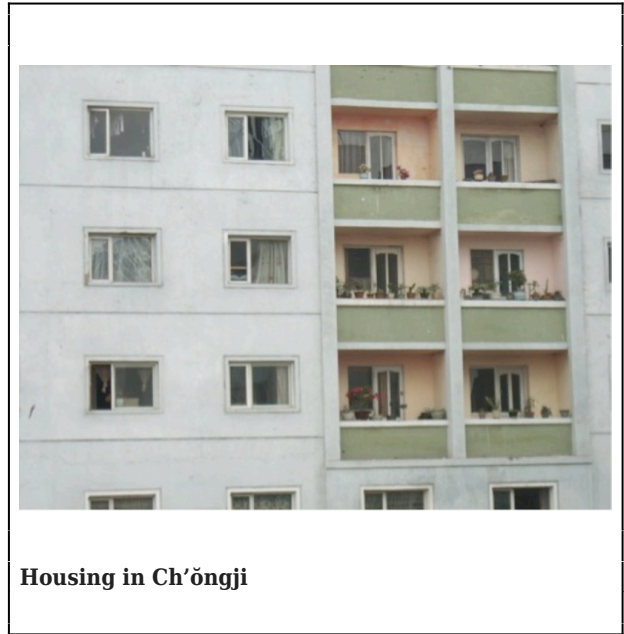


Pets are a symbol of status, although not sure about this one!

These visible social and cultural differences provided some insight into the kind of cleavages that exist even among the guides and interpreters who are relative elites (they would all be party members, employed by the government and trusted to interact with foreigners). Similarly, social and economic disparities in North Korea were highly visible when travelling between the city and the countryside, and between the relatively wealthy city of Rasŏn and smaller cities such as Ch’ŏngjin and Kyŏngsŏng. Differences could be noted in peoples’ size and skin colour, types of housing, methods of transport, quality of clothing and use of makeup and accessories. Our guides were not very keen for us to talk to children on the street who were hanging around looking for money and sweets or old ladies unofficially selling small amounts of vegetables or locally brewed liquor in the markets, often hunched and dark skinned from

their years of working in the fields. I suspect from the guides' way of speaking to these people that this was as much to do with issues of class and snobbery as it was to do with trying to maintain political authority. UN surveys have reported regional differences in nutritional status and as noted earlier, research has begun to highlight the increasing importance of economic capital over political capital. However, further quantitative and qualitative inquiry is needed to understand the implications of regional differences and the consequences of other socio-economic disparities in North Korea.

During our visit we also observed a consumer and leisure culture that is likely to be one differentiator of class in North Korea. This was exhibited in the way that balconies were decorated with flowers and plants, houses that were tidy and well-kept with a multitude of consumer goods visible through their windows, and people with pet dogs. In the fields, dogs were seen accompanying workers and the home of an elderly lady we visited by chance in a rural village (see below for more discussion on this incident) had a puppy, well-kept and sleeping in its own dog basket. In Rasŏn we saw a small white fluffy dog accompanying its owner as she took it for a walk to the park. Other common sights of leisure activities included children and adults playing table tennis and the ubiquitous roller blading in North Korea's large concrete public squares which make perfect skating rinks. In Ch'ŏngjin, the sight of pigeon coops/lofts on balconies was not uncommon. Our guides said that many Koreans kept pigeons as a hobby and the bright decoration that adorned many of the coops confirmed this. The origins of pigeon fancying as a pastime in North Korea is interesting - it is a common hobby in China, but also popular in South Korea, so the mode through which pigeon fancying became popular may be valuable for analysing the movement of new ideas and trends into the country.



Housing in Ch'ŏngji

How tough is daily life for the average North Korean?

The presence of major humanitarian actors in North Korea, including the WFP, UNICEF, Save the Children, MSF and Concern, highlight the ongoing humanitarian challenges faced by North Korea. Humanitarian organisations themselves struggle to collect the necessary information to fully understand the extent and nature of the issues, and because of the sensitivities around operating in North Korea are very circumspect about sharing information. Of the various humanitarian agencies, the UN provides the most information and according to the WFP's most recent in-country nutritional survey, released in March 2013, 35 percent of children are suffering from chronic malnutrition (stunting) and 5 percent from acute malnutrition (wasting)²⁸. There is other data available that suggests that inadequate medical supplies and equipment make the health care system unable to meet basic needs²⁹, while sanitation, water supply and heating systems continue to fall into disrepair³⁰. As a result of these factors, the country faces major public health challenges from infectious disease such as tuberculosis, drug resistant tuberculosis³¹, and diarrhoea,

the number one cause of morbidity and mortality in North Korea for children under five³².

The visible rise of a consumer culture, at least in some cities, does not mask the deep poverty and crisis that inflicts many North Koreans in both the city and the rural areas. The dire humanitarian environment is also much in evidence when travelling through the Northeast of the country. Housing, at first glance, looks relatively substantial, built with brick walls and tiled roofs. A notable proportion, however, have polythene rather than glass window panes, and this in a country where temperatures commonly reach well below zero in the winter months. Seeing the poor quality housing, the lack of public transport, and signs of deforestation reminded me that during the winter months, compared to many other developing countries, life in North Korea must be very harsh for all, and especially the most vulnerable in society. These visible signs of poverty reflect the international data on North Korea's per capita GDP that places it among the world's poorest countries³³.



Housing in a fishing village in the rural Ch'ilbosan region

It is possible to see children collecting water in buckets from rivers to carry back to their

homes in villages and my own experiences confirm the infrequency of running water and the poor water-sanitation infrastructure even in tourist facilities. In one extraordinary incident, I and two fellow female travellers were looking for an appropriate place to relieve ourselves on a brief stop during a long coach journey. As we walked up a village lane, a wizened grandmother invited us to use the toilet in her rural house - the "toilet" being an outdoor latrine infested with maggots. The kind old lady (and owner of the aforementioned puppy) explained that she had not been expecting foreign guests and would have cleaned it out had she known we were coming! While outdoor latrines are hardly uncommon in developing countries, they pose a real risk of contaminating water supplies and spreading infectious disease. The use of such facilities in the depth of winter must also mean immense hardship and discomfort for rural North Koreans.

United Nations statistics on stunting in North Korea are made tangible when meeting children who are considerably smaller than one would expect for their stated age. This is also apparent among some groups of adults. Inside the burgeoning markets there are unofficial sellers whose small frames, dark skin and simple clothing suggest that they grew up and still live in economically insecure circumstances. These were generally middle-aged women selling small piles of green vegetables, home brewed alcohol or second hand school books. Older women could be observed selling ice-creams in Ch'ŏngjin and Rasŏn and were also visible in the rural villages of Ch'ilbosan where they ran 'convenience stores', offering cigarettes, snacks and liquor from wooden carts, windows of houses or back doors. Small stalls were also visible in cities and ice cream seemed to be a particularly popular product. In Ch'ŏngjin, a group of schoolchildren walked along the road with their teacher and one of the children was eating an ice cream. This really stood out to me - the

consumption of an ice cream by that child indicated an interesting chain of events: an entrepreneur selling ice creams in the street; the child having pocket money to buy the ice cream; a teacher allowing her to buy and eat an ice cream while out with a school group; and potential differentiation among the children – one child had an ice cream but the others did not. It was a brief observation on the ground, but one that provides a small but potentially enlightening glimpse of some freedom, social differentiation and a market economy in the daily life of North Koreans.



School children in Ch'ŏngjin: Notice one girl eating an ice cream. The girl also appears to be one of the tallest children in the group.

While it is not unusual to encounter older women selling goods or working in the fields, the absence of older men on the streets and in markets is marked. We did come across older men working as drivers or running bicycle repair stalls in the rural areas of the Ch'ilbosan, but this was infrequent. As one North Korean expert wisely pointed out to me, this may simply be due to the fact that older men spend time together smoking, chatting and drinking while their wives went out to work and thus the latter are more visible to foreigners. However, the apparent absence of old men reminded me of my time working in Swaziland

with MSF where the dearth of people in their middle age betrayed the consequences of the terrible HIV and TB epidemic that has led to a severely reduced life expectancy for Swazis of around 40 years. Male life expectancy in North Korea is reported as 66 years³⁴ and even this is relatively low by Western standards. We may speculate, with some reason, that a major cause of this reduced life expectancy is a result of alcohol and smoking-related illnesses. Wherever one travels in the country it is noticeable that alcohol and tobacco are used widely by North Korean men and significant amounts of alcohol were consumed at lunch and dinner by our male guides and interlocutors. While lunching at the Seaman's club in Ch'ŏngjin I witnessed two heavily intoxicated men being escorted out of the dining room by two waitresses (who were not afraid to demonstrate their annoyance!). The problems of high levels of alcohol and tobacco use were also underlined by a private briefing I received which indicated that a focus of humanitarian and health requests from North Korean authorities is for expertise and training in the areas of gastroenterology and cardiovascular medicine because of the high rates of morbidity and mortality in men of all classes as a result of these types of life-style influenced disease.

Another striking observation was the invisibility of disabled people. This is perhaps not surprising - in many cultures, and particularly developing countries without well-developed infrastructure, people with learning or physical disabilities are often cared for within institutions or family homes and are not easily visible to foreigners visiting for short periods of time. However, because of my previous work in the humanitarian sector and the experience of growing up in a family where my parents fostered children with learning disabilities, I was interested in how North Korea dealt with the challenge of learning disability and mental illness. I asked one interlocutor how such children were cared for in North Korea and,

surprised to hear that my parents volunteered to care for children with learning-disabilities, he asked ‘do you not kill these children when they are born?’ Perhaps because of the shock I displayed at his reply he refused to pursue this topic any further. But this response interested me deeply and I discussed it with North Korean friends living in the South. Some had heard of institutions where disabled children and adults were cared for and another told me of a wealthy family that cared for their learning-disabled son at home. The response of the interlocutor could have indicated an accepted practice of infanticide in North Korea or stories he had heard about how those in the West treat disabled children. It could even have been a joke to shock me! However, this is an area that has been vastly understudied and the response that I received suggested that - and based on experiences of Eastern-bloc and other developing countries - care for vulnerable mentally ill and learning-disabled people should be a critical area for research and possible intervention. Indeed, having previously worked for a medical NGO, as I travelled through the Northeast of the country I was on the lookout for medical facilities that average North Koreans might visit. Pharmacies, hospitals or other obvious medical facilities were not easily recognisable which contrasts with other developing countries where state-run or NGO-run clinics are clearly signed and are often in the centre of communities near transport hubs, schools or shopping areas. It may be the case that I was unlucky, or it may indicate a shortage of clinics, or that healthcare is managed informally by medical practitioners out of homes or small private clinics. It may also confirm academic and journalistic accounts detailing the dire state of the country’s healthcare system³⁵.



Spectacular Ch'ilbosan

As you drive through rural areas of the Northeast, the precarious state of Korea’s transport infrastructure and agricultural system is apparent. Roads are in disrepair and occasionally impassable. Ancient tractors, ox-pulled ploughs and Soviet-era trucks fuelled by wood constitute the passing traffic³⁶. With the exception of some bicycles and the occasional truck loaded with people, moving by foot seemed to be the most common means of passage for people of all ages and health. Notably absent also, are trees - particularly on hillsides where ‘small-plot’ farming takes place. Small-plot farming is carried out by private individuals and families as a means of supplementing their diets and incomes. Driving through Ch'ilbosan national park, one of the few places where trees had not been removed for fuel and to clear land, signs were attached to trunks warning of serious consequences for the removal of trees. Every other inch of land, however, is cultivated including areas clearly prone to flooding. Across the countryside, groups of school children, soldiers, work units of mixed age and gender can be seen working in the fields, accompanied by (sometimes live!) motivational music and propaganda. The required mass mobilization for these labour-intensive methods of farming can only be carried out under the current authoritarian

conditions that exist inside the country. Late May, the month in which I made my most recent visit to North Korea, corresponds with the planting season for rice and large groups of children and adults had been deployed to the fields to transplant rice seedlings. This labour force came from local schools and work units and it highlighted a huge vulnerability in the event of political instability. It made me wonder how authorities would be able to mobilise sufficient numbers of people to sustain the agriculture sector, given its current mode of operation, if there was any breakdown in the current political structure during key periods such as the rice planting season.

Conclusion

Perhaps the most important message from this essay is the value that can be gained from travel to North Korea and on-the-ground data collection and observation. There is limited but valuable understanding that we can develop from observing life and interacting with North Korea, even over a short period of time and as part of an organised tour. The observational data that is collected can help to corroborate and critique the literature that is based upon data collected outside of the country. There are benefits of making repeated visits to North Korea which include the ability to note changes over time - for example to cityscapes and landscapes, propaganda content and freedoms granted by guides to visitors. In-country observation can also prompt research questions and lines of inquiry to be pursued later using information available outside of North Korea.



Images of Daily Life in North Korea - a photographer displays her wares in Ch'ŏngjin

As Frank has argued, these observations are a small piece of a much larger story that is the everyday life of North Korea. At first glance the observations may appear mundane and incidental but we urgently need to develop better understandings of everyday life and the impacts that international policies may be having on the lives of the innocent majority. Studying and writing about on-the-ground observations of daily life in North Korea is essential in order to develop a body of literature. That scholarship and debate in this area is necessary is evident, for example, in the lack of knowledge about the impact that sanctions might be having on the general population. A number of scholars have argued that coercive sanctions 'are more likely to enhance nationalist legitimacy of rulers than to undermine it'³⁷, in what Galtung has called the 'rally around the flag effect'³⁸. This is particularly the case when sanctions are perceived to be affecting the daily lives of the general population. Observations made during this trip suggest that in the case of North Korea, such isolation may be encouraging nationalist sentiment rather than encouraging anger and opposition toward the government and this demands further investigation. Other observations from this trip should raise

questions about the growing influence of China upon North Korea. These growing ties may, for example, make North-South relations more difficult as North Koreans look to China for their economic, political and cultural future, building on ties cemented during this current period of economic activity. The huge presence of China also highlights the apparent weakness of the existing sanctions regime. China has so far refused to enforce sanctions against North Korea, but even if China were to shift its policy on sanctions the entrenched demand in North Korea for Chinese products, and thus profits to be made by the Chinese suppliers, means that these close and individualized ties will continue. And, of course, as long as the broader international community continues its policy of sanctions and isolation, so the reliance upon China will increase.

The value of more on-the-ground data collection and observation means that while we will still find evidence of the continuing misery faced by many in the North, we can also be surprised by the small signs of political apathy and non-conformity and a nascent consumerism. Travel to North Korea also presents an opportunity for thoughtful people-to-people contact, and such contacts reflect the recommendations that were made in the recent report of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in North Korea that called for measures to bring perpetrators of human rights abuses to justice, but “combined with a reinforced human rights dialogue [and], the promotion of incremental change through more people-to-people contact”³⁹.

Change to North Korea’s system and improvements to the daily lives of the majority of the country’s population will come slowly. However, the effectiveness and humanity of the policies enacted by the international community to bring about that change can be improved through a better understanding of the details of daily life. It is unlikely that such change will happen in North Korea in time to

make it unnecessary for the little boy that I saw in the Ch’ilbo mountains to leave home for his gruelling stint in the military. Nevertheless, the image of this family should remind the academic and policy community of the importance of daily life and the individual when contemplating broader research and policy questions regarding North Korea.

Emma Campbell is the Australian National University’s Korea Institute Postdoctoral Fellow. She is based in the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, College of Asia and the Pacific, at the Australian National University. Emma can be contacted [by email](#). The author would like to acknowledge Professor Tessa Morris-Suzuki and her ‘Daily Life Politics Laureate Team’ for comments on an earlier draft and also thank the editor and anonymous reviewer at *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* for the extremely valuable comments provided.

Recommended citation: Emma Campbell, "Fieldwork' North Korea: Observations of daily life on the ground inside the country," The Asia-Pacific Journal, Vol. 12, Issue 40, No. 2, October 6, 2014.

Related articles

- Ruediger Frank, [The Arirang Mass Games of North Korea](#)
- Saeyoung Park, [National Heroes and Monuments in South Korea: Patriotism, Modernization and Park Chung Hee’s Remaking of Yi Sunsin’s Shrine](#)
- Ruediger Frank, [Money in Socialist Economies: The Case of North Korea](#)
- Tessa Morris-Suzuki, [Remembering the Unfinished Conflict: Museums and the Contested Memory of the Korean War](#)
- Stephen Epstein, [The Axis of Vaudeville: Images of North Korea in South Korean Pop](#)

Culture

- Jan Creutzenberg, [Painters of Juche Life? Art from Pyongyang: A Berlin exposition challenges expectations, offers insights on North Korea](#)

Notes

¹ In this article I use the terms North Korea and South Korea to refer to the two Koreas, rather than referring to the respective nations' official names of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea. I do this because the focus of this article is the population rather than the state.

² Bruce Cumings, *North Korea: Another Country*, The New Press, 2013, pp.1.

³ Pyongyang Project - "[May Program on Economic Development and Cross-Border Interaction](#)," Accessed 14 July 2014.

⁴ Examples of scholarship written from this perspective include Barbara Demick, *Nothing to Envy: Real Lives in North Korea*, London, Granta Publications, 2010; Sonia Ryang (ed.), *North Korea: Toward a Better Understanding*, Lanham and Plymouth, Lexington Books, 2009; Andrei Lankov, *The Real North Korea*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012.

⁵ Chad O'Carroll, '[Is Tourism in North Korea Really Booming?](#)', *NK News*, 20 February 2013. Accessed 14 July 2014; Kristine Savando, '[How North Korea is Coping with Uncouth Tourists from China](#)', *South China Morning Post*, 5 August 2013. Accessed 14 July 2014.

⁶ Geoffrey Cain, '[Message to North Korea Engagers: You're Helping Kim Jong Un](#)', *Global Post*, February 7, 2014. Accessed 14 July 2014.

⁷ Chad O'Carroll, '[Tourism to North Korea: Right or Wrong?](#)' *The Guardian*, 1 May 2014. Accessed 14 July 2014.

⁸ John Bolton, '[Doing a Big Favour for Kim Jong](#)

[Un](#),' *New York Daily News*, 8 January 2013. Accessed 14 July 2014. John McCain also tweeted that Eric Schmidt and Bill Richardson were 'useful idiots' and stated in a [CNN interview](#) that Dennis Rodman was 'an idiot' and 'that he really does provide propaganda for this very brutal ruthless young man,' Accessed 14 July 2014.

⁹ Chad O'Carroll, 2014, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Tessa Morris Suzuki, *To the Diamond Mountains: A Hundred Year Journey through China and Korea*, Lanham, Rowman and Littlefield, 2010, pp. 94. See also Tessa Morris-Suzuki, 'To the Diamond Mountains: A Hundred Year Journey Through China and Korea, 1910-2010,' *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, vol. 46, no. 1, November 15, 2010.

¹² Rüdiger Frank, 'The Arirang Mass Games of North Korea', *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, vol. 11, no. 2, December 16, 2013.

¹³ Jan Kubik, 'Ethnography of Politics: Foundations, Applications, Prospects', in E. Schatz (ed.), *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009, pp. 33.

¹⁴ See for example, Benedict Kerkvliet, '[Village-state relations in Vietnam: The effect of everyday politics on decollectivization](#)', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 54, no.2, May 1995, pp. 396; and Benedict Kerkvliet, *The Power of Everyday Politics: How Vietnamese Peasants Transformed National Policy*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2005.

¹⁵ On North Korea see authors including Tessa Morris-Suzuki, 'Exodus to North Korea Revisited: Japan, North Korea, and the ICRC in the "Repatriation" of Ethnic Koreans from Japan', *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, vol. 9, no. 2, May 2011; and Charles Armstrong, 'The

Possibility of Civil Society in North Korea', in Charles K. Armstrong (ed.), *Korean Society: Civil Society, Democracy and the State*, London and New York, Routledge, 2009, pp. 191-208.

¹⁶ [Information on Entry & Investment into Rajin-Sonbrong District](#). Accessed 14 July 2014.

¹⁷ Our tour group visited a new Russian restaurant that is serving the Russian expatriate population. It has an expatriate chef.

¹⁸ Soo-Ho Lim, 'China-North Korea relations and Rajin-Sŏnbong Special Economic Zone', *SERI Quarterly*, vol. 3, no. 3, July 2010, pp. 123-129.

¹⁹ Kristine Savando, *op. cit.*

²⁰ It is notable that during Dennis Rodman's visit to Munsu Water Park famously opened by Kim Jong Un in 2013, Rodman was surrounded, not by North Koreans, but by Chinese tourists who were using this newly constructed facility.

²¹ Chad O'Carroll, '[Is Tourism in North Korea Really Booming?](#)', *NKNews.org*, 20 February 2013. Accessed 19 September 2014.

²² Trade with China has increased on average 40 percent annually between 2009 and 2014. See '[Inter-Korean trade hits 8-year low in 2013](#),' *Yonhap News*, 23 February 2014 . Accessed 14 July 2014.

²³ North Korean Economy Watch, '[Rajin Market on Display to Foreigners](#)'. Accessed 14 July.

²⁴ Daniel Byman and Jennifer Lind, 'Pyongyang's Survival Strategy: Tools of Authoritarian Control in North Korea', *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 1, 2010, pp. 44-74; Andrei N. Lankov, In-ok Kwak and Choong-Bin Cho, 'The Organizational Life: Daily Surveillance and Daily Resistance in North Korea', *Journal of East Asian Studies*, vol. 12, 2012, pp. 193-214.

²⁵ See for example Dennis Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate: coercion and dissent in Romania, 1965-1989*, London and New York, M.E. Sharpe, 1995.

²⁶ Hyung-min Joo, '[Hidden transcripts in marketplaces: politicized discourses in the North Korean shadow economy](#)', *The Pacific Review*, vol. 27, no.1, 2014, pp. 49-71; Noland, 'They're not brainwashed', *op. cit.*; Andrei N. Lankov, In-ok Kwak and Choong-Bin Cho, 'The Organizational Life', *op. cit.* Accessed 14 July 2014.

²⁷ Lankov, 'The Real North Korea', *op. cit.*; Yong-Sueng Dong, 'The Rise of North Korea's Merchant Class', *SERI Quarterly*, vol. 4, no. 4, 2013, pp. 67-76. ; Changyoung Choi, 'Everyday Politics', *op. cit.*

²⁸ [World Food Programme](#). Accessed 14 July 2014.

²⁹ Justin McCurry, 'North Korea's Health System in Disarray', *The Lancet*, vol. 376, 2010, pp. 318.

³⁰ [Swiss International Cooperation](#). Accessed 14 July 2014. See also [UNICEF](#). Accessed 14 July 2014.

³¹ Kwonjune J Seung, Stephen W Linton, 'The Growing Problem of Multi drug-Resistant tuberculosis in North Korea', *PLoS Medicine*, vol. 10, no.7, 2013.

³² [Swiss International Cooperation- Water Sanitation and Hygeine](#). Accessed 14 July 2014.

³³ In 2013, North Korea's GDP per capita was US\$506. This compares unfavourably with countries such as Bangladesh (\$706); China at (\$5439); Ivory Coast (\$1196); Philippines (\$2370); Mongolia (\$3060); and South Korea (\$23067). [UNdata](#). Accessed 19 September 2014.

³⁴ DPRK Central Bureau of Statistics, [2008](#)

[DPRK Korea Population Census National Report](#). Accessed 14 July 2014.

³⁵ Sanghyuk S. Shin, Ricky Y. Choi, and Thomas E. Novotny, 'Economic sanctions towards North Korea', *BMJ*, vol. 339, 2009; Justin McCurry, 'North Korea's Health System in Disarray', *op. cit.*

³⁶ David Wogan, '[How North Korea Fuels its Military Trucks with Trees](#)', *Scientific American*, 2 January 2013. Accessed 14 July 2014.

³⁷ Robert Pape, 'Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work', *International Security*, vol. 22., no. 2, pp. 107. See also, Rüdiger Frank, *Asian Perspective*, vol. 30,no. 3, 2006, pp. 5-36.

³⁸ Brendan Taylor, *American Sanctions in the Asia Pacific*, London and New York, Routledge, 2010, pp. 27-28.

³⁹ UN - [Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea](#). Accessed 14 July 2014.