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North Korea: Labour Migration from a Closed State

John Connell

Abstract. *Most East and Southeast Asian countries have made a transition from being sources of labour migrants to recipients of migrants. North Korea has largely remained outside this structure until recent decades when economic downturns have led to its emergence as a growing source of labour migrants. Much of that migration is clandestine and tightly controlled. Most labour migrants have gone to adjoining Russia and China but workers have also gone to Gulf countries, Europe, Africa and elsewhere in Asia. Labour migrants are predominantly male, work in construction and endure state sanctioned exploitative wages, hours and conditions. Remittances have returned to the state rather than to households. North Korea has opened up, engaging in limited globalisation in other areas, including tourism and industrial zones, but none of this trilogy has resulted in significant changes to the economic or political structure.*

Introduction

A conventional perspective on labour migration in East and Southeast Asia emphasises, firstly, that most countries, notably South Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan and Thailand, have gone through a transition in the past fifty years from being sources of labour migrants to being recipients of labour migrants. Labour migration played a very small part in contributing to restructuring and economic growth. More wealthy Asian countries, such as Taiwan, Singapore, Brunei and Japan, have primarily been recipients of labour migrants, albeit in some cases quite reluctantly. Secondly, those Asian countries that are currently sources of labour migrants, such as Nepal, Myanmar, Cambodia, the Philippines and Indonesia, have relatively weak economies, and have yet to engage in sustained economic growth and domestic employment creation (Abella and Mori 1996, Asis 2005, Athukorala 2006). International migration thus remains a default strategy, for both households and countries, in the generation of incomes and development where economic growth has been limited. Despite occasional suggestions that North Korea has been poised to engage in greater regional cooperation and become a source of regional labour migrants (Kim 1992), the considerable literature on migration in the East Asian region invariably excludes any reference to North Korea. In contrast, this paper attempts to make an initial contribution to developing a perspective on labour migration from North Korea.

The flow of political refugees and a stagnant economy have resulted in North Korea being widely described as a failed state (H. Lee 2014). A rigid economy that faces enormous problems in generating livelihoods, combined with a dictatorial and repressive political system, has resulted in the flight of many refugees or defectors from North Korea, a situation that has been relatively well documented

both formally (Tanaka 2008, Robinson 2010, Song 2015) and through a series of accounts by defectors and other observers of the regime (Demick 2000). That well-known migration flow has occurred at the same time as a smaller and much more poorly documented, but nonetheless significant, flow of labour migrants.

In this century especially it has become increasingly evident that the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea (DPRK) has steadily become a source of labour migrants. Despite a reputation for being a closed state (a 'hermit kingdom') where migration is impossible, other than as illegal defectors and refugees, formal labour migration has existed for almost half a century. That largely clandestine process has accelerated in volume in the past decade and especially since Kim Jong Un took over as leader in 2011, as international sanctions have squeezed other sectors of the economy. Despite increasing numbers, and its role in contributing to foreign exchange, labour migration is entirely ignored in standard accounts of development in North Korea (Eberstadt 2007, Smith 2015). This paper seeks to account for this new trend, and provide an analysis of the fragmentary data that exist on labour migration from North Korea, and the relationship between this and national economic development. I have elected to draw selectively on accounts from defectors, not uninterested South Korean sources, and other disputed accounts in order to clearly elucidate contemporary structures and trends.

An Economy in Crisis

Almost every account of the North Korean economy over the past twenty years has pointed to severe problems, centred on an industrial sector that is inefficient and antiquated, an agricultural sector that is sometimes unable to sustain the population (and where poor harvests and food shortages are not uncommon) and inadequate transport and communications infrastructure. External criticisms have also focused on the inflexibility, centralisation and collective rigidity of the state, otherwise largely abandoned in formerly socialist states, which partly followed an official policy of effective self-reliance (*juche*). Legal exports are few and dwarfed by imports, and substantial resources are required to support the huge military and bureaucracy that are part of a longstanding 'security first, economy next' strategy. Tightened United Nations sanctions on trade since 2006, re-emphasised in 2013, have further weakened the national economy.

Coal mining, once a mainstay of the economy, had largely ended by 2015 following concerns over the safety of the remaining mines and poor quality coal (which effectively ended exports to the main China market) and reduced fuel supplies for local consumption. Falling coal exports were part of an overall decline in the minerals trade, further hindered by a sharp fall in world prices. However, mineral exports, and the concentration of trade with China (accounting for 90 percent of all trade in 2014), have reduced the need for structural or institutional reforms.

Tentative efforts have been made to open the economy to external investment, including Chinese investment in the minerals industry since the 1970s. But investment in manufacturing has been limited. A partial exception has been

the Kaesong Industrial Park (which hosts a number of South Korean factories) but this has also experienced the repercussions of changing political policies that have led to intermittent factory closures, though it returned to more normal operations in 2014 (Hayes and Cavazos 2014). Rason free trade zone was opened in the north-east in 1991 in an attempt to draw industrial development from Russia, and develop industrial fishing, but such constraints were placed on industry that investment has been insignificant, while the collapse of the Soviet bloc largely ended the regional market. A casino has been opened in the region to attract Chinese tourists and there is some anticipation of greater Chinese investment. Despite their limited impact proposals exist to extend the number of 'special districts' from four to twelve, in an effort at decentralisation (S. Lee 2014). Local markets (*jangmadang*), have also tentatively emerged.

Likewise although North Korea has experienced a trickle of tourism for a quarter of a century, there has been some recent expansion, oriented primarily at Chinese rather than western tourists, and again centred in the north. Ironically one reason that draws such tourists is the ability to see what some regard nostalgically as how China was before the reform era (Li and Ryan 2015). North Korea has also intermittently opened its border to South Korean tourism, notably at Mount Keumgang, but numbers have been relatively small, especially after the death of one such tourist, and the border has also been intermittently closed for political reasons (Shin 2004). Nevertheless in recent years tourism has been one of the few growth sectors in the economy.

Neither the free trade zones nor tourism have contributed much foreign exchange or created much employment, hence their overall impact on the economy has been very limited. Indeed both are also effectively ignored in conventional accounts of the economy. Labour migration has become part of a trilogy of economic trends – alongside promoting special economic districts and foreign tourism – that have partly followed constraints on conventional export industries imposed by United Nations sanctions (Tanaka 2008, H. Lee 2014). In some respects it has been the most consistent of these. After a long period when numbers were few and working conditions were little different from forced labour, it has expanded in the 2010s into a more substantial but only marginally less exploitative system.

Labour Migration

Like most information from and about North Korea that on labour migration is scarce, fragmented, largely impossible to verify and comes from external sources rather than sources within North Korea. Since labour migration is tightly controlled by the state in order to prevent defections, detailed information is largely non-existent. Moreover, providing labour migration opportunities to North Koreans, while not formally in defiance of United Nations sanctions, might be seen to be subverting them, hence deterring acknowledgement let alone data provision. Nonetheless it is possible to summarise the limited empirical data that do exist and indicate the basic structures of these migration flows. Labour migration existed before the end of the last century, probably dating from 1967 when a bilat-

eral trade agreement was signed with the then Soviet Union (Devalpo 2006), but a more deliberate labour migration policy expanded in the mid-2000s, at the same time as tourism promotion and the development of special economic zones, and again expanded in the 2010s with external pressure on the economy.

Early labour migration seems to have focused on nearby regions of Russia and China, and later extended to the Gulf and to central Europe, particularly the Czech Republic. In the 1990s an estimated 1,800 workers were in Kuwait, but there appears to be no data on other twentieth century numbers and distributions. Data on the current century are equally scarce. According to Kim Tae San, a defector and former North Korean diplomat, in 2006 as many as 70,000 North Koreans were working in various European countries (Czech Republic, Russia, Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary) and also in Mongolia, Iraq, Qatar and Kuwait (Tanaka 2008). At the end of 2014 there were an estimated 3,000 North Koreans in Qatar, more than 2,000 in the United Arab Emirates and more than 4,000 in Kuwait (Pattison 2014). Some 47,364 workers were said to be in Russia at the start of 2015, mainly working in logging and construction (Rivituso 2015). About 2,000 are reported to be working in textile factories and agriculture in Mongolia and that number was expected to increase to 4,000 under a five-year agreement (Shim 2015).

A quite recent estimate has suggested that about 50,000 North Koreans may be employed elsewhere, in Asia, Russia and the Middle East, 'in what are likely less than ideal conditions' (Byrne 2015). Others are said to be digging military tunnels in Myanmar, mining coal in Malaysia, 'building monuments for African dictators' (at least in Senegal) or aboard fishing vessels off Fiji, making up possibly as many as 65,000 overseas workers in 2012, a total that was believed to be steadily growing, and extending to as many as 40 countries (Choe 2015, Mundy 2015). It has been estimated that as many as 45 countries may at one time or another have hosted North Korean workers, and 16 countries (including Algeria, Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Libya, Myanmar, Nigeria, Oman, Poland and the UAE) were recognised as having workers in 2013. Countries that apparently no longer host workers may now include some Asian countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Thailand and Laos), east European countries (Ukraine, Romania) and Middle Eastern countries (Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Syria). Otherwise there has been a pattern of geographical and numerical expansion. However about three quarters of all overseas workers are in China or Russia (Shin and Go 2014), with the remainder more thinly scattered.

China is somewhat distinctive, since employment there includes both contracted labour migration, that takes a similar form to that in the various destinations mentioned above, and 'free' migration, where North Koreans cross the border legally or illegally, and seek work in factories, restaurants, hotels and elsewhere. As many as 20,000 North Korean workers, almost all men, may be employed in the Chinese border city of Dandong alone, the largest single concentration of overseas North Koreans. Many of the workers in Dandong hold visas for periods of between a month and two years, and like other North Koreans overseas retain only about a tenth of their incomes (Kim

and Kang 2015, Lankov 2016). Women are employed in hotels and restaurants in various border cities, under similar contractual arrangements. Thus even though North Koreans arrive in Chinese towns and cities independently they are ultimately employed under the same conditions.

Most North Korean labour migrants are concentrated in neighbouring parts of China and Russia, states that themselves tightly control labour migration, with others in various Asian, European and Middle Eastern countries. Estimates of the number and status of North Koreans in China vary enormously since most are illegal migrants. That status has made them open to exploitation, with many women forced into marriage and prostitution. China does not recognise North Koreans as refugees and prioritises bilateral relations with North Korea over its international obligation of non-refoulement, hence North Koreans can be deported at any time (Song 2015). The situation in Russia is similar. A substantial but again unknown number of North Koreans in China and Russia are permanent residents with legal status. In 2013 China granted 93,300 work visas to North Koreans, a 17 per cent increase on the previous year (Joon 2014). Numbers of labour migrants to China have thus substantially increased.

Beyond even crude numbers little data exist for early years, but they point to the dominance of industrial employment in the earliest phase, followed by an extension into construction work. In late 2006 about 400 women and less than 20 men were employed in the Czech Republic, most on three or four year contracts, and working in clothing, footwear and leather factories in small Czech towns, as were other migrants from Ukraine, Moldova and Vietnam. After the 1967 agreement as many as 10,000 to 20,000 North Koreans have worked in the logging industry every year in the Russian Far East. During the Soviet era they were also engaged in construction (Kim 1992). By 2015 the number of North Koreans working in Russia was exceeded only by the numbers from China and Turkey, as the collapse of the Rouble and repercussions from the Russian annexation of Crimea prompted the departure of workers from many other nations (Rivituso 2015). Labour migrants also work in Chinese factories that have been established in other countries to take advantage of low wages. Early in 2015 a group of twelve North Koreans were waiting for work permits to be employed in a Chinese owned clothing factory, Leisure Clothing, in Malta. At the end of the year 41 North Koreans were employed there alongside rather more Vietnamese (Debono 2015).

Skilled migration is rare, partly because North Korea has a shortage of skilled human resources, although skilled workers can earn higher wages. It has however been claimed in South Korea that as many as 1,250 doctors and nurses have been employed in 26 nations where they also perform illegal medical practices, such as abortions. It was further claimed that 1,170 of these were in Africa (Jin-Kyu 2015). A number of health workers have been employed in Libya, from where 25 were withdrawn in 2015 after escalating violence, and the abduction of a North Korean doctor and his wife by an armed Islamic group. Three Korean doctors were killed in northern Nigeria by Boko Haram. Some health workers are employed in both Tanzania and Cambodia.

Skilled workers, none reported from outside the health sector, like unskilled workers, have been deployed to marginal and difficult environments.

Most labour migrants are currently employed in some part of the construction industry. In Qatar, and elsewhere in the Gulf, all North Korean labour is in the construction industry. The same is true in China where workers are engaged particularly in railway construction. In Nepal North Korean workers were involved in blasting work for the construction of a hydroelectric power plant, close to the Chinese border, and had been hired because of their previous military experience and training with explosives. Construction workers in Mongolia were employed in 'sub-standard conditions' (Shim 2015). Since most migrant labourers work in the construction industry there is a preference for workers with experience of engineering, water supply and drainage. Workers are thus selected in North Korea according to their relevant previous experience, and are less likely to be poor rural workers.

Demand for overseas employment exists in North Korea. Potential workers are said to 'wait in line, with hope in their hearts' (Park 2015) and, despite reported hardships and the expropriation of earnings, employment overseas is considered such a privilege that opportunities were purchased with bribes (Choe 2015, O'Carroll 2015). Working overseas offers a rare chance to earn hard currency, and its disadvantages are ignored or unknown before migration. Migration results from the basic absence of economic opportunities and low incomes, rather than from the lack of political freedom that results, for some, in refugee migration.

Most of the female workers in the Czech Republic were said to have 'come from families loyal to Kim Jong Il and therefore deemed less likely to defect while abroad' (Tanaka 2008, 15; Jelinkova 2006). That has remained officially true so that formally overseas workers must possess 'qualities of diligence and loyalty towards the Party' (Park 2015). In practice while this is still of official importance, and Workers Party members must approve choices, as labour migration has increased most candidates are chosen 'as a result of backdoor dealings with elites' (ibid) and their particular skills are more valuable. Overseas workers have usually been selected from the existing industrial workforce by factory managers and local Party officials, and have relatives at home to discourage any attempts at defection.

In 2006, under pressure from some individuals (such as the former president, Vaclav Havel), the Czech Republic stopped issuing new visas to North Korean workers, and intended to send home all the remaining workers after their contracts expired (Tanaka 2008). There was recognition both that these contracts were exploitative and that the remittances were propping up an undemocratic regime, contradicting the spirit of the UN Security Council sanctions imposed on North Korea in October 2006. Subsequent migration has thus tended to be to countries that have been willing to ignore the sentiments of the UN sanctions.

The Costs and Benefits of Migration

Characteristically, contemporary North Korean labour migrants are young men who engage in hard work, long hours and are closely regulated as much by Party officials embedded in the workforce as by local employers and site managers.

Such constraints make them docile and attractive workers but commonly result in exploitation. Chinese and Russian workers in the Siberian logging industry were reportedly earning six times the wages of North Koreans (Choe 2015). North Koreans in Poland and Mongolia, where there were said to be 2,600 workers, face 'rights violations', work 'extreme hours' and are deprived of 90 percent of their earnings (Song 2015). In Qatar, North Koreans worked longer hours than all other migrant workers (Pattison 2014). Workers in Kuwait in the mid-1990s were reported to be routinely working seven days a week and twelve hours per day. Days off were rare in every context. Since workers have also been said to work an implausible 21 hours a day in Siberia in winter (Choe 2015), it is likely that exceptional hours were and are common but were not quite beyond endurance. Indeed the circumstances of employment and welfare have been described as nothing short of 'forced labour' and 'slavery' (Shin and Go 2014).

Regimentation and regulation almost guarantee low wages and poor working conditions and the inability to challenge these. Workers in Nepal, where wages are extremely low, were using explosives with few safety procedures in an area prone to landslides (Byrne 2015). Likewise, at Siberian logging camps, North Koreans worked excessively long hours without safety equipment and adequate fuel and clothing (Mundy 2015). Labour migrants to China 'know that their wage rate is significantly low, in comparison to the amount of work that is expected of them' (Park 2015). In Qatar North Koreans, like other Asian workers, worked in excessive heat (sometimes over 40°C) (Mundy 2015), but extending over twelve hour days, beyond what was expected of others.

Typically, as in the Czech Republic, workers were paid the minimum wage and were 'popular among Czech employers for their discipline and high productivity' (Tanaka 2008: 15) while 'women work to perfection; a Czech employer could only dream of such well organised labour' (Jelinkova 2006). In Russia they were reported to be 'very able-bodied and don't come with bad habits' (Rivituso 2015). Indeed in Russia, where North Koreans have undercut Chinese workers, a Russian official noted: 'Wages for North Korean workers are inexpensive and the workers are very disciplined and easily managed' (quoted in Ko 2015). In Qatar a construction project manager observed: they are 'very disciplined, they follow the rules of the army ... and very hard working. You can control them, guide and instruct them' (quoted in Pattison 2014). Above all, in Malaysia, after a North Korean had been killed in a Sarawak mine explosion, the Malaysian Deputy Home Minister observed that North Koreans were particularly good workers because of their 'dedication, strength and bravery' so that 'When it comes to industries such as coal mines, the jobs are very dangerous and tough. No local ... will dare to take up such jobs - that is why [we] need foreign workers' (quoted in Hodal 2014). North Koreans are typically engaged in old-fashioned dirty, dangerous and difficult jobs, without adequate wages or protection. Beyond that many are also employed in particular regions, such as Siberia and the Far East in Russia and Sarawak in Borneo (the only Malaysian state permitted to employ North Koreans), where citizens and others are extremely reluctant to work. Low wages, poor conditions, dis-

cipline and regulatory management underpin the labour migration system.

Since work hours are long, often exploitative and exhausting, and the social lives of migrants are controlled, there are few opportunities for expenditure. Almost all incomes earned therefore flow back to North Korea. Workers in the Czech Republic were carefully guarded. In China, as elsewhere, workers can only work and travel in groups of at least fifteen people, and cannot travel beyond workplaces and dormitories or watch television, on which South Korean soaps are regularly broadcast (Park 2015). In Kuwait workers were housed in compounds surrounded by barbed wire, and surveillance was constant.

The earlier Czech workers were supervised by embassy officials who were responsible for repatriating the remittances. That has been a general subsequent pattern, with a high proportion of their salaries sent back to the government (Tanaka 2008, Byrne 2015). In Russia most of the salaries earned went directly to the state, but with North Koreans moonlighting, at night or on weekends, on additional jobs to earn income for themselves; such incomes in construction could enable workers to send back as much as US\$2-3000 annually (Kang 2015). Individual workers retained only a small proportion of their earnings, possibly no more than ten per cent (Jelinkova 2006). That proportion has been recognised in a range of contexts, such as Mongolia and Poland, although that might enable workers, by undertaking extra work, to earn up to \$1,000 in a year (Whan-woo 2015). In Qatar also, as little as 10 per cent of their wages may be retained by workers after a three year contract, although local North Korean officials have suggested a much larger proportion (Pattison 2014). Other sources suggest that 50-60 percent of the standard wages are remitted to the state (Ko 2015). Recent labour migrants in China are reported to be keeping less than half the wages earned (Park 2015); although that appears too high it may indicate changing economic circumstances and small increases in the flexibility given to overseas workers.

It is the economic interests of recipient countries to control the status and welfare of labour migrants, but lack of transparency has given rise to global concerns about the mistreatment of workers (most obviously in the context of the construction of infrastructure for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar). Qatar has repeatedly pointed out that it has had no complaints about its national employment system (Pattison 2014) though it was shamed in early 2015 into sending 90 North Koreans home after continuous violations of labour legislation, with Korean supervisors forcing workers to continuously work more than twelve hours a day, with inadequate food, health and safety procedures, which left one worker dead (Walker 2015). Recipient countries have tended to collaborate with North Korea and provide no external access to such workers or data on their status.

Remittances from overseas workers are estimated to be around US\$200 million a year (Choe 2015) a considerable contribution to a weak economy. It is probable however that the bulk of remittances to North Korea actually comes from North Koreans working illegally in China, rather than formally employed elsewhere. As in other contexts workers often return with rather less than they had anticipated yet many are able to earn US\$1,000 after a year's

work. That is a significant sum in North Korea that can be used for consumer goods or bribes to obtain professional or educational advantages. One North Korean was reported to have returned with \$5,500 after five years working in the Malaysian mining industry that enabled the purchase of an apartment (Mundy 2015). That may be more common than might be expected. Labour migration therefore makes some contribution to national development, at least in terms of income generation, but at some social cost.

Conclusion

Given the introspection of North Korea, and the reluctance to open its borders to most external influences, the extent of labour migration from the country is remarkable and indicative of an economy that is experiencing severe economic problems, and that is willing to resolve these problems through increasing its tentative links to the global economy. It has proved a necessary default strategy. The processes of labour migration have remained largely clandestine, being tightly controlled by North Korea and by most recipient countries, with no formal data on flows and impacts. Numbers are uncertain and no more than estimates, and data from many countries, such as Malta and Mongolia, emerge only after flagrant breaches of regulations. Labour migration is exploitative, through North Korea's own rigid disciplinary structures, and by primarily sending to countries scarcely known for positive labour relations and social welfare, who are either not signatories to ILO conventions or simply ignore them. It may now be marginally less exploitative and clandestine than in the past, and more like similar patterns of labour migration from other poor and weak Asian states, but it is almost entirely and quite distinctively regulated by the state.

Ironically North Korean labour migration, like its Asian predecessors, has primarily contributed to the development of somewhat richer countries. It has nonetheless contributed to the economy of North Korea as the substantial majority of wages flow directly to the state. Much less than half of what are already extremely low wages, in difficult and dangerous conditions in often unskilled employment, are retained by the workers, resulting in minimal direct contribution to household livelihoods. North Korea thus routinely exploits its own workers, in terms of wages, conditions and hours, who directly gain relatively little, and mainly work in sectors where exploitation is rife and skill acquisition is minimal: classic low wage jobs. Recipient countries have little interest in improving the welfare of migrants who cannot express any concerns, and are often 'out of sight' in remote regions. The migrant workers who benefit, however little that may be, are from an already existing 'labour aristocracy' rather than from the rural poor. Since migrants are better off than many in North Korea migration makes a small impact on emerging national inequalities.

North Korea has re-constructed an old-established economic development strategy, in a highly exploitative form, that takes little note of the welfare of its citizens, but benefits from their increasingly valuable overseas employment. A pariah state has followed conventional strategies in its own way. A country whose political economy is anything but conventional gradually adopted one of the most

assured if limited means of development through global linkages: a mark of the bankruptcy of the national economy. Migration has made a small contribution to the national economy at some social if not political cost, part of an always tentative and fluctuating opening up of the economy, that even in North Korea appears to serve the interests of privileged socio-economic groups both at home and abroad. Like trade and tourism, it has further emphasised North Korea's dependence on China, and thus reinforced existing state structures.

While estimates of North Korea's GDP are notoriously unreliable, the best of these suggest that GDP per capita is around US\$1,251 per capita – a figure which indicates that North Korea is faring rather better than Myanmar but worse than Bangladesh, and about the equivalent of South Korea in 1976 (Lankov 2015). The small amounts of overseas incomes that North Koreans retain and remit are therefore significant at a household level. North Korea remains therefore a poor country where labour migration plays a small but useful role, which is greater than hitherto believed. It is indicative of the extent of economic inequality in the Korean peninsula (with no two juxtaposed countries in the world experiencing such economic differences) that the structure of labour migration in North Korea is similar to that in South Korea forty years earlier. That alone indicates the challenges that would face any process of Korean unification.

Labour migration from North Korea seems likely to continue until the national economy grows, diversifies and develops. It is least likely to be affected by a decline in global demand, but most likely to be affected by external constraints on labour migration, most likely in the form of sanctions directed against the hire of North Korean labour migrants. Since North Korea's nuclear test at the start of 2016 at least one NGO has argued that the most effective sanctions on North Korea involve ending labour migration. Foreign exchange flows have contributed to the national economy and, as elsewhere but in a more extreme form, the national economic gains from emigration are perceived to outweigh the social costs (Lucas 2005). Demographic shifts in East and Southeast Asia indicate that several countries will experience a growing demand for migrant labour, and that might provide an expanded (and less clandestine) regional market for North Korea, beyond its two protective neighbours. That is still unlikely to be imminent. In North Korea, a country facing the worst drought in twenty years, and with a worsening trade balance, constraints on labour migration are likely to be limited, other than for political reasons. That too is unlikely to be soon. The present regime of Kim Jong Un has yet to implement significant economic reforms (H. Lee 2014, Hayes and Cavazos 2014) despite the limited growth of markets, and the slow rise of consumer culture, hence ideology prevents the transformations to which remittances might otherwise have contributed. Nor is there any likelihood or indication that labour migration has resulted in the return of migrants with values that might contribute to economic innovations and development or to political change. Structural change cannot be accomplished by labour migration alone. The transition to an economy rather more like its southern neighbour is still in the distant future, despite this particular strand of globalisation.

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Connell: North Korea

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