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Marcus  
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WITNESS TO  
TRANSFORMATION:  
REFUGEE INSIGHTS  
INTO NORTH KOREA



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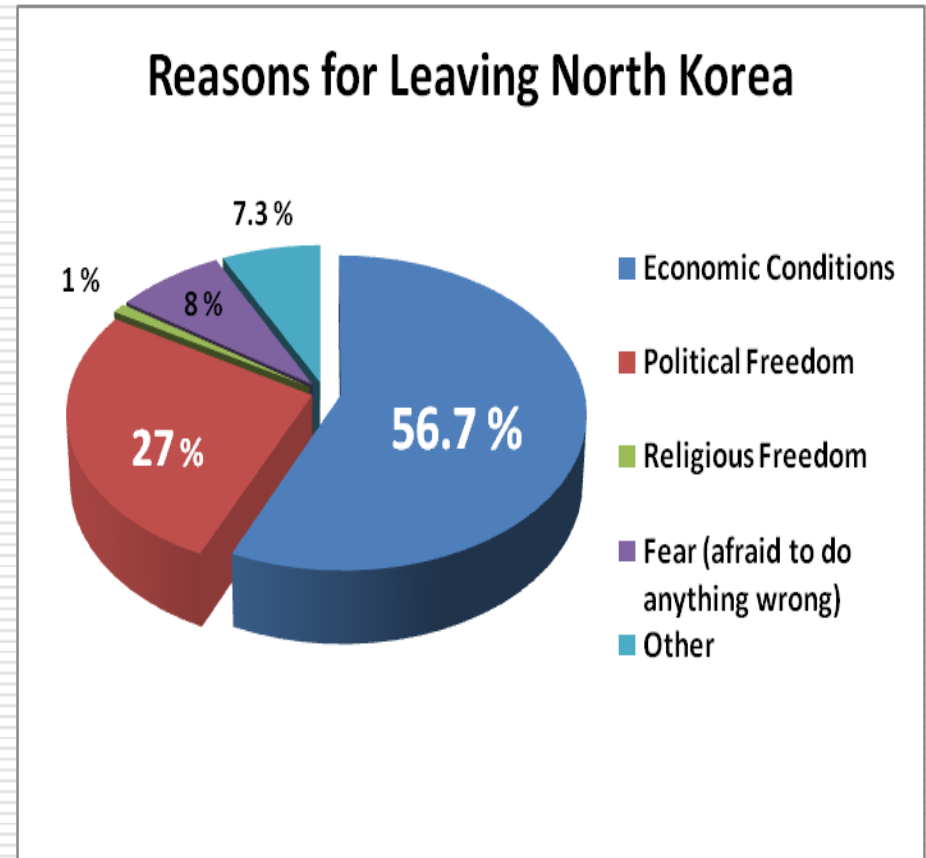
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# The Refugee Experience

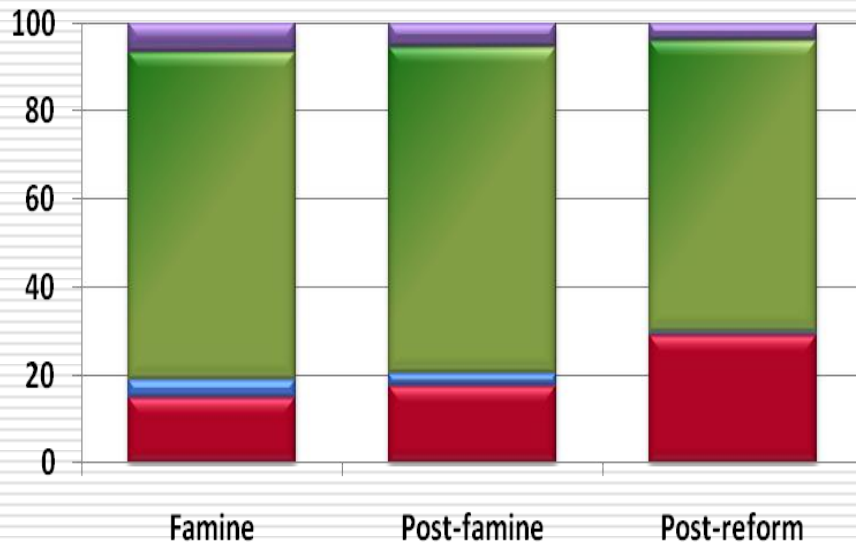
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- Exit—rising numbers cite “political” motives
- Pervasive psychological distress linked to experiences in North Korea and China
- Experiences in China
  - Little interest in permanent resettlement in China under current rules
  - Pervasive problems in employment
  - Difficulties of on-migration



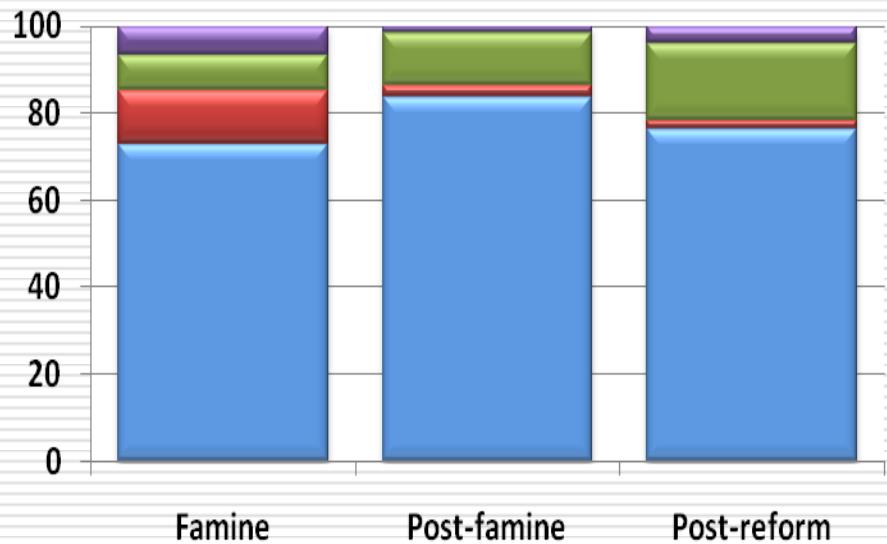
# Economic and social change

The easiest way to make money in North Korea is...



- Engage in corrupt or criminal activities
- Work hard at assigned job
- Engage in market activities
- None of the above

The best way to get ahead in North Korea is...

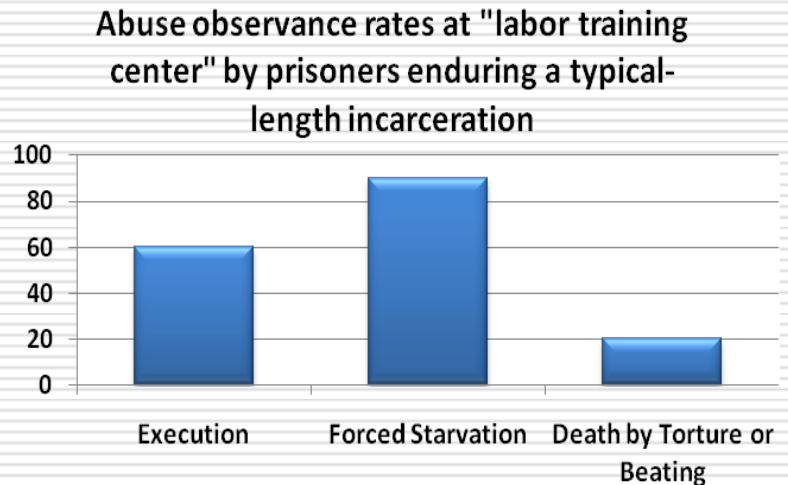
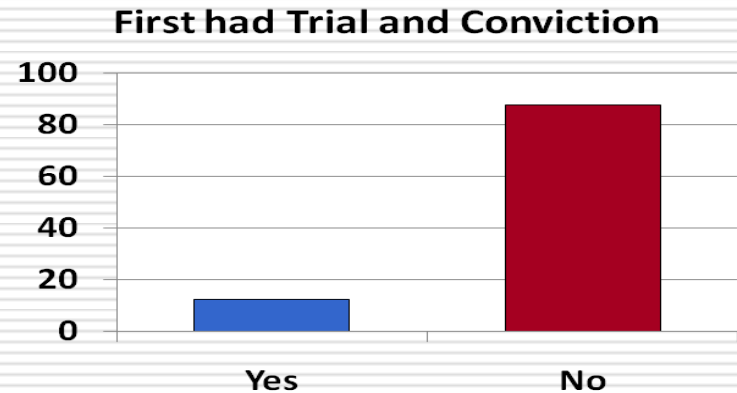


- Become a government or party official
- Join the army
- Engage in business
- None of the above

# Criminalization of economic activity

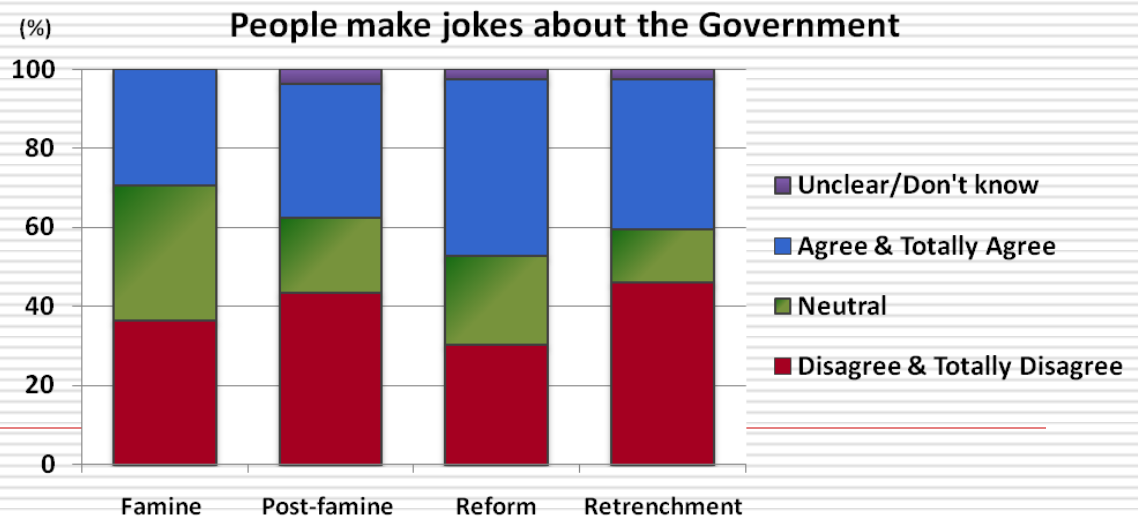
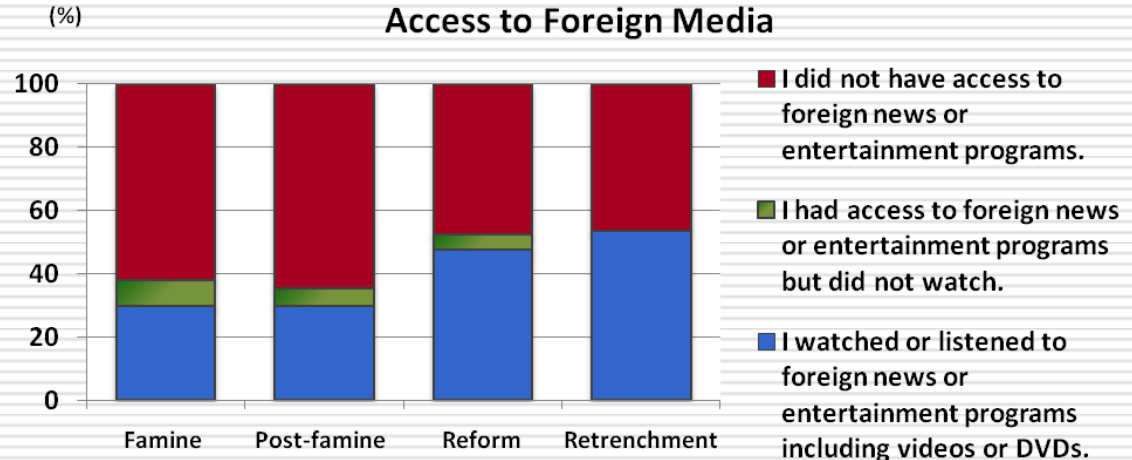
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- ❑ Market activity associated with 50% higher arrest rate
- ❑ Severe punishment
- ❑ Political intimidation and economic predation

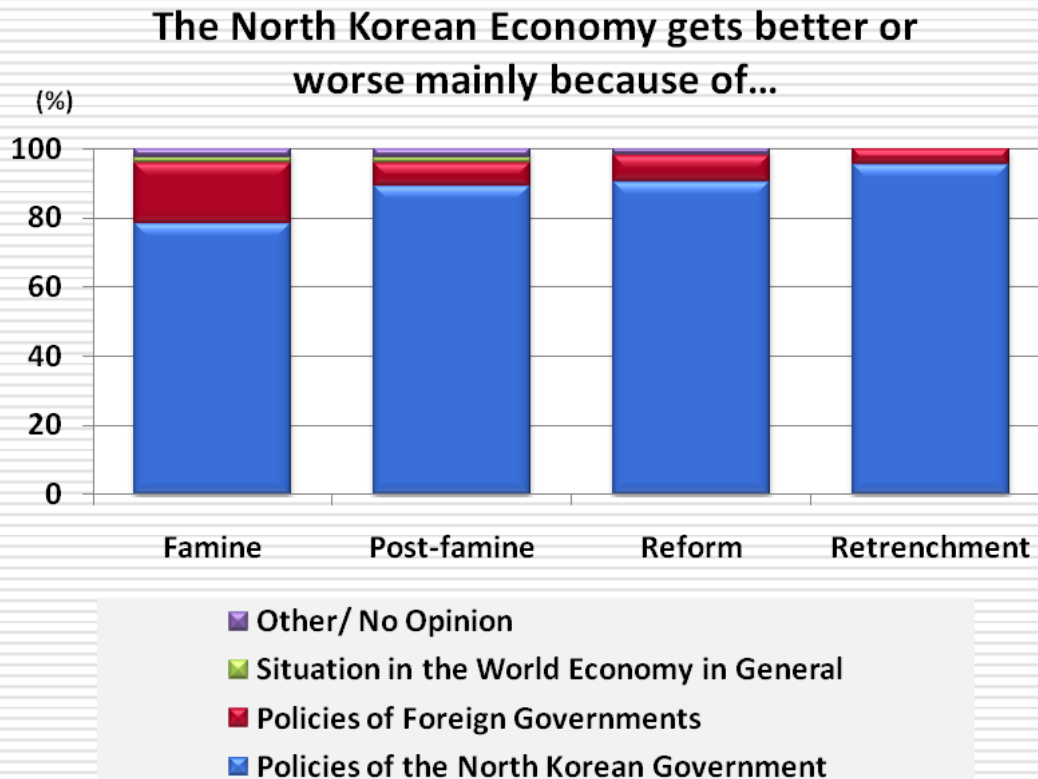


# Political implications: "everyday forms of resistance"

- Increasing access to foreign media
- Associated with more dissenting views
- Meta-narrative increasingly disbelieved
- Population atomized



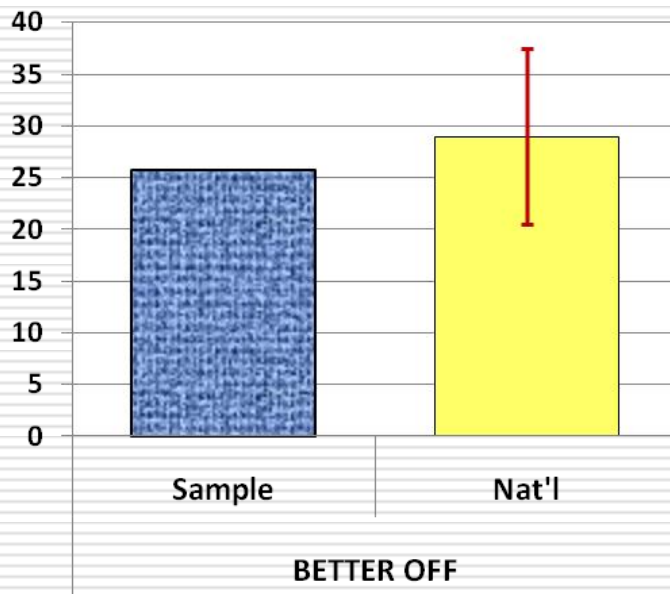
# The Market Syndrome—the regime is right to fear the market



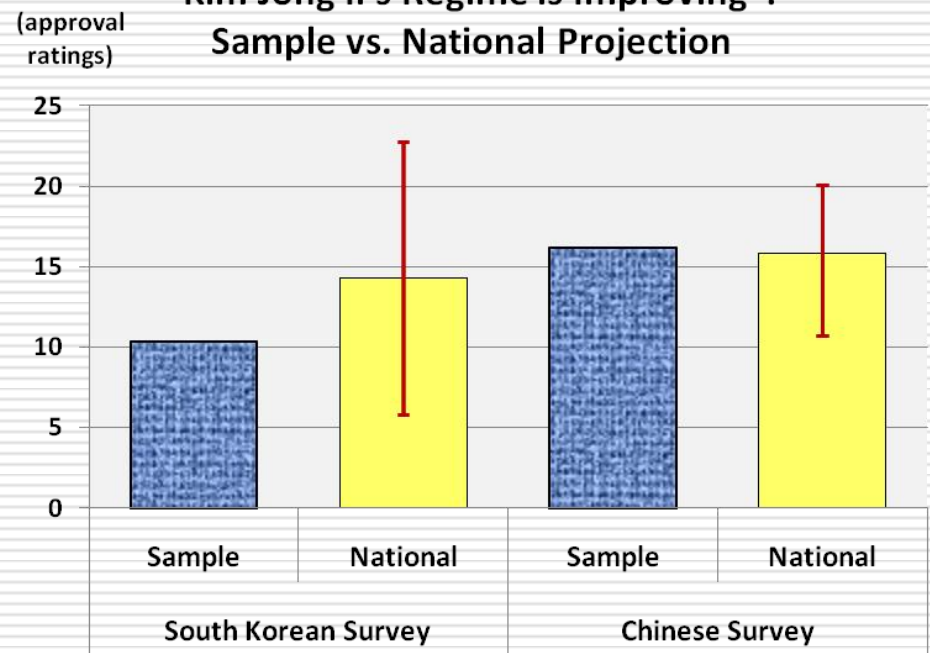
- Participants in market activities
  - More likely to cite “political” departure motives
  - More likely to have been arrested
  - More negative views
  - More likely to communicate views to peers

# Counterfactuals

Sentiments about the Government and Economy:  
Sample vs. National Projection



"Kim Jong Il's Regime is Improving":  
Sample vs. National Projection



Note: Brackets display confidence intervals at the 95 percent confidence

# Human rights policy matrix

Policies toward	Direct policies	Indirect policies
Resident population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official dialogue</li> <li>• Penal system</li> <li>• Humanitarian relief</li> <li>• POWs/abductees</li> <li>• Family unification</li> <li>• Nonofficial exchange</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information</li> <li>• Labor standards</li> </ul>
Refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decriminalize exit</li> <li>• Free repatriates</li> <li>• Enable determination</li> </ul>	<p>US:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement NKHRA</li> <li>• Support asylum seeking</li> <li>• Refugee scholarships</li> </ul> <p>China</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ease forced repatriation</li> <li>• UNHCR access</li> </ul>



# Eyes Open Engagement

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- Address material deprivation and encourage institutional change
  - Humanitarian assistance
    - Improve programmatic quality
    - Encourage agricultural reforms
  - Development assistance
    - International financial institutions
    - Target non-state enterprises
  - Commercial engagement
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# Whither North Korea?

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- ❑ Looming succession
  - ❑ Widespread discontent, but an absence of civil society institutions
  - ❑ Exiting the system: Everyday forms of resistance
  - ❑ The market as a zone of autonomy and freedom
  - ❑ “Intensify contradictions”: Constrain an uncountable regime
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# Thank you for your attention

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