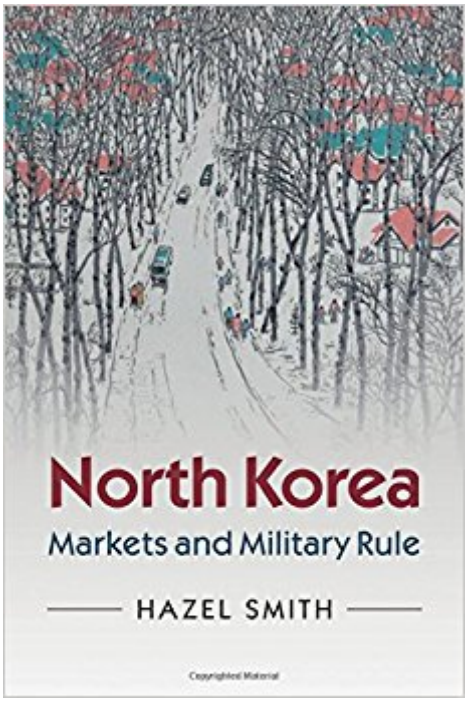
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North Korea: Markets And Military Rule



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Synopsis

In this historically grounded, richly empirical study of social and economic transformation in North Korea, Hazel Smith evaluates the 'marketization from below' that followed the devastating famine of the early 1990s, estimated to be the cause of nearly one million fatalities. Smith shows how the end of the Cold War in Europe and the famine brought radical social change to all of North Korean society. This major new study analyses how marketization transformed the interests, expectations and values of the entire society, including Party members, the military, women and men, the young and the elderly. Smith shows how the daily life of North Koreans has become alienated from the daily pronouncements of the North Korean government. Challenging stereotypes of twenty-five million North Koreans as mere bystanders in history, Smith argues that North Koreans are 'neither victims nor villains' but active agents of their own destiny.

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Customer Reviews

"Hazel Smith's data-driven tour de force convincingly demolishes the cartoonish image of North Korea held by most outsiders, including senior policymakers in the West." Robert M. Hathaway, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington DC"A timely and insightful analysis of the post-Cold War transformation of the North Korean society. Ã Â This book challenges the stereotypes of many outside observers of North Korean affairsÃ Â and provides important policy implications." Yoon Young-Kwan, Seoul National University, and former Foreign Minister of Republic of Korea"As an antidote to demonization the powerful impact of Hazel Smith's thought forces one to

look at North Korea not as a pariah, but as a country struggling to pull itself out of international isolation." Donald P. Gregg, former US Ambassador to South Korea and Chairman Emeritus of The Korea Society in New York"North Korea is a no-nonsense book. The wealth of documents and statistics does much to buttress the analysis, and it is as good as any English-language book in providing an overview of contemporary North Korea. Smith's analysis of the pre-famine, Kim Ilsungist period is well grounded and clear sighted as she pays due attention to the historical, organizational, and ideological factors that molded the robust system." John Lie, Cross-Currents

In this historically grounded, empirical study of social and economic transformation in North Korea, Hazel Smith evaluates North Korean society after the 'marketisation from below' that followed the famine of the early 1990s, providing readers with a fresh, insightful and broad-ranging overview of the country today.

A careful reader of the literature on North Korea will note that non-Americans tends to write without the customary mainstream-produced baggage about the conflict on the Korean peninsula while the American narrative applies all the dispassionate objective analysis of Joe McCarthy hunting down the reds. The question of addressing the North Korean problem is something that is sorely beyond those commentators who see force as the sole way to resolve the world's problems. We owe a debt of gratitude to Hazel Smith for expanding the spectrum of the discussion about North Korea and injecting nuances that go far beyond the tedious Cold War narrative.

The author presents a comprehensive history of North Korea based on verifiable and well-researched facts, and provides a glimpse at how the country changed after the famine of the 1990s. The book does not shy away from criticizing the Kim family dictatorship, but it warns against the simplistic view of North Korean citizens as being unified, brainwashed automatons. The reality is more subtle and more interesting. Recommended.

Very detailed description of what is known today. A good update of the outside world's knowledge built on extensive collection of the scattered pieces of information that is allowed to trickle out of North Korea. It illustrates that in spite of the reime's effort to stop it more information is flowing out of the country than ever before.

Very well researched and insightful; goes a long way toward dispelling the myths and stereotypes

about North Korea and it’s leaders, replacing false assumptions with revealing and comprehensive analysis. This work is for serious students of North Korea.

Hazel Smith has tons of experience; however, she sees things quite differently from most analysts of North Korea - but that is part of her appeal. If books like Felix Abt’s "A Capitalist in North Korea" and Bruce Cumings "North Korea: Another Country" impress you as being more accurate and thus better than mainstream reporting on North Korea, then this book is one you will likely enjoy. For myself, however, the constant turning of accepted facts into different - even contrarian - points of view got tiresome. Sometimes, as Freud said, a cigar is just a cigar and one doesn’t need to analyze the heck out of facts that do a good job of speaking for themselves. This book was difficult to get through because of Smith’s desire to be different - but it seems that is what sells books these days.

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