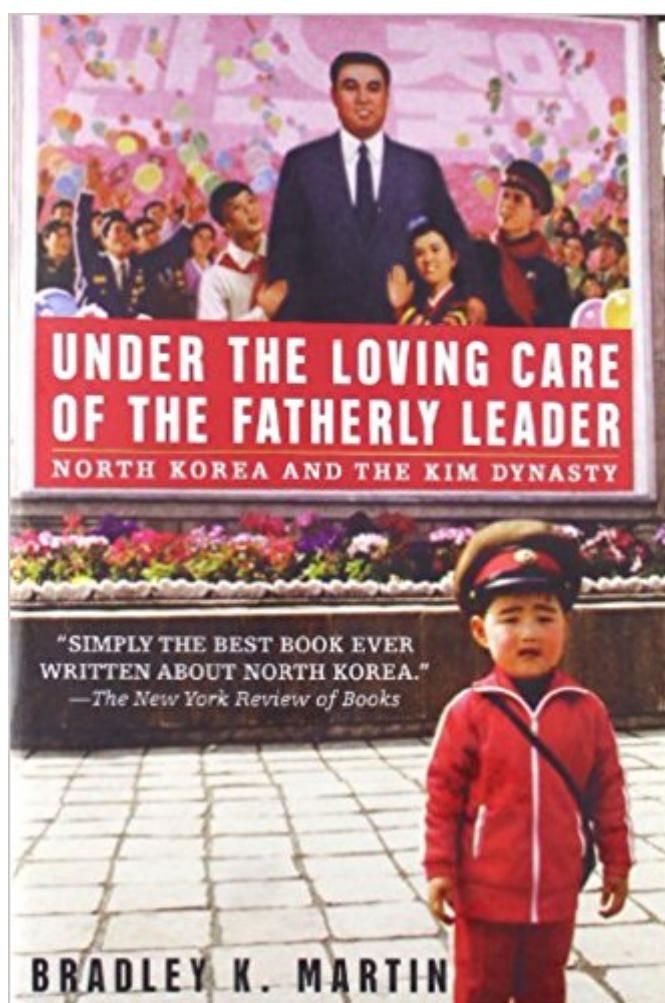


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Under The Loving Care Of The Fatherly Leader: North Korea And The Kim Dynasty



Synopsis

Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader offers in-depth portraits of North Korea's two ruthless and bizarrely Orwellian leaders, Kim Il-Sung and Kim Jong-Il. Lifting North Korea's curtain of self-imposed isolation, this book will take readers inside a society, that to a Westerner, will appear to be from another planet. Subsisting on a diet short on food grains and long on lies, North Koreans have been indoctrinated from birth to follow unquestioningly a father-son team of megalomaniacs. To North Koreans, the Kims are more than just leaders. Kim Il-Sung is the country's leading novelist, philosopher, historian, educator, designer, literary critic, architect, general, farmer, and ping-pong trainer. Radios are made so they can only be tuned to the official state frequency. "Newspapers" are filled with endless columns of Kim speeches and propaganda. And instead of Christmas, North Koreans celebrate Kim's birthday--and he presents each child a present, just like Santa. The regime that the Kim Dynasty has built remains technically at war with the United States nearly a half century after the armistice that halted actual fighting in the Korean War. This fascinating and complete history takes full advantage of a great deal of source material that has only recently become available (some from archives in Moscow and Beijing), and brings the reader up to the tensions of the current day. For as this book will explain, North Korea appears more and more to be the greatest threat among the Axis of Evil countries--with some defector testimony warning that Kim Jong-Il has enough chemical weapons to wipe out the entire population of South Korea.

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Customer Reviews

Under different circumstances, North Korea could be the subject of a Marx Brothers satire, with the

elements of a pompous, ego-driven patriarch, a worshipful population, and a general aura of fantasy and illusion. But North Korea has a superbly equipped million-man army and an expanding nuclear weapons program. So this comprehensive examination of this totalitarian society and the two men who have dominated it is often terrifying. For a quarter century, Martin has covered North Korea while working for the Baltimore Sun, the Asian Wall Street Journal, and Newsweek. Using newly available material from Russian and Chinese sources, Martin offers surprising insights into the career and character of both Kim Il-Sung and his son, Kim Jong-Il. He strives, albeit with moderate success, to unveil the reality from the mounds of myth and distortions with which both men have surrounded themselves. But Martin's account is most chilling in his descriptions of contemporary North Korean society. And yet, as Martin eloquently illustrates in this important book, the control of the Kim dynasty may well be tenuous. Jay Freeman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

“Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader is, from all I have read, simply the best book ever written about North Korea. Relying largely on extensive interviews with defectors, Martin portrays North Korean life with a clarity that is stunning, and he captures the paradoxes in North Korean public opinion.”
—Nicholas D. Kristof, *The New York Review of Books*
“Martin's massive book provides as useful a set of insights into life in North Korea as can be found anywhere.”
—L.A. Times Review
“As an AP correspondent covering South Korea in the 1970s, I learned quickly how difficult it was to discover any reliable information about that secretive, threatening regime to the north. Brad Martin's book is testimony to the thoroughness of his work, and the high level of his ability as a journalist and researcher. North Korea is one of the least known, least understood countries in the world. Its leaders have always been enigmas, both frightening and fascinating, but almost impossible to decipher. Again today, it becomes vitally important that we do both, yet there is almost nothing of importance being written about the subject. Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader is important, as well as fascinating. The research is impeccable, the writing excellent. This is a major and timely contribution, and essential to anyone who hopes to deal sensibly with a vital region of the world.”
—Terry Anderson, former AP correspondent and author of *Den of Lions*
“Brad Martin's Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader, a careful, penetrating analysis of North Korea, is more than just a book. Given the levels of secrecy which surround the Pyongyang regime and the danger it poses to its neighbors, Martin has rendered a considerable service to us all.”
—Bestselling author, David Halbertstam
“Brad Martin's book on North

Korea is at once enlightening and frightening. It is lucid in writing, balanced in analysis, and comprehensive in its meticulous research and anecdotal evidence. The detailed exposition of the narrow life of luxury and the devious character of the 'Dear Leader,' Kim Jong-il, is scary. So is the description of North Korea as a corrupt, secretive, stagnant fief of the Kim family. Brad Martin, with his long years as a Pyongyang-watcher, is eminently qualified to write a book that should strip away any illusions America and the West have about Kim's dangerous regime. — Richard Halloran, former correspondent for The New York Times in Asia and Washington, D.C.

Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader is the most in-depth, well-researched, and comprehensive study I have read of the Kim Dynasty and North Korea. I spent 23 years with the CIA, many of those years following the regime, and can attest that there is so much propaganda, myths, and urban legends surrounding this nation and its rulers that it is often impossible to distinguish fact from fiction. Bradley Martin has done a superior job in doing just that. His research is impeccable, and I appreciate that with many of the more controversial subjects (such as the private lives of the Great Leader and the Dear Leader) he is honest about what can and cannot be verified. My only criticism is that in some of the chapters which are reliant on defector interviews, in my opinion Bradley Martin used too many interviews that were similar in nature, and that using less would have helped move the work along. However, this is a minor criticism; while the amount of interviews may slow down the pace, it does provide a deep understanding of the North. Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader is one of the best books written on North Korea and the Kim Dynasty. I hope Bradley Martin intends to update it in the future to include Kim Chong-il's final days and the succession of Kim Chong-un.

This is a wonderful book in many ways. 1. As a chronicle of the building of a religious movement in real time. Juche (and the Kim Dynasty) have all the elements of the major monotheistic religions. Blessings over food thanking the Kim Family (all three Christianity, Islam, and Judaism); Prophets and Dynamic Leaders (The Kim family vis a vis the Prophet Mohammed); A figure that becomes larger than the life that he actually lived (Mohammed, Jesus). As I read this book, it made me think that there is no need to go back over sources to reconstruct the birth of any of the major religions when I have something to read here to approximate that process that has not been translated over many languages over long periods of time. 2. There are also heavy elements of things that have been said before by other authors (I am thinking primarily of Eric Hoffer's classic — The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements (Perennial Classics

(Paperback)) and secondarily of Ernest Van den Haag's Jewish Mystique), which are:

- a. Religion is not something that exists independently of a medium (i) and (ii) that even though the specific symbols are different, the psychic architecture is the same;
- b. Mass movements may get started without a belief in God, but never without belief in a Devil. (The Korean Devil here was the Japanese/ Americans.)

3. There are elements of historical events that have happened before in history:

- a. There is a direct parallel between Poland (in between the two huge powers of Expansive Russia and Germany) and Korea (in between the Expansive Chinese and Japanese);
- b. The person who became the leader of a mass movement tried on quite a few things before he found that at which he had a talent. Mao Zedong's progression was something like Nationalism-->Communism-->Chinese Communism (Mao: The Unknown Story) and Kim progression was something like Christianity-->Nationalism-->Communism-->Juche.

4. As a historical text.

- a. There is a huge Korean diaspora, and now we have an idea of how it came to be;
- b. Northeast China is heavily Korean. Authors like BR Myers (The Cleanest Race: How North Koreans See Themselves and Why It Matters) would have us believe that the idea of Korea is a relatively new concept and that there was no difference between Chinese and literate Koreans until about a century ago. This author gives a more believable explanation, and it is that: Korean people were a tribe like Poles who had the sense of a country. Some amount of this amorphous space turned into a country and that explains why there are lots of Germans in Poland and Russia and Poles in Russia, etc.

Verdict: Strongly recommended. Worth the time and worth even more than the secondhand purchase price.

Insights too the dysfunctional family that is North Korea headed by a great leader father figure. This book reveals the contradictions and just plain bat-dung crazy stuff that passes for normal life in North Korea. This is a personality cult that has bested Stalin. Joe Stalin would have lived in constant despair and died with abject envy of the sick twisted police state North Korea has become. Compared to North Korea Stalin was but an upstart a primitive novice at building a personality cult driven communist police state. North Korea could have taught Adolf Hitler a few things about how to keep a people down using brain washing and internal re-education camps. The loving care of the fatherly leader yeah right, reading this book is almost sickening not because it is a bad book but because it is so good. This book reveals things about the daily suffering of the North Korean people that would make the normal caring human heartsick. I'm an old gray autistic werewolf not usually given to the weakness of human compassion but in this rare case even I was moved almost to tears at the suffering of everyday North Korean folks recounted faithfully in this book. This book is

awesome because the truth about North Korea must be told. It is hard to believe the things in this book are true because no one wants to think humans could do such evil to another. Read this book and you can taste the death and suffering in North Korea, every word has power within. It is funny the South Korean Flag has the Yin Yang opposites and in reality South Korea is an economic powerhouse a driving force on the world stage. While North Korea is hardcore Ultra Stalinist communist economic and social basket-case run into the ground by a succession of imbed family nut jobs. In its attempt to get atomic weapons a Pakistani leader said we will eat dirt and grass if that is what it takes to get an A Bomb. In North Korea the government literally made its population eat dirt and grass in its head long drive to get an A-Bomb. It is sad really.

Written for a casual reader by a gifted writer. Uses some colloquial statements like "hitch" when referring to a NK soldier. But this book isn't written for academics but for the armchair historian who wants to learn about the dear leader. There may not be any better literature produced that has such detail about the life of Kim il sung than this book. Any literature that is released about Kim il sung from Korea cannot be trusted. Martin goes far and wide to interview people who knew Kim il sung from his earlier years to the publish date. It's dated now... But the gold standard into the life of Kim il sung

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