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This collection of seminal primary readings in the social, intellectual, and religious traditions of Korea from the sixteenth century to the present day lays the groundwork for understanding Korean civilization and demonstrates how leading intellectuals and public figures in Korea have looked at life, the traditions of their ancestors, and the world they lived in.

Death and the activities and beliefs surrounding it can teach us much about the ideals and cultures of the living. While biologically death is an end to physical life, this break is not quite so apparent in its mental and spiritual aspects. Indeed, the influence of the dead over the living is sometimes much greater than before death. This volume takes a multidisciplinary approach in an effort to provide a fuller understanding of both historic and contemporary practices linked with death in Korea. Contributors from Korea and the West incorporate the approaches of archaeology, history, literature, religion, and anthropology in addressing a number of topics organized around issues of the body, disposal of remains, ancestor worship and rites, and the afterlife. The first two chapters explore the ways in which bodies of the dying and the dead were dealt with from the Greater Silla Kingdom (668-935) to the mid-twentieth century. Grave construction and goods, cemeteries, and memorial monuments in the Koryŏ (918-1392) and the twentieth century are then discussed, followed by a consideration of ancestral rites and worship, which have formed an inseparable part of Korean mortuary customs since premodern times. Chapters address the need to appease the dead both in shamanic and Confucians contexts. The final section of the book examines the treatment of the dead and how the state of death has been perceived. Ghost stories provide important insight into how death was interpreted by common people in the Koryŏ and Chosŏn (1392-1910) while nonconformist narratives of death such as the seventeenth-century romantic novel *Kuunmong* point to a clear conflict between Buddhist thought and practice and official Neo-Confucian doctrine. Keeping with unendorsed views on death, the final chapter explores how death and the afterlife were understood by early Korean Catholics of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. *Death, Mourning, and the Afterlife in Korea* fills a significant gap in studies on Korean society and culture as well as on East Asian mortuary practices. By approaching its topic from a variety of disciplines and extending its historical reach to cover both premodern and modern Korea, it is an important resource for scholars and students in a vari-

ety of fields.

A funny, transporting, surprising, and poignant novel that was one of the highest-selling debuts of recent years in Korea, *Love in the Big City* tells the story of a young gay man searching for happiness in the lonely city of Seoul. *Love in the Big City* is the English-language debut of Sang Young Park, one of Korea's most exciting young writers. A runaway bestseller, the novel hit the top five lists of all the major bookstores, went into twenty-six printings, and was praised for its unique literary voice and perspective. It is now poised to capture a worldwide readership. Young is a cynical yet fun-loving Korean student who pinballs from home to class to the beds of recent Tinder matches. He and Jaehee, his female best friend and roommate, frequent nearby bars where they push away their anxieties about their love lives, families, and money with rounds of soju and ice-cold Marlboro Reds that they keep in their freezer. Yet over time, even Jaehee leaves Young to settle down, leaving him alone to care for his ailing mother and to find companionship in his relationships with a series of men, including one whose handsomeness is matched by his coldness, and another who might end up being the great love of his life. A brilliantly written novel that takes us into the glittering nighttime of Seoul and the bleary-eyed morning after with both humor and emotion, *Love in the Big City* is a wry portrait of millennial loneliness as well as the abundant joys of queer life.

In this comprehensive yet compact book, Michael J. Seth surveys Korean history from Neolithic times to the present. He explores the origins and development of Korean society, politics, and its still little-known cultural heritage from their inception to the two Korean states of today. Telling the remarkable story of the origins and evolution of a society that borrowed and adopted from abroad, Seth describes how various tribal peoples in the peninsula came together to form one of the world's most distinctive communities. He shows how this ancient, culturally and ethnically homogeneous society was wrenched into the world of late-nineteenth-century imperialism, fell victim to Japanese expansionism, and then became arbitrarily divided into two opposed halves, North and South, after World War II. Tracing the past seven decades, the book explains how the two Koreas, with their deeply different political and social systems and geopolitical orientations, evolved into sharply contrasting societies. South Korea, after an unpromising start, became one of the few postcolonial developing states to enter the ranks of the first world, with a globally competitive economy, a democratic politi-

cal system, and a cosmopolitan and dynamic culture. North Korea, by contrast, became one of the world's most totalitarian and isolated societies, a nuclear power with an impoverished and famine-stricken population. Seth describes and analyzes the radically different and historically unprecedented trajectories of the two Koreas, formerly one tight-knit society. Throughout, he adds a rich dimension by placing Korean history into broader global perspective and by including primary readings from each era. All readers looking for a balanced, knowledgeable history will be richly rewarded with this clear and concise book.

With his insightful and wide-ranging theory of recognition, Axel Honneth has decisively reshaped the Frankfurt School tradition of critical social theory. Combining insights from philosophy, sociology, psychology, history, political economy, and cultural critique, Honneth's work proposes nothing less than an account of the moral infrastructure of human sociality and its relation to the perils and promise of contemporary social life. This book provides an accessible overview of Honneth's main contributions across a variety of fields, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of his thought. Christopher Zurn clearly explains Honneth's multi-faceted theory of recognition and its relation to diverse topics: individual identity, morality, activist movements, progress, social pathologies, capitalism, justice, freedom, and critique. In so doing, he places Honneth's theory in a broad intellectual context, encompassing classic social theorists such as Kant, Hegel, Marx, Freud, Dewey, Adorno and Habermas, as well as contemporary trends in social theory and political philosophy. Treating the full range of Honneth's corpus, including his major new work on social freedom and democratic ethical life, this book is the most up-to-date guide available. Axel Honneth will be invaluable to students and scholars working across the humanities and social sciences, as well as anyone seeking a clear guide to the work of one of the most influential theorists writing today.

One in a series of booklets whose purpose is to stimulate greater and more effective understanding of world affairs among Americans, this seven-chapter report examines the political, economic, and anomalous positions of North and South Korea in the international system. "Traditional Legacies" traces the historical development of the two Koreas. "The Colonial Pressure Cooker" looks at the colonial system's impact on Korea. "Liberation, Separate Regimes, War" explores national division, rivalry, and the Korean War. "The South Korean Political System" examines South Korean political crises and growth. "The North Korean Political System" examines North Korea's socialist corporatism system. "The Two Economies" compares the two Koreas' different economies. "Foreign Relations" discusses the diplomacy of North and South Korea. The "Talking It Over" section offers questions for students and discussion groups. The report includes maps, pictures, and an annotated reading list. (TRS)

Frankly in Love meets Shark Tank in this feel-good romantic comedy about two entrepreneurial Korean-American teens who butt heads—and maybe fall in love—while running competing Korean beauty businesses at their high school. There's nothing Valerie Kwon loves more than making a good sale. Together with her cousin Charlie, they run V&C K-BEAUTY, their school's most successful student-run enterprise. With each sale, Valerie gets closer to taking her beloved and adventurous halmeoni to her dream city, Paris. Enter the new kid in class, Wes Jung, who is determined to pursue music after graduation despite his parents' major disapproval. When his classmates clamor to buy the K-pop branded beauty products his mom gave him to "make new friends," he sees an opportunity—one

that may be the key to help him pay for the music school tuition he knows his parents won't cover... What he doesn't realize, though, is that he is now V&C K-BEAUTY's biggest competitor. Stakes are high as Valerie and Wes try to outsell each other, make the most money, and take the throne for the best business in school—all while trying to resist the undeniable spark that's crackling between them. From hiring spies to all-or-nothing bets, the competition is much more than either of them bargained for. But one thing is clear: only one Korean business can come out on top.

Now in English, this important new contribution from a distinguished Korean historian on the history of twentieth-century Korea covers: first, the Japanese colonial period, including detailed accounts of the anti-Japanese independence movements, followed by the liberation of Korea, the Korean War and political developments up to the late 1980s.

North Korea and South Korea are never far from the news headlines - one for the alleged danger it poses to the world, the other for its apparent capitalist success story. In *Bipolar Orders*, Hyung Gu Lynn analyzes the processes driving both countries since the 1980s. North Korea has experienced severe economic deterioration and increasing international isolation, while South Korea has undergone democratization and witnessed the emergence of a vibrant consumer culture. Paradoxically, this growing gap in ideologies and material standards has led to improved relations between the two countries. Why has this counterintuitive development occurred? Is North Korea really a threat, and if so, for whom? This book provides a substantive, accessible, and timely examination of the complex and compelling histories of the two Koreas.

A riveting debut novel set in contemporary Seoul, Korea, about four young women making their way in a world defined by impossible standards of beauty, after-hours room salons catering to wealthy men, ruthless social hierarchies, and K-pop mania "Powerful and provocative . . . a novel about female strength, spirit, resilience—and the solace that friendship can sometimes provide."—The Washington Post NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY Time • NPR • Esquire • Bustle • BBC • New York Post • InStyle Kyuri is an aching beautiful woman with a hard-won job at a Seoul "room salon," an exclusive underground bar where she entertains businessmen while they drink. Though she prides herself on her cold, clear-eyed approach to life, an impulsive mistake threatens her livelihood. Kyuri's roommate, Miho, is a talented artist who grew up in an orphanage but won a scholarship to study art in New York. Returning to Korea after college, she finds herself in a precarious relationship with the heir to one of the country's biggest conglomerates. Down the hall in their building lives Ara, a hairstylist whose two preoccupations sustain her: an obsession with a boy-band pop star, and a best friend who is saving up for the extreme plastic surgery that she hopes will change her life. And Wonna, one floor below, is a newlywed trying to have a baby that she and her husband have no idea how they can afford to raise in Korea's brutal economy. Together, their stories tell a gripping tale at once unfamiliar and unmistakably universal, in which their tentative friendships may turn out to be the thing that ultimately saves them.

"This volume represents the first English-language collection by the renowned Korean cultural and political critic Paik Nak-chung. Paik's omnipresent theme is the 'division system' on the Korean peninsula, the peculiar logic by which one nation remains divided into two states. These deeply humanistic essays foreground the needs of ordinary citizens and call for globally relevant solutions to Korea's divided reality."--Publisher's website.

The growing importance of the Korean economy in the global arena and the spread of the so-called 'Korean wave' in Asia mean there is an increasing desire to understand contemporary Korean Society. To this end, this book provides a critical and progressive analysis of the diverse issues that impact on and shape contemporary Korean society at both local and national levels. The contributors address issues and movements which include: The state and regime Human rights Gender Civil society and social movements Culture Religion Domestic and migrant labour Welfare The chapters in this volume provide a critical perspective on Korean society, and draw upon interdisciplinary research from across the social sciences. With contributions from leading Korean scholars and academics from around the world, this is a welcome addition to the growing field of Korean Studies, and will be of great interest to students and scholars interested in Korean studies, Korean and Asian culture and society, and Asian studies more generally.

Originally published in hardcover in 2002.

A BRACING ACCOUNT OF A WAR THAT IS EITHER MISUNDERSTOOD, FORGOTTEN, OR WILLFULLY IGNORED For Americans, it was a discrete conflict lasting from 1950 to 1953. But for the Asian world the Korean War was a generations-long struggle that still haunts contemporary events. With access to new evidence and secret materials from both here and abroad, including an archive of captured North Korean documents, Bruce Cumings reveals the war as it was actually fought. He describes its origin as a civil war, preordained long before the first shots were fired in June 1950 by lingering fury over Japan's occupation of Korea from 1910 to 1945. Cumings then shares the neglected history of America's post-World War II occupation of Korea, reveals untold stories of bloody insurgencies and rebellions, and tells of the United States officially entering the action on the side of the South, exposing as never before the appalling massacres and atrocities committed on all sides. Elegantly written and blisteringly honest, *The Korean War* is, like the war it illuminates, brief, devastating, and essential.

This book considers both Koreas - North Korea and South Korea - to examine possible pathways for the years leading up to 2032 and beyond, thus offering a composite picture of Korea and its strategic relevance in Asia and the world at large. Through a combined South-North Olympic team and an effort of jointly hosting the Games, Republic of Korea president Moon Jae-in has marked the year 2032 as special in the future of the Korean Peninsula. Although the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has expressed scepticism about a combined hosting of the Games, the expectation in Korea is that this event will underline the shared destiny of the people inhabiting the peninsula and realign two states still caught in an ideologically fraught civil conflict that is one of the last vestiges of the Cold War. Chapters begin with a brief historical review and analysis of the present, before moving to consider how these will shape the next decade, drawing comparative and complementary analyses. No matter how contrasting the contemporary trajectories of both North and South Korea might appear, 'Korea' as a singular entity is an old concept still containing great possibilities. As the ongoing inter-Korean reconciliation process underscores, the futures of North and South Korea can be found in a complementary singular Korea, which would again represent an important political, strategic, cultural, and social space in Asia. An evaluation of the future trajectory, social awareness and perception of the Koreas, this book offers a valuable contribution to the study of North and South Korea and Asian Politics.

Korean cinema as industry, art form, and cultural product.

The Korean popular music consumed overseas under the banner of K-pop is pop and dance music performed by idol groups, who have mainly emerged since the 1990s and have come to enjoy popularity among teens. Since the 1990s can be considered the period in which K-pop directly took root, the development from the 1990s up through the 2000s when the popular music of the new generation entered the global spotlighted under the name of K-pop will be examined in this volume.

Ever since Korea was first divided at the end of World War II, the tension between its northern and southern halves has riveted—and threatened to embroil—the rest of the world. In this landmark history, now thoroughly revised and updated in conjunction with Korea expert Robert Carlin, veteran journalist Don Oberdorfer grippingly describes how a historically homogenous people became locked in a perpetual struggle for supremacy—and how they might yet be reconciled.

Understanding a people and their culture through code words and language. Today, South Korea is an economic, technological and entertainment superpower. How, as a country, did they rebound from war, poverty and political unrest? And how can that success be replicated in other cultures? The answers can, in fact, be found by understanding Korean customs, values and beliefs. Author Boye Lafayette De Mente identifies the unique qualities that comprise the Korean identity and articulates their modern expressions of Korean culture and history in this book. Organized alphabetically by topic, De Mente explains the critical cultural code words that make Korea the country it is today. Anyone interested in Korean etiquette, whether for travel or work, will discover that their meanings extend far beyond superficial English translations to deeper interpretations. Cultural code words include: Aboji, Ah-boh-jee — The "Father Culture" Anae, Ah-negh — Wives: The Inside People Han Yak, Hahn Yahk — The Herbal Way to Health Innae, Een-nay — A Culture of Enduring Katun Sosuy Pap, Kaht-unn Soh-suut Pahp — Eating from the Same Rice Bowl And over 200 more... This in-depth discussion covers the concepts and principles that are integral to the Korean way of life and provides all the Korean history and insight necessary for those readers eager to learn the secrets of this resilient and burgeoning, yet little-understood nation.

"This book presents a comprehensive overview of the relations between the two Koreas and the different ASEAN states, including their relations with ASEAN as an organisation. It outlines a complex picture with both bilateral and multilateral relations in play at the same time. It charts for each relationship how the present situation has arisen, discusses current difficulties and strains, and assesses how the relationship may develop in future"--

Japan and South Korea are Western-style democracies with open-market economies committed to the rule of law. They are also U.S. allies. Yet despite their shared interests, shared values, and geographic proximity, divergent national identities have driven a wedge between them. Drawing on decades of expertise, Brad Glosserman and Scott A. Snyder investigate the roots of this split and its ongoing threat to the region and the world. Glosserman and Snyder isolate competing notions of national identity as the main obstacle to a productive partnership between Japan and South Korea. Through public opinion data, interviews, and years of observation, they show how fundamentally incompatible, rapidly changing conceptions of national identity in Japan and South Korea—and not struggles over power or structural issues—have complicated territorial claims and international poli-

cy. Despite changes in the governments of both countries and concerted efforts by leading political figures to encourage U.S.–ROK–Japan security cooperation, the Japan–South Korea relationship continues to be hobbled by history and its deep imprint on ideas of national identity. This book recommends bold, policy-oriented prescriptions for overcoming problems in Japan–South Korea relations and facilitating trilateral cooperation among these three Northeast Asian allies, recognizing the power of the public on issues of foreign policy, international relations, and the prospects for peace in Asia.

This pioneering volume navigates cultural memory of the Korean War through the lens of contemporary arts and film in South Korea for the last two decades. Cultural memory of the Korean War has been a subject of persistent controversy in the forging of South Korean postwar national and ideological identity. Applying the theoretical notion of “postmemory,” this book examines the increasingly diversified attitudes toward memories of the Korean War and Cold War from the late 1990s and onward, particularly in the demise of military dictatorships. Chapters consider efforts from younger generation artists and filmmakers to develop new ways of representing traumatic memories by refusing to confine themselves to the tragic experiences of survivors and victims. Extensively illustrated, this is one of the first volumes in English to provide an in-depth analysis of work oriented around such themes from 12 renowned and provocative South Korean artists and filmmakers. This includes documentary photographs, participatory public arts, independent women’s documentary films, and media installations. The Korean War and Postmemory Generation will appeal to students and scholars of film studies, contemporary art, and Korean history.

Twelve chapters, portraying diverse aspects of the contemporary Korean families and showing how they have come to have their current shapes

"Passionate, cantankerous, and fascinating. Rather like Korea itself."--Nicholas D. Kristof, New York Times Book Review Korea has endured a "fractured, shattered twentieth century," and this updated edition brings Bruce Cumings's leading history of the modern era into the present. The small country, overshadowed in the imperial era, crammed against great powers during the Cold War, and divided and decimated by the Korean War, has recently seen the first real hints of reunification. But positive movements forward are tempered by frustrating steps backward. In the late 1990s South Korea survived its most severe economic crisis since the Korean War, forcing a successful restructuring of its political economy. Suffering through floods, droughts, and a famine that cost the lives of millions of people, North Korea has been labeled part of an "axis of evil" by the George W. Bush administration and has renewed its nuclear threats. On both sides Korea seems poised to continue its fractured existence on into the new century, with potential ramifications for the rest of the world.

This book discusses perceptions of ‘femininity’ in contemporary South Korea and the extent to which fictional representations in South Korean women’s fiction of the 1990s challenges the enduring association of the feminine with domesticity, docility and passivity.

Kim Jong Il came to power after the death of his father Kim Il Sung in 1994. Contrary to expectations, he has succeeded in maintaining enough political stability to remain in power. Kim Jong Il's Leadership of North Korea is an examination of how political power has been developed, transmitted from father to son, and now operates in North Korea Using a variety of original North Korean sources as well as South Korean materials Jae-Cheon Lim pieces together the ostensibly contradictory and incon-

sistent facts into a conceptual coherent framework. This book considers Kim and his leadership through an analytical framework. composed of four main elements: i) Kim as a leader of a totalitarian society; ii) as a politician; iii) as a Korean; and iv) as an individual person. This illuminating account of what constitutes power and how it is used makes an important contribution to the understanding of an opaque and difficult regime. It will be of interest for upper level undergraduate, post-graduates and academics interested in North Korean politics, and also those in Political theory.

Igniting the Internet is one of the first books to examine in depth the development and consequences of Internet-born politics in the twenty-first century. It takes up the new wave of South Korean youth activism that originated online in 2002, when the country’s dynamic cyberspace transformed a vehicular accident involving two U.S. servicemen into a national furor that compelled many Koreans to reexamine the fifty-year relationship between the two countries. Responding to the accident, which ended in the deaths of two high school students, technologically savvy youth went online to organize demonstrations that grew into nightly rallies across the nation. Internet-born, youth-driven mass protest has since become a familiar and effective repertoire for activism in South Korea, even as the rest of the world has struggled to find its feet with this emerging model of political involvement. Igniting the Internet focuses on the cultural dynamics that have allowed the Internet to bring issues rapidly to public attention and exert influence on both domestic and international politics. The author combines a robust analysis of online communities with nuanced interview data to theorize a “cultural ignition process”—the mechanisms and implications for popular politics in volatile Internet-driven activism—in South Korea and beyond. She offers a unique perspective on how local actors experience and remember the cultural dynamics of Internet-born activism and how these experiences shape the political identities of a generation who has essentially come of age in cyberspace, the so-called digital natives or millennials. South Korea’s debates on the nature of youth-driven Internet protest reverberated around the world following the events in Tahrir Square in 2010 and Zuccotti Park in 2011. Igniting the Internet offers numerous points of comparison with countries following a path of technological development and urban youth formation similar to that of South Korea with a thorough consideration of general structural changes and locally specific triggers for Internet activism. Readers interested in social movement theory and new media in social context as well as students and scholars of Korean studies will find the work both far-reaching and insightful.

Don Oberdorfer has written a gripping narrative history of Korea's travails and triumphs over the past three decades. The Two Koreas places the tensions between North and South within a historical context, with a special emphasis on the involvement of outside powers.

Michael E. Robinson provides readers with the historical essentials upon which to unravel the complex politics and contemporary crises that exist in the East Asian region.

After providing an accessible history of the nation, the author turns his focus to what North Korea is, what its leadership thinks and how its people cope with living in such an oppressive and poor place, arguing that North Korea is not irrational, but rather a nation that has survived against all odds.

A comprehensive history of the Korean War explains how it started and why it still has not technically ended, and describes how North Korea continues to stockpile weapons while its people go without the basic necessities of life.

Presenting a succinct, historically informed introduction to North and South Korea, the second edi-

tion of *The Koreas* considers the radically different ways these countries have dealt with the growing challenges of globalization. Since the first edition's publication, the economic, political, and social differences have only intensified, making evident the relevancy and importance of Armstrong's work, in understanding the Koreas now and in the future. Ultimately, *The Koreas* is a crisp, engaging primer of Korea and the Korean people in the contemporary world. This book is ideal for many courses in a variety of disciplines, including politics, history, international business, and Asian studies.

What history, pop culture, and diaspora can teach us about North and South Korea today. Korea is one of the last divided countries in the world. Twins born of the Cold War, one is vilified as an isolated, impoverished, time-warped state with an abysmal human rights record and a reclusive leader who perennially threatens global security with his clandestine nuclear weapons program. The other is lauded as a thriving democratic and capitalist state with the thirteenth largest economy in the world and a model for developing countries to emulate. In *The Koreas*, Theodore Jun Yoo provides a compelling gateway to understanding the divergent developments of contemporary North and South Korea. In contrast to standard histories, Yoo examines the unique qualities of the Korean diaspora experience, challenging the master narratives of national culture, homogeneity, belongingness, and identity. This book draws from the latest research to present a decidedly demythologized history, with chapters focusing on feature stories that capture the key issues of the day as they affect popular culture and everyday life. *The Koreas* will be indispensable to any historian, armchair or otherwise, in need of a discerning and reliable guide to the region.

The first in-depth, comprehensive study of Korean cinema offering original insight into the relationships between ideology and the art of cinema from East Asian perspectives. Combines issues of contemporary Korean culture and cinematic representation of the society and people in both North and South Korea. Covers the introduction of motion pictures in 1903, Korean cinema during the Japanese colonial period (1910-45) and the development of North and South Korean cinema up to the 1990s. Introduces the works of Korea's major directors, and analyses the Korean film industry in terms of film production, distribution and reception. Based on this historical analysis, the study investigates ideological constructs in seventeen films, eight from North Korea and nine from South Korea.

Examining the theoretical, historical, and contemporary impact of South Korea's Golden Age of cinema.

The inspiring, unlikely story of the American, Canadian, South Korean and even North Korean women who joined together to form Korea's first Olympic ice hockey team. Two weeks before the opening ceremony of the 2018 Winter Olympics, South Korea's women's hockey team was forced into a predicament that no president, ambassador or general had been able to resolve in the sixty-five years since the end of the Korean War. Against all odds, the group of young women were able to bring North and South Korea closer than ever before. The team was built for this moment. They had been brought together from across the globe and from a wide variety of backgrounds—concert pianist, actress, high school student, convenience store worker—to make history. Now the special kinship they

had developed would guide them through the biggest challenge of their careers. Suddenly thrust into an international spotlight, they showed the powerful meaning of what a unified Korea could resemble. In *A Team of Their Own*, Seth Berkman goes behind the scenes to tell the story of these young women as they became a team amid immense political pressure and personal turmoil, and ultimately gained worldwide acceptance on a journey that encapsulates the truest meanings of sport and family.

This volume brings together contemporary plays written by artists of Korean descent living in the Americas. The plays address the complex experiences of diaspora, from matters of immigration and cultural assimilation to home and belonging. In her introduction, Esther Kim Lee outlines the critical issues addressed by the playwrights and offers context for understanding the place of drama in representing the Korean diaspora. The book will be ideal for teaching and should also appeal to a general readership interested in drama and Asian American literature.

Against the backdrop of China's mounting influence and North Korea's growing nuclear capability and expanding missile arsenal, South Korea faces a set of strategic choices that will shape its economic prospects and national security. In *South Korea at the Crossroads*, Scott A. Snyder examines the trajectory of fifty years of South Korean foreign policy and offers predictions—and a prescription—for the future. Pairing a historical perspective with a shrewd understanding of today's political landscape, Snyder contends that South Korea's best strategy remains investing in a robust alliance with the United States. Snyder begins with South Korea's effort in the 1960s to offset the risk of abandonment by the United States during the Vietnam War and the subsequent crisis in the alliance during the 1970s. A series of shifts in South Korean foreign relations followed: the "Nordpolitik" engagement with the Soviet Union and China at the end of the Cold War; Kim Dae Jung's "Sunshine Policy," designed to bring North Korea into the international community; "trustpolitik," which sought to foster diplomacy with North Korea and Japan; and changes in South Korea's relationship with the United States. Despite its rise as a leader in international financial, development, and climate-change forums, South Korea will likely still require the commitment of the United States to guarantee its security. Although China is a tempting option, Snyder argues that only the United States is both credible and capable in this role. South Korea remains vulnerable relative to other regional powers in northeast Asia despite its rising profile as a middle power, and it must balance the contradiction of desirable autonomy and necessary alliance.

When Kim Jong Un became the leader of North Korea following his father's death in 2011, predictions about his imminent fall were rife. North Korea was isolated, poor, unable to feed its people, and clinging to its nuclear program for legitimacy. But he has solidified his grip on his country and brought the U.S. and the region to the brink of war. Pak, a former CIA analyst, provides a groundbreaking account of the rise of North Korea's dictator from his nuclear ambitions to his summits with President Donald J. Trump. She argues that Kim's personality, perceptions, and preferences are underestimated by Washington policy wonks who assume he sees the world as they do. -- adapted from jacket