Who is North Korea?

Recent intensified conflicts between North Korea and the rest of the world and President Trump’s constant twitters about his intake on the hermit kingdom have inevitably arouse curiosity. With any reasons, actions and diplomatic languages from North Korea are hard to understand. This book display contains selective publications from not only two Koreas, but also western and Korea’s neighboring countries, such as China and Japan. Hopefully, these balanced multinational voice could provide a better picture about North Korea in the aspects of politics, economy, history, culture, and daily life.
Daily Life in North Korea

1. Above the Line: People and Places in the DPRK (North Korea)  
   (DS932.23 .D35 2014)
   Photographs exhibited once before are outcome over three weeks in North Korea to capture people’s everyday life. Although restricted access as a foreigner with the limited permission to take a photo, there are relatively vivid photographs of folks in North Korea.

2. Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea  
   (PN6734.P9613 D44 2005)
   In 2001, cartoonist Guy Delisle lived in the capital of North Korea for two months on a work visa for a French film company. In this remarkable graphic novel, Delisle recorded what he was able to see of the culture and lives of one of the last remaining totalitarian communist societies. (From Book Depository)

3. Luca Faccio: Common Ground  
   (TR647 .F33 2014)
   By an Italian photo artist Luca Faccio, examines Korea’s violent division into North and South, with portraits of people, cities and landscapes on both sides of the divide. (From Amazon)

4. Coréennes = 북녘 사람들  
   (DS932.4 .M37166 2008)
   Recent Korean reprint of Chris Marker’s rarest book, Coreennes (Korean Women), his photographic study of Korea and Korean women from 1959. 150 pages of some of Marker’s finest work. (From Editorial review)

5. Without You, There Is No Us: My Time with the Sons of North Korea’s Elite  
   (PE64.K45 A3 2014)
   A haunting account of teaching English to the sons of North Korea’s ruling class during the last six months of Kim Jong-il’s reign. (From Amazon) Interesting comparison of college life between North Koreans’ and yours.

Propaganda

1. **Kim Il Sung: with the Century v.1-8** *(DS934.6.K53 A5 1992, Volume no.4 is the only English version at UCI)*
The entire collection at UCI is in Korean language. Known as a work written by Kim Il Sung, which is not verified. There are a number of parts different from historical facts over the entire collection. A huge propaganda tool for people in North Korea.

Literature

1. **Reading North Korea: An Ethnological Inquiry** *(PL997.A25 R93 2012 c.2)*
Casts new light on the study of North Korean culture and society by reading 15 North Korea novels published during 1970s and 1980 as sources of ethnographic data. Explores North Korea society by focusing critical attention on three central themes—love, war, and self—that reflect the nearly complete overlap of the personal, social, and political realms in North Korean society.

(Excerpt from the book)

2. **Your Republic Is Calling You** *(PL992.415.Y5863 P5813 2010)*
A mysterious email is sent to a spy living in South Korea for twenty-one years who has not received any kind of message from anyone in North Korea over ten years. It orders him to return headquarters in one day. Why is he being called back now? Is this message really from Pyongyang? Is he returning to receive new orders or to be executed for a lack of diligence? Has someone in the South discovered his secret identity? Is this a trap? (From Amazon)

Further Readings: 3. Escape from Camp 14 / 4. Stars between the Sun and Moon / 5. The Great Leader and the Fighter Pilot

Films

1. **Sea of Blood = 피바다** *(PN1997.2 .P4893 2012)*
One of the “Five Great Revolutionary Operas". Originally written by Kim Il Sung, partly directed by his son, Kim Jung Il. Set in the 1930s, during the Japanese occupation of Korea, a protagonist and her family suffer numerous tragedies at the hands of the Japanese before eventually gaining the willpower and means to join the communist revolution and fight against their oppressors. (From Wikipedia)

One of the “Five Great Revolutionary Operas", too. Life of poor family during Japanese occupation. Kkotpuni sells flowers to make money for her family and she is getting more influenced by her brother who enlists in the Communist military. Finally, her brother organizes a group of villagers to overthrow the infamous landlord. (From Wikipedia)
History, Economy and Politics

1. **A Most Enterprising Country: North Korea in the Global Economy** (Available Online, HC470.2)
   The author argues that the North Korean state and citizens have proved pragmatic and adaptable, exploiting market niches and making creative use of brokers and commercial methods to access the global economy. North Korean trade networks—which include private citizens as well as the Kim family and high-ranking elites—accept high levels of risk and have become experts at operating in the blurred zones between licit and illicit, state and non-state, and formal and informal trade. (From ProQuest)

2. **North Korea: State of Paranoia** (Available Online, DS935.5)
   The world’s most secretive nuclear power, it still has Gulag-style prison camps, allows no access to the Internet and bans its people from talking to foreigners without official approval. Examining in forensic detail the history and politics of North Korea, Pyongyang’s complex relations with South Korea, Japan, China and America, and the implications of Kim Jong Un’s increasingly belligerent leadership following the death of his father, Kim Jong-il. (From ProQuest)

3. **Environment, Politics, and Ideology in North Korea: Landscape as Political Project** (Available Online, GE190.K7)
   Provides a unique summary of North Korean environmental and developmental policies. Focuses on the specificity of individual developmental sectors and projects, such as those addressing forestry and hydrology, seeking to trace general trends into these more particular environmental fields. (From ProQuest)

4. **North Korea’s Hidden Revolution: How the Information Underground Is Transforming a Closed Society**
   Media flows covertly into the country, and fault lines are appearing in the government’s sealed informational borders. Drawing on deeply personal interviews with North Korean defectors from all walks of life, ranging from propaganda artists to diplomats, this book tells the story of North Korea’s information underground—the network of citizens who take extraordinary risks by circulating illicit content such as foreign films, television shows, soap operas, books, and encyclopedias. (From Front Jacket Flip)

5. **Art Under Control in North Korea**
   The first Western publication to explore the state-controlled role of art in North Korea. This timely volume places North Korean art in its historical, political, and social contexts, with a discussion on the state system of cultivating and promoting artists and an examination of the range of art produced, from painting and calligraphy to architecture and applied art. (From Amazon)