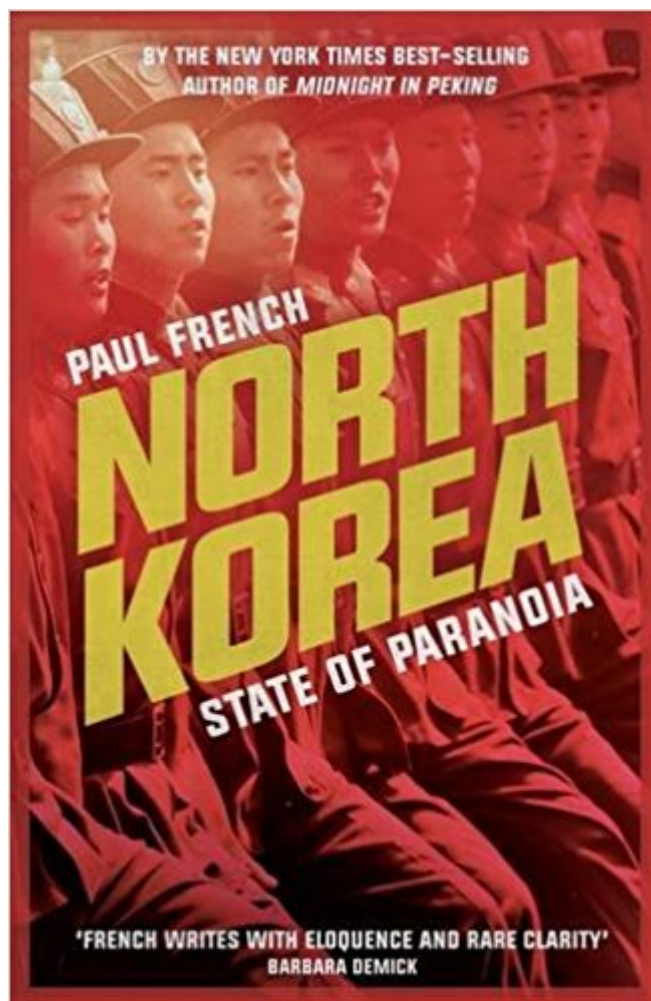


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# North Korea: State Of Paranoia (Asian Arguments)



## Synopsis

Secretive, mysterious, and almost certainly dangerous, North Korea is an object of endless fascination and worry for the rest of the world. The world's most inaccessible nuclear power, it retains Gulag-style prison camps, completely blocks Internet access, and forbids citizens to talk to foreigners without approval which makes the occasional report from a smart, dogged, connected analyst all the more valuable. *North Korea: State of Paranoia* is just such a report. Drawing on an impressive range of insider sources and previously unseen archival material, Paul French examines the nation and its ruling regime in forensic detail. He offers a close analysis of the history and politics of North Korea; Pyongyang's complex relations with South Korea, Japan, China, and the United States; and the troubling implications of Kim Jong-Un's increasingly belligerent leadership in the years since his father, Kim Jong-il, died. Straightforward and unsensationalistic, *North Korea* nonetheless paints a picture of a frightening unstable country, one whose sudden collapse could have globally dangerous consequences.

## Book Information

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"Paul French writes with wit, eloquence, and rare clarity about the complicated history of North Korea." (Barbara Demick, author of *Nothing to Envy: Real Lives in North Korea*) "North Korea's ability to worry and shock remains perhaps the only predictable aspect of the country's behavior. Paul French's no-nonsense approach to understanding

the country's history, political system, ideology, and what remains of its decimated economy is one of the best introductions to a country that does all it can to resist outside inspection and comprehension. This is the most accessible starting point for anyone wanting to understand the hermit kingdom.

• (Kerry Brown, China Studies Centre, University of Sydney) "This clear-eyed overview to North Korea's modern history is packed full of fascinating detail. French ably outlines the hermit kingdom's ideology, economic system, and haphazard efforts at reform, while simultaneously revealing why pickpockets target Kim Il-sung badges, what the North Korean cabinet's position is on lice, and why smoking can be a small act of resistance.

• (Louisa Lim, Beijing correspondent, NPR) "An admirably clear and calm survey of one of the hardest countries in the world to report on.

• (Jonathan Steele Guardian) "Highly readable. . . . A solid overview of the country's modern history and how it became a failed state. . . . Admirably clear and refreshingly devoid of academic gobbledygook.

• (Wall Street Journal) "Fascinating. . . . Highly readable.

• (Daily Telegraph)

Paul French has lived and worked in Shanghai for many years and is a highly regarded commentator on Asia and the author of a number of books.

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