

Collapse of Socialism Comparison: Russia Experience and North Korea



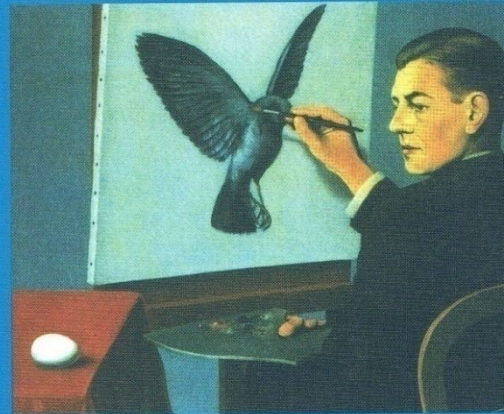
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러시아의 전략적 시각

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Contents

- **The USSR under Gorbachev and the Current North Korea: a Comparison**
- **Crisis of “Real Socialism” in the former Soviet Union**
- **North Korea: Domestic Politics**
- **Real Economy**
- **New Social Situation**
- **The Regime Transformation and Change in North Korea: an Outlook and Prospects**
- **Accelerating the Regime Transformation**

The USSR under Gorbachev and the Current North Korea: a Comparison

Ideology

USSR (mid-late 1980s)	DPRK (Present)
1. Preserving the communist ideology up to 1989	1. Reaffirming the ideology of “KimIlSungism” and “KimJongIlism” and the existing political system
2. Evolution of the communist ideology towards social democracy although it was not publicly pronounced	2. Lack of new idea

The USSR under Gorbachev and the Current North Korea: a Comparison

Political Power

USSR (mid-late 1980s)	DPRK (Present)
1. CPSU and Gorbachev retain the leading political positions	1. Sacralizing the father and the grandfather. Formally, they are “eternal leaders”
2. An appearance of inside-party competition. The inside-party struggle takes open forms	2. An attempt to strengthen the leading role of the party simultaneously reducing the role of NDC
3. 1985 – a new style of Gorbachev’s leadership: trips all over the country, meetings with people of various social positions, for the first time the Soviet leader is accompanied by his wife wearing modern western clothes. But in practical terms, Gorbachev is late with undertaking democratic reforms	3. 2012 – a new style of Kim Jong Eun’s leadership: meeting various strata of society – from military to youth, public appearance with his wife in modern suits, a phenomenon which didn’t exist among high nomenclature circles before. Nevertheless, an approach to real economic and political reforms <i>doesn’t appear to have been worked out even in a preliminary form</i>

The USSR under Gorbachev and the Current North Korea: a Comparison

Socio-political atmosphere

USSR (mid-late 1980s)	DPRK (Present)
1. Rising expectations for democratic changes	1. Lack of confidence in future and expectations for the better coincide with fears of changes as such
2. Rejection of communist ideas and moral norms after 1989	2. Skepticism over Kim Jong Eun's abilities to become a "new" leader and to improve the situation in the country
3. A failed attempt by Gorbachev to replace communism with "socialism with a human face"	3. Lack of dissidents and of opposition sentiments due to a closed society and an exceptional regime rigidity
4. Growth of moral decay as a result of intensified contacts with the West and an emergence of quasi-market elements (black-grey market). Before 1989, accelerated process of emigration due to a reduced control from special services. After 1989, the socialist market turned into an ordinary, normal market, although the private ownership was not legalized. Nevertheless, it was enough to stimulate the majority of people with entrepreneur mood to seek for business opportunities in their own country	4. Growth of moral decay as a result of strengthening black-grey market elements and intensifying partially-legal and full legal contacts with China and South Korea. Attempts to emigrate for economic reasons (fall in incomes of the majority of population) in spite of a tougher border control from special services

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Economy

USSR (mid-late 1980s)	DPRK (Present)
<p>1. In 1985-1986, an attempt of renovation through the concept of accelerated (economic) development and stimulating progress in science and technology. In 1987-1988, an attempt to introduce market mechanisms into the system: laws on profit-and-loss working methods, cooperatives, state enterprises. An abandonment of directive planning and an approval of indicative planning</p>	<p>1. Lack of attempts to rehabilitate or to reform the system of directive planning</p>
<p>2. A failure of attempts to reform the socialist economic system</p>	<p>2. Growth of black-grey market is developing spontaneously, along with accumulating illegal capital, spread of corruption and increased gangster activity</p>
<p>3. Growth of black-grey market, an expansion of criminalized economic ties</p>	<p>3. Famine in provinces simultaneously with rise in the elite's well-being in Pyongyang. The emergence of a quasi-market economic sector which satisfies needs of "new rich"</p>
<p>4. The fall in income of population, various deficits on domestic consumer market are rapidly widening</p>	<p>4. An intensified illegal foreign currency circulation (yuan, dollar)</p>
<p>5. An intensified illegal foreign currency circulation (dollar)</p>	

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Foreign Policy

USSR (mid-late 1980s)	DPRK (Present)
1. The USSR retained its status of a nuclear superpower	1. The country is completely discredited on the world arena
2. Détente – the strategic goal is to lessen political tensions with the West and China, and to get additional internal (through reducing military expenditures) and external sources of capital and technologies for economic development	2. Search for contacts with South Korea and the US as a means to ask for foreign aid which the regime is desperately in need for survival and to continue its confrontational line in foreign policy. China is the key sponsor of the regime

Crisis of “Real Socialism” in the former Soviet Union

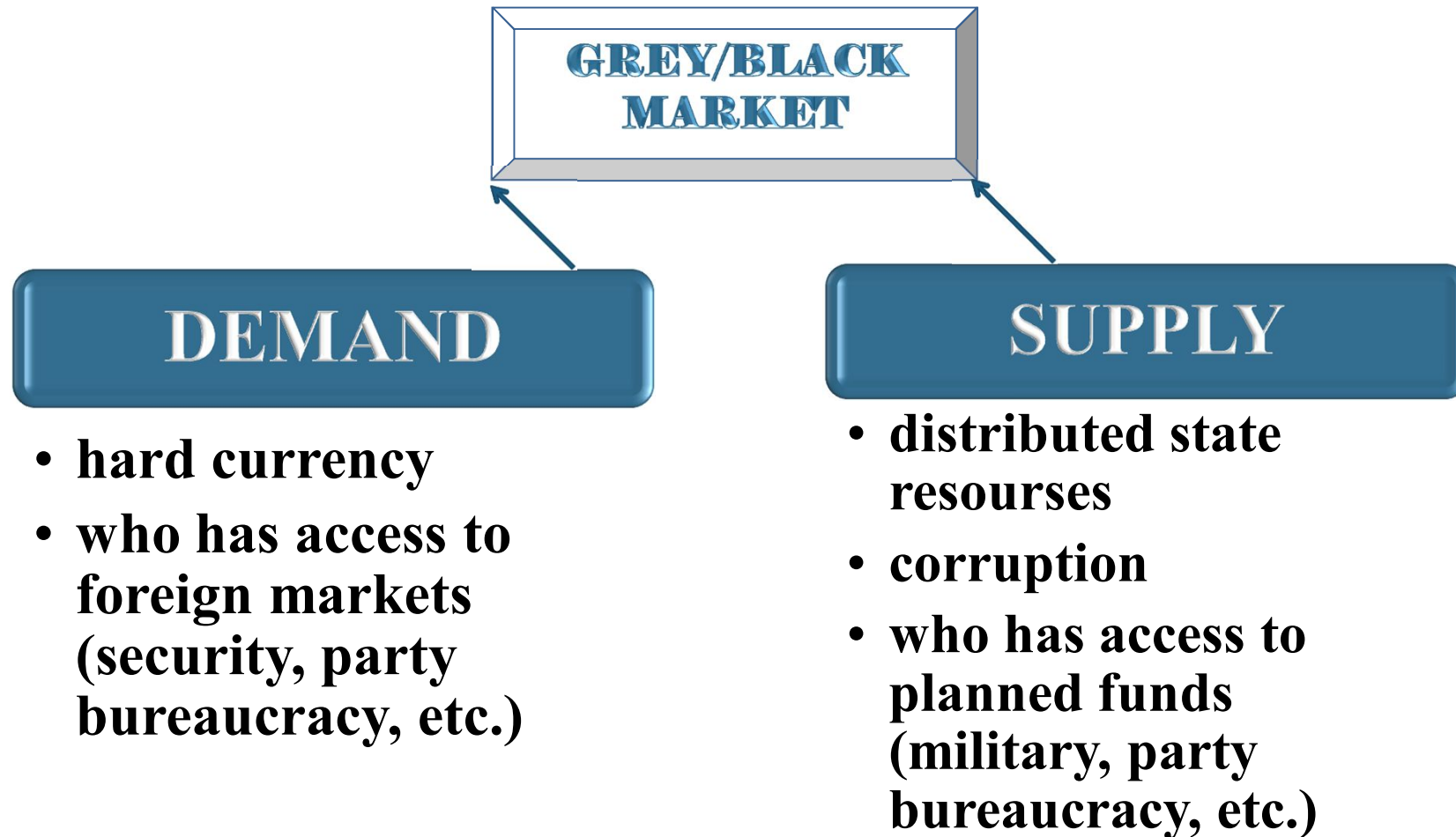
Conclusions for North Korea

- (1) North Korean regime is historically doomed**
- (2) South Korean tough policy towards North Korea was very useful**
- (3) Russia's experience is relevant for the North's transformation**

North Korea: Domestic Politics

- **Kim Jong-Eun – an umbrella – not a Player**
- **From bloody-stability to bloody-instability**
- **Leaders: old Bureaucracy is incompetent**

Real Economy



New Social Situation

The Young elite:

On the one hand → future political basis of the regime

On the other hand → channel for penetration of South Korean and Western ideology and culture

The Regime Transformation and Change in North Korea: an Outlook and Prospects

- (1) Crisis – transformations – collapse**
- (2) North Korean Socialist Economy: already collapsed**
- (3) Political Regime: Trigger is needed**
 - USSR in 1991 – coup attempt**
 - North Korea – ?**

Accelerating the Regime Transformation

- ☐ **“Total engagement”**
- ☐ **“New reciprocity ”**
- ☐ **Amendments to South Korean Security Legislation**

Thank you for your attention!

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