The Banned Book Club was definitely an interesting book. One thing that especially stood out to me was the fact that it was written as sort of a biography or a recollection of an event that occurred to the author (Hyun Sook), but not only that but the fact that it was also done in a graphic novel format. Which I have personally not seen. I feel that the way that this story was written was really good. In a graphic novel format, you can reach many more people than you would have been able to if you had stuck to the traditional novel style. Graphic novels break down the events in a much simpler way. This means that both young and old audiences alike can enjoy it. In a graphic novel, there aren’t many words that are needed because a lot of what takes up the word count is describing, people, places, and actions. In a graphic novel, these things are illustrated rendering words unnecessary. Which allows you to now focus on the dialect and the words that are spoken between characters. You can also see more context in what is happening in any given interaction because you can see facial expressions. When you try to describe these things in writing you always run the risk of not portraying what you really mean, when it’s illustrated the reader can see exactly what you meant.

I would say that the character development of Hyun Sook herself was very good. Of course, I would expect her to be the best since this is her story, and it is mostly from her point of view. I feel that the way her character was developed was visible but not too obvious, which was very nice. At the beginning of the book, she was a shy and timid person who wanted to completely avoid politics. However, as she is immersed in “college life” more and more she starts becoming braver and louder about her beliefs. She also starts getting more and more political, especially once introduced to certain facts that showed the corruption of the government. At the end of the book, she is a full participant in the protests and is no longer afraid to spread her beliefs. I feel that some of the other main characters (the other members of book club) could have benefited from showing their character growth more like Gundo and Suji. I’m sure that during this time both Gundo and Suji grew as people, it just wasn’t highlighted in the book as much as some of the other characters.

As I talked about in the first assignment, I believe that the main themes of the book are governmental censorship, oppression, and finding the truth even when it’s hidden. I believe that the authors did a great job of portraying these themes. I believe that the main purpose of this book was to raise awareness about the many places where people are still oppressed, and the truth is actively hidden from them just like they were in South Korea. It tells people how to oppose the forces that keep them down. If this was the purpose of this book, I believe it was successful.

I personally enjoyed this book. I think it was a nice book that was kind of a nice breather from some of the other more confusing books that we have covered this year. It had a good message, and it had a good plot. I would recommend this book to others as I feel that it is a good book to read. I feel that it taught me a lot of things I didn’t know about the history of South Korea. Before this I personally thought that South Korea didn’t really have many problems, since it was kind of overshadowed by how horrible North Korea is. I feel that I learned much about the history and culture of South Korea, and I know that it can help others understand South Korea better as well. I rate this book as a 7. It was a good book, but it’s obviously not the best book I have ever read in my life.