

Still Life with Rice Honors Assignment

You are about to read a work that critics describe as “biofiction.” Helie Lee tells her grandmother’s story but does so by choosing to adopt her grandmother’s voice and use a first-person narration. The words we read are not her grandmother’s – they are Ms. Lee’s as she takes on the guise of her grandmother – but the story she tells and the events she describes are real. Ms. Lee’s Korean grandmother lived through the Japanese occupation of her country, a brief stint in China to escape Japanese oppression, a bloody civil war that ultimately divided Korea, and a difficult move to America later in life.

You will read this book in three parts. We will have lunch meetings on the days your reading is due to be completed:

By April 25, have read through p. 105 By May 11, have read through p. 209 By May 22, have finished the book In-class essay on the book – May 26
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As you read, we want you to pay attention to the historical events during Hongyong Baek’s life. Use the chart to cover the events in history and how Hongyong conducts herself during the historic events that happen around and to her. What kind of person does she seem to be? Does the type of person she is ebb and flow with the events in history or does she remain a static character?



Helie Lee and her Grandmother Hongyong Baek in 1999