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Assignment #6

HIST 201

I have a lot of interest in the food and cooking styles of Japan. I chose to focus on this topic for this assignment and have found useful information in ODU's Library system about this. I will also be using the NHK¹ website for information gathering, as this source is credible and is also a primary source regarding my topic. I will go through my usual process of writing in the next paragraph and include footnotes when more information is necessary.

The first thing that I do when writing papers of any sort is I try to find a way to be interested in the topic. Even if the topic isn't something that I would seek to write about myself, I can usually find an aspect of the topic that engages me. For this paper, there is no problem with that since I chose my own topic. I'll now choose what I want to talk about regarding Japanese food, which for a short paper like this would be Japanese washoku food², and a more modern take on Japanese food called Yoshoku³. These two food styles in Japan would fit nicely into a short paper and could be expanded on easily if a longer report was needed.

In the ODU library system, I found a book called "Rice, Noodle, Fish Deep Travels through Japan's Food Culture." By Matt Goulding. I chose this book first to start referencing Japan's traditional foods, because Goulding seems to be concentrated on both "real" traditional Japanese foods and the new and bizarre kinds in his book. I think this combination would be important for comparison purposes. For me, making a clear distinction between Japan's traditional foods and yoshoku foods is essential, because I may have readers who do not know what Japan's traditional foods are. Because of this, I would start with the traditional foods and

¹ Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai, or Japan Broadcasting Corporation. Comparable to the BBC network in Europe.

² Washoku is traditional Japanese food.

³ Yoshoku is westernized Japanese food.

then compare them to yoshoku foods. Not only would I want to compare the two food styles in my paper, I would want to teach my readers what foods each style includes.

Through ODU's library system I also found a video, "Ethnic Eating- Japanese Foods" By Visualz⁴ about ethnic Japanese cooking presented by Andrew Zimmern.⁵ This video is a good source of information about what exactly makes washoku its own food style. Japanese food features many foods that the rest of the world consumes as well, but the way it is prepared is a big part of what makes it different.

I am a big fan of NHK's reports and documentaries, as they report on everything they can about Japan. This Corporation is not unlike Europe's BBC Network, and their field reporters are excellent prime sources. Two of the usual hosts are Peter Barakan from London, and Matt Alt from America, both of whom have resided in Tokyo for many years. In their programming they usually use an unbiased approach to their interviews and documentaries but are allowed to express their thoughts on the programs as well. For someone like my readers and I, who aren't in Japan, their thoughts can be useful in gaining our own opinions about the given subject. NHK's website⁶ on yoshoku features pictures of this food style as well, which helps to understand the topic.

I chose to also reference one of NHK's 'Begin Japanology' series videos on YouTube about yoshoku⁷. I think since almost everyone has internet access now, a link to the video documentary could be useful. This video goes in depth about yoshoku and features this kind of food being cooked. I could elaborate in detail about cooking methods and ingredients in my paper also, which is exciting to me.

⁴ <https://odu.kanopy.com/video/ethnic-eating-japanese-foods>

⁵ Andrew Zimmern is widely known for his show "Bizarre Foods" on The Travel Channel.

⁶ <https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/food/articles/8.html>

⁷ <https://youtu.be/6iDk7UfeFrQ>

