Zachary Babcock

Prof. Jay O’Leary

ENC1102

October 7, 2019

Essay Two Skeleton

**Thesis**: The message is simple: in cooking, the concept of authenticity should be done away with.

**Topic Sentence 1**: This message of Albala’s is certainly bold, and he overall presents it quite well.

**Topic Sentence 2**: While Albala certainly makes a strong case, there still are countless individuals that claim, whether actively or passively, that authenticity indeed does exist.

**Topic Sentence 3**: Albala does seem to have missed an important aspect that may be a strong foothold for authenticity though: the aspect of health.

**Topic Sentence 4**: Authenticity is a fickle thing, but it shouldn’t be totally dismissed, as Albala admits.

**Conclusion**: With this abstract concept persevering so strongly in many culinary circles, a lone voice like Albala’s is unlikely to undo all that it is; however, Albala does a great job of tackling this subject level-headedly and effectively. While all this talk of “authentic” foods isn’t going anywhere anytime soon, Albala has certainly given critics of this topic a strong step forward. Seeing what others will do to take the next step should prove to be even more interesting than the last.

Notes: Albala neglects to bring up harmful ingredients that can come from making unauthentic food (like the 2008 Chinese melamine scandal), so it seems that authentic dishes are a little bit of “who cares” whereas authentic ingredients are more nuanced and important; will the substitutes be safe for human consumption? “Authenticity” can have a positive effect on quality, but it’s in no way a rule; someone in, say, Spain, could possibly make better sushi than a chef born and raised in Japan. Champagne is a good example of how authenticity is a bit bogus; only champagne grown in certain areas are technically champagne, even if one made it the same way with the same ingredients shipped over, but it’s just made in the wrong place. Both will most likely taste exactly the same, and use the same ingredients and everything, just not made in the same place. Changes in cuisine happen with restaurants all the time all around the world; back in 2014, a Japanese chef, after moving to the US and making sushi there, moved back to the US and brought Americanized sushi to Okinawa. Look into the relation between geography and authenticity; Albala could’ve gone farther on that or raise issues he missed assess and respond and criticize will disregarding authenticity increase the rate of cultural appropriation?

Albala says Authenticity is farce – authenticity cannot be found in almost any factors (location, person cooking, ingredients, etc.) – despite this, people still say it exists, due to a deeply ingrained social belief, possibly due to their childhoods (i.e. Chinese person views Chinese dishes they grew up with as authentic, whereas if some new dish was made when said person is an adult, they may not view it as “authentic”, showing how subjective this is) – Albala says it’s a farce, and he seems to be mostly right, but authenticity still has value to it. Such an abstract value that has been made into something more concrete is hard to deconstruct and ultimately dismiss, so more arguments need to be provided; however, another question is whether such a concept should be dismissed at this point.

~~Albala starts this message, discussing the cook, asking if their ethnicity is what matters, using Rick Bayless as his example. Bayless opened several expensive Mexican restaurants, despite being a white man with no Mexican heritage, which, to simplify, people had objections to. Albala undermines those objections~~