

outside Europe saw and continue to see not as peace-able but as coercive and imperial. As such, the book's basic claim that the "strong" make peace while the "weak" make war is difficult to sustain. For while Ghervas's history shows how the states that survived the wars and great seismic changes of their time (the "strong") created systemic frameworks that aimed at protecting their collective power going forward, it does not follow that peace made by the strong aided (or aids) the weak.

I applaud Ghervas for being deeply ambitious in constructing this history. The book does so much more than narrate a history of a complex idea—the idea of peace—as it functioned across time in a particularly crisis-ridden part of the world. It highlights how elusive and multidimensional the search for peace and the ambition of war avoidance was and remains among the European powers. It does not shy away from asking complex questions, nor from attempting to answer them. While I did not find many of the book's core interpretative assertions convincing, it has succeeded in making me rethink and requestion my own interpretations of how international systems sustain regimes of stability and who benefits from them.

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Currywurst & Co. Die Geschichte des Fast Food in Deutschland

By Arnd Kluge. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2021. Pp. 165. Paper €39.00. ISBN 978-3515129138.

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The term "fast food" evokes strong feelings: perhaps of nostalgia, moral judgement, or simply hunger. As Arnd Kluge expounds in *Currywurst & Co.*, there is no single definition of fast food, and the term is actually quite complex. Indeed, on the production end, there is no such thing as fast food, merely fast consumption. In other words, even though the rhetoric of mechanization and industrialization would have us believe otherwise, there are no overall time savings to fast food—the cost of time is merely displaced.

Fast food is not a new phenomenon in Germany. Here, Kluge attempts to cover shifting trends and implications of fast food across its entire history, going back to the sausages and meatballs mentioned in Apicius' first-century cookbook. This is a nearly impossible feat in just 146 pages, but the book covers significant turning points in fast food over time. Prior to the nineteenth century, fast food was not socially desirable because it signaled that one was too poor to cook in a kitchen of one's own. Many foods that are integral to fast food today, such as cheese, baked goods, and grilled meat were too expensive in pre-industrial Europe to be a regular part of the German diet. Most of the German-speaking peoples until the nineteenth century sustained themselves on potages of grains, lentils, and garden vegetables that were cooked and eaten from a single pot.

Enlightenment impulses to reform through alms led to the development of the first *Volksküche* in 1770 that distributed warm meals on a sliding scale. Such establishments continued to fill hungry bellies in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries ("*nicht gespeist, sondern abgefüllt*" [52]) and to instruct the populace in the morals of temperance, thrift, and industriousness. As wasted time was increasingly denigrated, workers were encouraged to

spend less time over meals. *Volksküchen* developed as cooperatives in the nineteenth century, but in World War I, there was such a shortage of food that regardless of the poor quality, the *Volksküchen* were popular as one of the only means of sustenance for much of the population. *Volksküchen* are related to other forms of communal, extra-domestic dining spaces such as factories (*Kantine*), university cafeterias (*mensas*), prisons, hospitals, and schools—sites where socialization and speedy intake of calories take precedence over gastronomic pleasure. The rhetoric of continuously increasing efficiency was paired with scientific and economic studies attempting to inform the quantifiable optimization of the production and consumption of food.

The United States is frequently invoked in this book, but surprisingly, the relationship between German fast food and America was not monodirectional. The Aschinger brothers, for example, who built around thirty *Bierquellen* in Berlin by 1892, were the model for all fast-food chains of standardization, mass production, self-service, hygiene, low prices, cheap labor, and micromanagement of workflow. The Austrian Friedrich Jahn expanded his chain Wienerwald into the United States in 1952 and was a forerunner to Roy Crock not just in his example of systematic gastronomy but also in his typification of the self-made boss who developed a new brand through the drive to perfect a process.

While this book provides delightful backstories to the fast foods that are characteristic of modern Germany (*döner* kebabs, Magi soup base, and of course, currywurst), it avoids a teleological trap by sharing telling anecdotes about lost food trends, such as the grocery cooperatives (*Konsumgenossenschaften*) that flourished briefly following World War II and the vending-machine restaurants (of which there were more than fifty in 1906) that took self-service to a short-lived extreme.

The chapter on Socialist fast food emphasizes that although the food culture of the DDR developed from existing norms, it did take its own *Sonderweg*. Preserved or ready-made dishes promoted the socialist value of equal rights for women by freeing them from the domestic labor of cooking from scratch. In the 1970s, the government developed its own fast-food chains (*Krusta*, *Ketwurst*, and *Grilletta*), with their particular slants on dishes that were also popular in the West. These accounted for around 20% of all restaurants in 1988 but quickly disappeared after reunification.

Although the book's sixteen chapters are short and digestible and contain thought-provoking vignettes, there is little connective tissue between topics and no obvious chapter order. The writing begs for transition statements between commodities as disparate as potatoes and coffee (not to imply that there is no connection, merely that they need a bridge). Kluge's most original contributions come when he draws on his expertise as chief archivist at the Stadtarchiv in Hof to share his own data on soup kitchens. This highlights a critical need for more archivally-based monographs on German food history rather than syntheses of syntheses. Ideally, this interesting little volume will inspire readers to get into the archives and dig down into the records about some of the themes touched on here.

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