

**Homing in the City**  
**An Ethnography of KulturHaus BrotFabrik and Stand129 in**  
**Vienna**

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Vienna, 26th May 2025

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## Abstract

This thesis researches homing practices and how they are nurtured inside the semi-public context of cultural centers, particularly through the case study of the KulturHaus in Vienna. It engages with the concept of homing as a continuous process of socio-spatial relations, composed of routines and habits that result in meaningful appropriations of places. The KulturHaus is a cultural center based in Vienna's 10th district, Favoriten, and located in two venues: the BrotFabrik, a three story building in an historical bread factory, and Stand129, a market stall in the central market square. The research is based on various ethnographic methods including participant observations, interviews, informal conversations and sensory ethnography. Then, the thesis puts in conversations the findings of ethnographic research with the present literature on home across the fields of the sociology of dwelling, urban anthropology and food studies. The analysis unfolds through the structures that form the house, and the practices that nurture the home within them. Particularly, the focus is on foodways, the act of sharing, and the roles one may take on inside the community as main sites of homing practices. I show how the structures of the KulturHaus provide an accessible and fertile ground for homing in Vienna, which emerge as embodied and sensorial practices. These practices are particularly relevant as they provide a way to tackle the unequal distribution of homing possibilities in public and semi-public spaces due to the discrimination against marginalized identities. In the context of Vienna, where far-right sentiments have been steadily rising in recent years yet 45.4% of the population is of foreign origin, researching accessible homing practices is essential to ensure that all its inhabitants can cultivate a sense of home in the city.

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Thank you goes to my family, who inspired me in the first place to care so much about feeling at home in a place, especially around a large table with a good meal and good company. A special thank goes to my grandmother AnnaMaria, with whom I share my passion for food as a medium to understand people.

Lastly, I'd like to thank my supervisor, Daniel Monterescu, for helping me make (a bit) of sense of the mess of academia.

## Introduction

The chatter and clinking of pots reach me before I even arrive in the kitchen, when I'm still in the foyer. Although I'm only 10 minutes late to the usual start of Community Cooking, there are already around ten people cutting vegetables, peeling pistachios, and mostly chatting. The majority are familiar faces, people I've filled the plate of or got my plate filled by, but some are new. One lady I talked to last time waves at me while on the other side of the room Salwa, the head of the Community Cooking, rushes to hug me. She holds my hand and guides me through the small crowd, one young man taps her on the shoulder to ask about a recipe, and another hands me a nut to taste. We find a corner on the table that dominates the kitchen, and we sit down to talk about homes and food and how it all ties into this kitchen, our hands still holding.

The idea for this thesis started when I realized that the atmosphere of Community Cooking, one of the main events of the KulturHaus, a cultural center in Vienna's tenth district, reminded me of my family gatherings in Italy. In my hometown, as at the KulturHaus, the community life centers around a table where people of different ages cook, argue, eat, and tell stories.

The KulturHaus is a cultural center that bridges community building and a cultural hotspot in one project. Through cooking events, art workshops, concerts, and other events, it offers a range of opportunities to bring people together (KulturHaus, 2024). Currently, it has two venues: the KulturHaus BrotFabrik, which resides in a historical bread factory, and Stand129, a market stall in the market square of the neighborhood. Both are located in sites central to the life of the neighborhood. The location of the KulturHaus in Favoriten is intentional: this neighborhood is one of Vienna's most populous districts, with over 50% of its residents coming from outside

Austria, and among the highest unemployment and lowest education rates in the city (Stadt Wien, 2024). It's in this context, that the KulturHaus aims to decenter culture and to include marginalized communities in culture production and consumption, as a way to build community.<sup>1</sup>

The connection between my understanding of home and my experience at the KulturHaus led me to explore how home can exist beyond a residence—in a way that is physically, economically, and socially accessible. Therefore, I investigate active dwelling<sup>2</sup> through the concept of homing as an evolving, situated, and interactive endeavor, formed by practices within one's socio-spatial context (Boccagni, 2017, p.2). Essentially, I research home not so much through a table, but rather through what is going on around it. Thus, my thesis inquires about accessible homing practices in the KulturHaus. I follow the English distinction between *the house*, understood as the physical shelter, and *the home*, meaning the emotional sphere of security and familiarity, to develop a twofold analysis. First, I engage with *the house*, and examine how the different structures of the KulturHaus, Favoriten, and their communities shape each other. Second, I delve into the embodied and sensorial practices of dwelling, as a way to nurture *the home* inside these structures. My research consists of ethnographic fieldwork, carried out between late January and the beginning of April 2025 at the two venues of the KulturHaus, as well as interviews with visitors and employees. Through a mixed-method approach, I include individual experiences and community dynamics to achieve a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the issue. Drawing on the knowledge I gathered during this time, along with my examination of the existing literature, my main argument is that the structures of the KulturHaus provide an

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<sup>1</sup>Community here is understood as the ensemble of “social relations that embody openness to unassimilated otherness with justice and appreciation (Young, 2007, p. 203)

<sup>2</sup>According to Heidegger, active dwelling is core to what makes us humans: through our whole life, we always strive to grow what sustains a meaningful form of life in a place (Wrathall, 2025).

accessible and fertile ground for homing in Vienna, which emerge as embodied and sensorial practices.

This research is relevant considering that homes, and the becoming of them, are sites of political action. Without the possibility to construct a homeplace, it's impossible to build meaningful communities of resistance (hooks, 2015, p.107). Moreover, homing possibilities are also closely dependent on the socio-political context of a place. Especially in (semi)public spaces, as the KulturHaus is, the ability to make a space feel like home is determined by how legitimate or “normal” this endeavor is perceived by the majority population (Boccagni, 2017). This judgment is usually made on biases regarding one's religion, ethnic background, and language. Considering the advance of the far-right in Austria, discriminatory sentiments in Vienna are only increasing. Between 2020 and 2024, the votes for the far-right Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), which uses anti-immigrant propaganda to gain consensus, almost doubled, from 16% to 29% (Politico, 2024). At the same time, 45.4% of Vienna's population is of foreign origin, a percentage even higher in Favoriten (Stadt Wien, 2024). This means that for almost half of the population in Vienna, making a home in the city is increasingly contrasted and presented as illegitimate. And this is considering only the difficulties that people with different geographies face. Factors like employment status, gender, age, and sexuality can also impact how legitimate one's home-making efforts are perceived, and, in turn, how challenging it may be to feel at home in the city. Delving into the case of the KulturHaus provides insight into how inequalities related to homing can be addressed, and illustrates the systems and practices that may be adopted to combat such discrimination—both in Vienna and in other contexts marked by socio-political oppression against homing.

To complete my understanding of the matter, I delved into research about home across the sociology of dwelling, urban anthropology, and food studies. Boccagni's study of the home-migration nexus provided me with a framework for homing (Boccagni, 2017). Moreover, Duyvendak's focus on general spaces like neighborhoods highlighted public spaces as sites for investigation (Duyvendak, 2011). Pink's conceptualization of the "sensory home" centered taste, smell, hearing, sight, and touch as critical components of homing (Pink, 2023). In particular, my methodology and analysis were informed by research that explores food and taste as a site for the sensorial creation of homes, specifically regarding migrant communities (Chen, 2021; Baho, 2020).

This thesis addresses the gap in the literature by exploring homing in semi-public spaces, following Boccagni's invitation to investigate how a sense of home is perceived and enacted within such environments (Boccagni, 2017, p.90). In this way, the case of the KulturHaus bridges Duyvendak's inquiry on home, which focuses either on public or private spaces, but not on their intersection (Duyvendak, 2011). Moreover, as this community is not determined by one characteristic (migrant, queer, etc.), this thesis has a distinctive approach from these previous authors. The heterogeneity of the KulturHaus group, composed of retired Austrian grandfathers as well as young migrant mothers, provides a new context for exploration. This is particularly interesting regarding food, as the majority of the literature engages with the culinary nostalgia<sup>3</sup> of groups with a prominent shared identity (Chen, 2021). However, at the KulturHaus, the recipes and tastes were negotiated between different groups of people and thus culinary traditions. Therefore, the novelty of this research lies in examining the habits of a heterogeneous

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<sup>3</sup> Culinary nostalgia means "the recollection or purposive evocation of another time and place through food" (Swislocki, 2008, p.1)

community concerning material culture and bodily senses, while also exploring the practices and relationships that emerge from them.

This thesis unfolds in three sections. It starts with the methodology I adopted and further unfolds in two chapters titled “The House” and “The Home”, focusing respectively on the structures of the KulturHaus and Favoriten, and on situated practices of homing.

## Methodology

To understand the practices of homing in the KulturHaus, I visited the two venues of the BrotFabrik and Stand129 on multiple occasions between late January and early April 2025. I chose a qualitative approach because, as previous literature on the topic points out, quantitative methods tend to reduce complex concepts like 'home' to narrow and standardized definitions, which may overlook the nuanced and personal meanings people attach to it (Boccagni, 2017, p. 38). Thus, I gathered data through the principal methods of ethnographic research: participant observation, which consists of participating in people's lives while observing them from a distance, informal interviews, which are unstructured exchanges with my interlocutors, and six semi-structured interviews, where I had a list of open-ended questions to loosely guide the dialogue (three with participants and three with employees of the KulturHaus) (Finesurrey, 2019, p.88; Howell, 2018). Employing a mixed methods approach enabled a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of both individual experiences and community dynamics. The interviews were transcribed and then thematically coded. The same coding system was applied to fieldwork notes, enabling a cohesive analysis of the knowledge and experiences gathered during research. In what follows, I outline the general approach of my thesis as informed by the literature, then reflect on my positionality, and further illustrate the specific methods adopted.

In developing my ethnographic approach, I draw on the experiences of both scholars researching home and individuals working at the KulturHaus, resulting in two main characteristics: an attention to the sensory home, and a deliberate reframing of home away from the thematization of migration. First, I center Pink's ethnographic experience in investigating the "sensory home",

understood as the domain formed by different sensory elements (smell, touch, taste, vision, and sound) (Pink, 2003, p. 46). As Boccagni reflects, when investigating home “the research challenge lies in grasping, multi-sensorially, the grassroots ways of appropriation of one or few places” (Boccagni, 2017, p. 42). As it is impossible to claim the same sensory experiences as others, I attempted to creatively construct correspondences between my experiences and my interlocutors’ by using the full range of my bodily senses (Okely, 1994, p. 61). This meant being attentive to the smells, tastes, sounds, and tactile feelings I experienced throughout my fieldwork and interviews. Similarly, I also observed how my interlocutors engaged with the material and sensorial contexts of the sites.

The conversations with the workers of the KulturHaus prompted me to deliberately choose not to thematize homing with migration directly. Although that is what a bulk of the literature I consider focuses on, and what I initially expected to address, it became evident as I progressed with my research that such a focus would offer only a reductive representation of the homing practices at KulturHaus (Boccagni, 2017; Duyvendak, 2011; HadžiMuhamedović and Grujić, 2019; Fathi, 2024). Rather, I consider broadly the community of the KulturHaus and the identities it holds. This allows me to address the homing efforts of the people I engaged with, despite their past and present geographies. When the theme arises, I consider it without lingering excessively on its analysis. This approach is not only shaped by my experience, but it also reflects the ethos that guides the KulturHaus. While people with a migration background and/or experience of discrimination are a target group of the KulturHaus, the organization is committed to not emphasizing the fragilities that the center holds. This is upheld not only by the employees but also by the people they collaborate with (see [Appendix A](#)). By acknowledging without

stressing the home-migration nexus, I maintain the centrality of migratory experiences in homing processes and in motivating my thesis, while avoiding excluding people's endeavors and reproducing othering narratives of migration.

As an international student, my identity in the community related to both the white (and thus local-passing) identity, and to the foreigner one, shared by a majority of people in the category of migrants, refugees, and second-generation Austrians. This allowed me to enter both circles while maintaining a distance, which benefited my analysis, as well as shed light on its limits. I could empathize with the difficulty of integrating into Austrian culture and language, but I could not relate to the added struggle of the racism and discrimination that my interlocutors with different skin color, legal status, and language fluency had to endure while making Vienna their new home.

Moreover, I held a (perceived) fluid position in the hierarchy of the KulturHaus, which allowed me to engage with a variety of people from a degree of closeness that I would not be able to reach if I were fixed in one clear position, for example, that of a participant observer. In this way, I could experience, although partially, different roles inside the community. This was because at times people (both participants and staff) assumed I was part of the staff of the KulturHaus. I believe this is because of my familiarity with the staff and sites, as I've previously collaborated with them when I co-organized a cooking event at the Stand129 in April 2024 for a project on art workshops for families in Favoriten. Through that experience, I became familiar with the people and locations of the KulturHaus, a foundation I built upon during my fieldwork.

I chose to gather data through informal and semi-structured interviews, which are two ways to learn and preserve the unique narrative of each informant by having in-depth conversations in small groups or one-to-one settings (Finesurrey, 2019, p.88). Informal interviews took place during the events and were usually prompted by sharing my research interest, which then led to others sharing their thoughts and experiences on the matter. My informants were loosely selected from the participants of the events to guarantee I'd engage with a variety of identities and included one to five people at a time. They happened both in German and English: although I sometimes missed the meaning of some words, I could understand the gist of it and could ask another participant for the English translation when needed. In this way, my observations and interactions could not center only on the oral exchange but rather led me to focus more on the non-verbal aspects of the interaction, like posture, facial expressions, and physical contact. Through the informal interviews, I gathered background information on the space and its participants, as well as on a variety of experiences regarding homing. Moreover, it allowed me to access specific information from participants I wouldn't be able to engage with in semi-structured interviews because of language barriers.

In addition, I carried out six semi-structured interviews with three participants and three employees of the KulturHaus. I had two sets of open-ended questions, one for the staff and one for the visitors. Interviewees were selected according to their position in relation to the KulturHaus and included: three staff members (Mataz, who's in charge of the coordination of artistic events, Tilman, who's the program director and Lisa, who's in charge of the "Living Together" projects and previously managed Community Cooking); as well as three participants (Antonia, a first-timer at the KulturHaus, Barbara, a habitu e of the Community Cooking but that

has never been to other events, and Esmaa, who has her office in the coworking space of the KulturHaus BrotFabrik and has been to different events). Considering my limited (but improving) command of German, I was able to have in-depth interviews only with those who were comfortable in English, or when someone else supported us in bridging the language gap. For example, in Barbara's interview, her personal assistant, who supports her due to a physical disability, facilitated translation when sentences or words were unclear in one language or the other. Moreover, following Miller's understanding of the significance of the material and environmental dimension of the home, all the interviews (apart from one that happened on Zoom) took place at the cultural centers, either during the events or during the work hours of the employees, to observe their engagement with the sites (Miller, 2001, quoted in Boccagni, 2017, p.41). The choice to have them semi-structured comes from a review of relevant research on the topic of home, which points to this method as the most straightforward to understand how people attach a sense of home to places (Boccagni, 2017, p.39). I agree with this position, as these interviews allowed me to dive into my informants' narratives and experiences, and to expand on the aspects dearest to them. These interviews raised points I could only partially envision before them, for example, regarding different forms of discrimination, as well as different forms of care, and were thus crucial for my thesis.

I also gathered data through participant observation, which consisted of prolonged participation in community life to understand their perspectives, values, and practices (Howell, 2018). I participated in fourteen events, which included concerts (*Wohnzimmerkonzert* and *Newroz Feier*), art workshops (*Samstag Atelier*), language café and meetup (*Sprach Cafe* and *Chat&Chai*), and cooking evenings (*Kochen Am Markt* and *Community Cooking*). This meant

that I cooked, ate, carved, drew, washed dishes, printed, smoked, hugged (so much hugging), and sang with the people of the KulturHaus. After the events, and sometimes during, I collected my observations in my notebook or on my phone. Through these embodied and sensorial experiences, I achieved an understanding of the practices and dynamics of the KulturHaus community.

## Chapter 3: The House

The stairs of the BrotFabrik can become slides. The foyer can be a theater or a dining room, or just a waiting area, or all of them together. The Stand129 transforms from a kitchen to a living room to an extension of the market. The physical structures of the KulturHaus are co-created by the people that interact with them, and in a more or less systematic way<sup>4</sup> change their function. In the same way, the KulturHaus, where, as titled, culture dwells, is not just a house for culture. Through the evolving and playful dynamics between the organizational, physical, and social structures of the KulturHaus, this chapter engages with the systems that form the house:<sup>5</sup> the ways through which a room can transform into a theater and then into a living room and then...

### 3.1 The project of KulturHaus

For the first time since I've been around, the KulturHaus BrotFabrik is quiet. Tilman, the program director, makes me coffee and leads me to an empty meeting room on the second floor. He patiently walks me through the history of the project. Apparently, there was a big shift in the strategy of the organization. Before, it focused mainly on people in a state of permanent suffering (which he described as “permafrost strategy”), but then it centered primarily on community building as a way to prevent the suffering - an approach he called “permalight strategy” (see [Appendix B](#)). Through our conversation, I start to untangle the different structures the KulturHaus is part of.

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<sup>4</sup>Given by the program of activities and individual input

<sup>5</sup>A system of structures (organizational, social, and physical) that shape each other, and from which *the home* emerges.

It all started in 2009 from Caritas, an international non-profit that operates in Vienna to tackle hardships and advocate for marginalized voices (Caritas 2024, KulturHaus BrotFabrik 2024). The project followed the learnings from the experience of the Brunnenpassage and Tanz Die Toleranz, two art-focused projects from Caritas Vienna that since 2007 have merged social work and artistic practices.<sup>6</sup> Smiling, Tilman shares with me that the former Caritas Director once claimed he had never worked for a single institution as much as he had done for the Brunnenpassage, but he had also never received so much positive feedback for a single project as for this one. The success of the permalight strategy, in opposition to the permafrost one, usually adopted by Caritas, led to the creation of a new rubric of Caritas projects for living together (Zusammenleben). Thus, the KulturHaus was created as a “community art center”, which combined community building and a cultural hotspot through relevant artistic and cultural offerings (KulturHaus BrotFabrik 2024). And to be both, the offer of the KulturHaus needed to be economically accessible, prompting most of the events to be on a free donation basis.

Additionally, to truly connect with the neighborhood, the KulturHaus must remain inclusive, living up to its mission of being "for everyone – regardless of origin, gender, age, or other characteristics." (KulturHaus BrotFabrik 2024). Because of the structural discrimination of specific groups, this requires particular attention towards the KulturHaus’ target groups: the local population, people with migration background and/ or experience of discrimination, and people systematically disadvantaged in the educational system, three groups that often overlap (KulturHaus BrotFabrik 2024). Here, the strategy of the permalight comes through again. Rather than framing these groups as structurally underserved and so recipients of the KulturHaus services, the project strives to be formed largely by people from these groups, usually as

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<sup>6</sup>Interview with Tilman Fromelt conducted on February 26th, 2024 in Vienna.

volunteers and employed staff. Thus, the community includes a variety of identities, who are generally united by having experienced some type of home rupture, understood as the physical or affective interruption of their everyday life and thus of their relation to home (Fathi, 2025, p. 42). By guaranteeing language and cultural representation, as well as a general welcoming atmosphere, the KulturHaus creates social structures of support and inclusion that aim to contrast the structures of discrimination in place.

The social and economic accessibility that the KulturHaus strives for determine it as a semi-public space. People may come in and out freely, create relationships, or stay by themselves. Join an event or just read their book. In this way, the intimacy of the private sphere can touch upon the anonymity of the public sphere. Moreover, the community created simultaneously carries nearness and distance (Lijster et al., 2022, p. 26).

### **3.2 KulturHaus BrotFabrik**

From a bread factory to a fancy creative hub to a social work institution, the history of the KulturHaus BrotFabrik holds multitudes. After the site lost its function as a bakery, in 2009 it became a vibrant center for art and culture, featuring galleries, studios, and artist training institutions. It portrayed an idea of culture as something to be trained and achieved. The initial idea of the real estate developers “Loft City” was to expand the Viennese cultural offerings to a more peripheral and marginalized area, so they chose Favoriten. However, the project risked growing into an island that had no contact with the neighborhood. Thus, Caritas Vienna was looped in for a project on Living Together and got assigned three floors in the left corner of the AnkerBrot (KulturHaus BrotFabrik 2024).

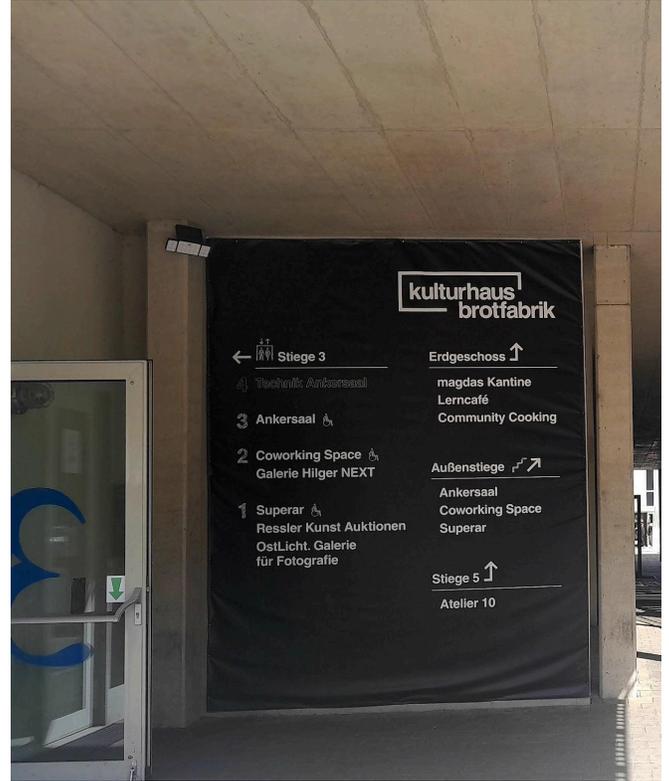


Figure 1: staircase of the KulturHaus BrotFabrik, photograph (author) Figure 2: poster with directions (autor)

The three floors of the KulturHaus BrotFabrik are next to a tall external staircase that connects all three levels. If one looks at it from far enough, they can see the word “kulturhaus” being spelled on the steps (see Figure 1). On the left of the stairs, one finds a poster indicating the directions: straight for community cooking, up for coworking space, and more up for the Anker Room, the large event hall (see Figure 2). If you pass the staircase, windowed walls show inside the foyer, where tables and chairs can be moved to form a repair workshop setting or a dance rehearsal space. A room, also separated with glass walls, distinguishes the “learning café”, where children and young adults receive learning support from volunteers. The Magdas canteen, also accessible from the foyer, is the only part of the KulturHaus that requires consumption, as the rest all work on a donation basis. Further into the space, there is the kitchen, which again has

large glass walls and one door that goes to the street - however, this is typically used for smoking breaks rather than for accessing/exiting the space. The ground floor is where the community typically gathers, whether because of the same event or spontaneously meeting from various activities. For example, Community Cooking happens every Tuesday at the same time as the Tanz die Toleranz rehearsals, which means that often cooks take breaks cutting vegetables to look at the young dancers moving to the rhythm coming from the speaker and after the rehearsal, the dancers go to get the leftover dessert in the kitchen. When going to the coworking space<sup>7</sup> on the second floor, I wondered if the same leftover sweets were also the ones in the office kitchenette. On the second floor, there is also Superar.<sup>8</sup> The three event rooms typically used for music classes can also serve other purposes, such as hosting art workshops during the *Samstag Atelier*,<sup>9</sup> with each room dedicated to a different art medium. The benches and tables that are present in the hallway easily transform into hiding spots for children playing hide and seek, or roundtables for parents to chat. They also became the spot for some of my interviews. Without a definite purpose, these spaces become a playground for visitors to make what they want of it, a recreation space or a quiet break from the crowd (see Figure 3).

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<sup>7</sup> Where different teams that work on community-oriented and art projects (specifically at the KulturHaus BrotFabrik but not exclusively) are based.

<sup>8</sup>An association that works with musicians to offer free cultural support to children and young adults (KulturHaus BrotFabrik, 2024)

<sup>9</sup>“Saturday Atelier”, an event to explore different art mediums that happens once a month



Figure 3: child sliding down the stairs at the KulturHaus BrotFabrik (author)

### 3.3 Stand129



Figure 4: Stand129 in the sun (author)

Painted in a bright yellow color and with large windows on three of its sides, the Stand129 is easily distinguishable from the other market stalls in the square (see Figure 4). Since 2013, it has operated as a cultural center in the Viktor-Adler Markt, the main market square of Favoriten, inside of what was a market stall (KulturHaus BrotFabrik, 2024). Because of its architecture and how the staff engages with it, the border of inside / outside is constantly bridged. Sometimes the door is wide open and volunteers sip tea and offer it to passersby during the Saturday market (Chat & Chai event). Sometimes, during the *Kochen Am Markt*,<sup>10</sup> which happens when the market is closed and the streets are quiet, the staff puts a table outside and cooks there. Even when the door is closed and the activities are all inside, the structural composition of the stall

<sup>10</sup>“Cooking at The Market”, a community cooking event happening once a month at the Stand129

puts the inside and outside of the space in dialogue. Sometimes, people passing by peek through the large windows, and at times they also come in. Such a permeable division of the space allows for a more direct engagement with people of the neighborhood and puts the cultural hub and community building directly in the heart of Favoriten- the market.

### **3.4 Favoriten**

Favoriten is one of the largest neighborhoods in Vienna, with a relevant part of its social life centered around Creta, the area between Quellenstraße, Gudrunstraße, and Geiselbergstraße. The two venues of the KulturHaus are also situated in this area. Creta includes Reumannplatz, the main square of the neighborhood, as well as the public pool, Amalienbad, and the street market, Viktor-Adler Markt. Essentially, it's where the social life of the neighborhood happens. The marketplace, where Stand129 is also located, plays a vital role in the neighborhood's social fabric, especially for residents who are not originally from Austria. Through the selection of food sold and the languages and habits that determine the exchanges, it gathers and connects the different cultural identities of Favoriten. A working-class neighborhood, it is Vienna's most populous neighborhood, with more than 50% of the residents having a migrant background (KulturHaus, 2024). The main cultures present in the neighborhood are Serbian, Syrian, and Turkish (Stadt Wien, 2024). These identities have signified and shaped the neighborhood to the point that, when researching the Turkish diaspora in Vienna, Savaş presented Favoriten to be a "Turkish place" (Bell, 1999 quoted in Savaş, 2014). Although this claim is based on research conducted more than a decade ago, the diasporic community in Favoriten has continued to expand since Savaş's work. Since 2013, the Syrian population in Favoriten has grown by 10.5%, alongside a notable, though smaller, increase in Ukrainian residents (2.5%), as well as a steady

influx of newcomers from other countries (Stadt Wien, 2024). Because of the prominent structures of social inequality, the community of Favoriten, with the different identities it holds, has also one of the highest unemployment rates in Vienna, and one of the lowest educational level rates in the city (Stadt Wien, 2024). The density of marginalized and disadvantaged characteristics in the community results in stigmatization and prejudice attached to the neighborhood, which is often used as an example to advance racist and populist propaganda by the FPÖ, Austria's far-right party (FPO, 2024). During multiple political campaigns, the FPÖ used the slogan "Vienna must not become Istanbul",<sup>11</sup> a propaganda particularly relevant in the densely Turkish populated neighborhood of Favoriten (Kurier, 2020). Therefore, structures of urban and social discrimination and marginalization interweave with structures of social and cultural inclusion proposed by the KulturHaus.

### 3.5 Constructing the House

Through the interweaving of these different systems (the organization of the KulturHaus, the social fabric of the cultural center and of the neighborhood, and the architecture and materiality of the buildings and Favoriten), *the house* is constantly co-constructed. This evolving co-construction determines the fluid and participatory nature of *the house*, and it therefore ensures its accessibility. Hence, a critical aspect for homing in semi-public spaces, in the KulturHaus as elsewhere, is to guarantee a certain level of playfulness and dynamism between the structures of *the house*.

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<sup>11</sup>"Wien darf nicht Istanbul werden", a slogan used in multiple political campaigns by the FPÖ

## Chapter 4: The Home

*The Home* explores the practices of homing within the KulturHaus. Grounded in the understanding that physical, organizational, and social structures form the foundational systems of a shelter, this chapter examines how these structures become meaningful and home-like for those who dwell in them, even if only temporarily. This section begins by establishing a framework for what constitutes a home, drawing on the firsthand experiences gathered during my research and insights from existing literature. This foundation provides a common ground for exploring various sites for homing practices. Then the chapter unfolds through the three main sites of homing I identified in the KulturHaus: foodways, the act of sharing, and the roles one may take on or not in the community. The chapter ends with a reflection on unhoming, addressing the habits and dynamics that resist or diverge from the effort to make the space feel like home.

### 4.1 Framing home

Barbara and I are cutting the vegetables for a recipe that we still haven't decided on, when I ask her if it's okay to record our conversation for my thesis. At the question of what makes a home for her, she tells me: "a good meal, a good pet, and a good community".<sup>12</sup> Although she hasn't found a pet at the KulturHaus yet, she's very happy with the meals she has here and with the community she prepares and eats them with. It's why she comes here. When I explain to her that I'm researching home through the KulturHaus, she nods with a smile. Similarly, Tilman also reacted supportingly to my research interest, and followed up on my question about homing at

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<sup>12</sup>Interview with Barbara, conducted on March 4, 2025, Vienna.

the KulturHaus with great excitement. Since he arrived at the KulturHaus, he's been working to have people "feeling [a sense] of ownership to this place", an effort that requires constant work.<sup>13</sup>

This feeling of ownership is also a characteristic that Boccagni identifies as a fundamental feature of homing, together with security and familiarity (both emotional and cognitive, meaning the orientation in a space and/or in a routine) (Boccagni, 2017, p.47). Moreover, the aspect of security is particularly significant to Mataz, who fled Syria, his childhood home, and is now working at the KulturHaus. He tells me that "home is where you actually feel safe".<sup>14</sup> And as Handel points out, ontological security is never given, but rather made and remade through the constant growing of sites of homing (Handel, 2019, p.1052). For Mataz, that looks like re-creating home through food, coffee, and his community. In academia, the home is considered to be a socio-spatial entity, a psycho-spatial feature, and a "warehouse of emotions" (Saunders and Williams, 1988; Giuliani, 1991; Gurney, 2000 quoted in Handel, 2019, p. 1046). It's also considered to be an active, evolving endeavor, "a constant work" as Tilman put it (Handel, 2019, p. 1046; Boccagni, 2017, p.3). According to Heidegger, active dwelling is core to what makes us humans: throughout our whole life, we strive to grow what sustains a meaningful form of life in a place (Wrathall, 2025). Therefore, homing is an endeavor everybody constantly engages with.

Hence, in this thesis, home refers to a variety of meanings: the childhood home, the current living, the KulturHaus and its two venues, BrotFabrik and Stand129, the culinary costumes, the set of routines that constitute one's familiarity and sense of continuity, and the community.

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<sup>13</sup>Interview with Tilman Fromelt, conducted on February 26, 2025, Vienna.

<sup>14</sup>Interview with Mataz Al Kerdy, conducted on March 21, 2025, Vienna.

## 4.2 Foodways

On what was to me a random Tuesday of March, I walked into the KulturHaus to find a crowd of rainbow wigs, leopard prints, red noses, and face drawings. Most of the people stood excited around the table where Stefan, one of the most skilled cooks in the group, was forming little balls of dough next to a large pot filled with sizzling oil. The menu that day centered around krapfen, made from scratch and filled with marmalade from Stefan's garden. I was excited, but still confused about the memo on the dress code that everybody seemed to have gotten apart from me. Finally, a lady explained to me what was going on. Krapfen is a staple of "Fat Tuesday", a Catholic festivity to celebrate before Lent begins, and that was happening that day. It is also the same day as Carnival. That's why the costumes! She also told me she used to love this day as a kid, but struggled to celebrate it as an adult and did not find a chance to dress up during the day: "So I thought I could do it here" she announced, shaking her multicolored wig (see Figure 5).



Figure 5: dressing up for Carnival (author)

Foodways are a practice of homing as they create and recreate what one knows and feels as home. This starts from the preparation of food, both as it may hold value *per se*, and because it's critical to achieve the desired sensations of the meal. Once, cooking Sholeh Zard,<sup>15</sup> I learned about the dedicated labor needed to extract the full properties of saffron by infusing it in both hot and cold water—a process well known to my fellow cooks coming from Persian countries (Figure 6, see [Appendix C](#)). Through these careful processes that guarantee the taste of the dish as one remembers, the sensorial home is created.



Figure 6: infusing saffron with an ice cube in the mortar (author)

Moreover, homing happens through other aspects of foodways, like the habits around the consumption of food. This can look like wearing colorful wigs to eat krapfen, or waiting exactly 18.19 to start eating dates for Iftar, the meal that ends fasting during Ramadan. Once, after cooking for Iftar at Stand129, Danilo (the organizer) instructed all the fellow diners on the

<sup>15</sup>Saffron rice pudding from Persian cuisine

foodways of the meal: according to the Bosnian tradition, there was an order and time for each course of our dinner (first dates, then lemonade, soup, and finally baklava).

Even during events that didn't revolve around cooking, foodways were central to the experience of the KulturHaus. Being in the proximity of the market, often conversations centered around the produce being sold. Moreover, these exchanges were usually accompanied by a cup of black tea, served in the traditional tulip-shaped Turkish glasses (see [Appendix D](#)). When researching the Turkish diaspora in Vienna, Savaş addresses the sensoriality of home exactly through the Turkish tea glasses, or rather, the absence of those. In fact, one of her interlocutors couldn't feel at home for their first two years in Vienna, as they didn't have the tulip-shaped glasses to drink their tea from (Savaş, 2014, p.188).

For Savaş's interlocutors, as well as for the community of the KulturHaus, homing happens through the right glass, the right order of dishes, the right dress. Thus, by having a community to enact and share their foodways with, people can create and recreate their homes in the KulturHaus.

Foodways are also the site where, through the creation and manipulation of sensory elements, the "sensory home" is formed (Pink, 2003, p.46). As memories can be created and recreated within a sensory milieu, the "sensory home" formed by foodways recalls the feelings and memories of past homes (Serematakis, 1994 quoted in Chen, 2021, p.136). Moreover, adopting Swislocki's concept of culinary nostalgia, foodways address the nostalgia of tastes and feelings of past homes (2008, p.1). When researching nostalgia of home, Duyvendak relies on Boym's

distinction between “restorative” and “reflective” nostalgia. While the first one relies on the seemingly desperate longing for former times, the second type “reflects upon the value of the (remembered) past for present purposes” (Boym, 2001 via Duyvendak, 2011, p. 108). The culinary nostalgia I consider here falls under the second category. By having a participatory approach, where participants bring recipes for the next session or are asked to find one on the spot, the foodways of the KulturHaus create and recreate different places and times, and a variety of traditions, which get mixed and matched in one single kitchen. In this way, the past, present, and future homes merge. It's through this more or less harmonious collision that foodways become “the sensual and performative medium through which diasporans enact their felt autonomy while laying claims to ‘ownership’ of the places and nations in which they settle” (Werbner and Fumanti, 2013, p. 149). While Werbner and Fumanti apply this argument to diasporic communities, I extend it more broadly, viewing it as a fundamental feature of foodways for establishing control and familiarity within a given place. Thus, to make a place (in this case the KulturHaus) taste, smell, appear, and most importantly, feel like home.

### **4.3 Sharing**

During a conversation once, Thomas, an Austrian guy in his mid-thirties, told me he comes to the KulturHaus “to harvest some energy, and eating food is good for that”. “Is it just about food then?” I asked. Throughout the months of knowing each other, Thomas claimed multiple times to be an excellent cook and often grumbled about how the dishes could have been improved. If he were there only for the food, it seemed to me he would be rather disappointed. I poked more around his statement: “So just to eat?”. He admitted he liked eating with nice people, something he can't do at home since he lives alone. We agreed that the energy he harvests at KulturHaus

doesn't come exclusively from the nutrients of the meals, but also from sharing the plates, stories, grudges, and laughs with the community.

During Iftar at Stand129, I learned that for Islam, there's more benefit in eating together than in doing it alone. This habit is especially revived during Ramadan when public iftars count many participants. However, Esmaa, who grew up celebrating Iftar with her family or at the mosque, shared that this one felt different, "like a family dinner".<sup>16</sup> Because of the smaller number of participants, we got to share more than just the meal, and in turn, we all talked about who we were and how we were feeling. Although not knowing each other before, this allowed us to make the community and space of the evening more familiar, and fostered a family-like relationship between the people.

Sharing food happened quite often during my fieldwork, and as for the case of Iftar, the practices of sharing held a particular quality of home. Often, we fed each other to taste if the food was cooked, filled each other's plates, and prepared leftovers for others to bring home ([Appendix E](#)). This intimate form of commensality, of sharing food from the same pot, plate, or at times spoon, like parents with children or between lovers, is what forms intimacy and familiarity in the community.

Beyond its material prompt, sharing also holds quality as the exchange of space, time, and emotions that dwell in them (see [Appendix F](#)). Sharing emotions, and allowing each other to receive and give care is also a way to harvest energies and share nurturance, creating a feeling of

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<sup>16</sup>Interview with Esmaa, conducted on March 26, 2025, Vienna.

security and familiarity in the space. Moreover, the emotional dimension of home also comes through the sharing of memories (see [Appendix G](#)).

When researching home, Carsten claims that “kinship is made in houses through the intimate sharing of space, food, and nurturance” (2003, p.35). Adopting a broader perspective, Duyvendak identifies the community as a critical site for homing, based on a mode of relating to one another and the sharing of affinities, hobbies, and longings (2011, p.62, 83). Sharing of art and cultural practices is also what Crobe claims as a critical aspect of homing in the city since it generates new forms of participation, which result in new relationships (2024, p. 84). Moreover, this contributes to homing as an affective pull of the self to the world, as sharing entangles materiality with social relationships, rooting interactions in the emotional terrain of home (HadžiMuhamedović and Grujić, 2019, p.6; Easthope et al., 2020, p. 1494).

Based on the experiences and reflections from my research and the one of other scholars, I argue that sharing is a fundamental site for homing at the KulturHaus. This happens through a dense overlay of different experiential dimensions of sharing (food, stories, emotions to mention some), and the bonds of kinship that arise from it.

#### **4.4 Roles**

“We cook together, we eat together, we clean together”. That’s how Salwa explains the dynamics of Community Cooking. There, as in the rest of the KulturHaus, dynamics aim to reflect a principle of horizontality, where everybody participates and takes responsibility. Still, people

embody certain roles, take on habits and customs that interact with the ones we are socialized through our homes.

For example, because of the number of elderly people in the community, I had many grandparents-like interactions (which even in my notes appeared at times like “grandma” and “grandpa”). Like Elena, a Russian lady who used to sneak me sweets wrapped in tissues for breakfast the next morning (see [Appendix H](#)). The role of grandparents extends beyond caregiving, it also reflects an age hierarchy, where the eldest holds the greatest knowledge and authority. During my fieldwork, I occasionally found myself being scolded, and at other times, witnessed others receiving similar reprimands from the oldest members of the group. This often happened over minor details, and it never appeared to be a personal grievance to anybody (see [Appendix I](#)).

But the KulturHaus also became a place to experiment away from the roles people have been socialized into. I had a couple of conversations with mothers who particularly enjoyed coming to the KulturHaus to not engage with the gendered labor usually present in their households. They told me that after a long day at home, it was good to be somewhere where everybody is in charge of cooking and cleaning, and the responsibilities don't fall just on one person.

The challenge of gender roles in the kitchen is an effort that Lisa, who previously coordinated the Community Cooking, was particularly keen on talking about during our interview. When the kitchen was set up, they consciously decided not to address women specifically, which resulted in a variety of male chefs participating in the events.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Interview with Lisa Plattner, conducted on March 31, 2025, Vienna.

For Carsten, homes are “the social relations of those who inhabit them”. And these relations don’t exist in a vacuum. Rather, they’re shaped by the encoding and internalization of hierarchical principles regarding different generations, ages, or genders (Carsten, 2003, p.37). Therefore, the role people take on inside the community is imbued with social meaning, which has relevance beyond the intimate sphere and reflects wider social distinctions (Carsten, 2003, p.37, p.49). For people who have experienced home ruptures, like they had to move away from their original homes, or who had their families move away, being able to enact those roles can be an empowering way to participate in social dynamics. It can also be a way to create what they imagined or would like as a home for this moment in their life. Specifically in older stages of life, people may struggle to find a purpose and role in society (Visser, 2019, p.294). Therefore, taking on a certain role can be a way to recreate a sense of control and familiarity in their life, and thus create a feeling of home within their community.

At the same time, homes are a site of resistance. According to hooks, homes are formed by the weaving of co-emerging and co-constructing of categories of power, and it’s up to individuals to move or disrupt them (hooks, 1990, p.41, quoted in HadžiMuhamedović and Grujić, 2019, p.5). Therefore, homing also resides in the resistance to such roles and powers. Hence, the roles one takes or doesn’t take on in the KulturHaus play a critical role as a practice of homing, and propose a multifaceted approach to make a sense of home for participants.

## 4.5 Unhoming

The KulturHaus is often quite chaotic: there is always something happening, people moving around, talking languages that at least somebody understands only partially, if not at all. Referring to the Iftar event at Stand 129, Esmaa told me that “chaos is also part of the magic.”<sup>18</sup> However, the chaos may also hint at tensions and ruptures in the community.

There was a day particularly in which the chaos surpassed what we were collectively able to hold. In the middle of the cooking, a group of people started going around the kitchen and taking food directly from the pots, forks and hands scavenging what seemed cooked enough to eat without giving a stomach ache. Some of the cooks refused to start giving out the food, as it was not ready. People got angry on both sides. I was also surprised. This whole situation went against the rules of Community Cooking I’ve been introduced to: we cook together, we eat together, and we clean together. And instead, a group of people started eating while all the others were cooking. Then, since the rules had already been broken, others followed, took a plate for themselves, and started to eat instead of setting the table. Salwa intervened, loudly repeating the rules of the space over the chattering. Silence came. She also clarified why there was an exception to them: when the sun went down, Iftar started, and some of the people there had to start eating since they’d been fasting the whole day. That’s the group that started going around to collect the half-cooked pasta. Their insubordination was justified. However, the one of the others tagging along was not, and they stopped eating. Still, justified or not, this rupture in the rules changed the atmosphere. The tension still hanging in the air, we didn’t eat together, as some had finished their meal before others started.

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<sup>18</sup>Interview with Esmaa, conducted on March 26, 2025, Vienna.

A similar dynamic happened during Newroz, the Persian New Year. When Iftar started, a group of people (Muslims fasting) went to eat what food was already prepared, while the others kept cooking. Although no tension arose, the rupture breached again the rituals and community (see [Appendix J](#)).

When there's a breach of a norm, the sense of familiarity, security, and control in the community is also broken (Turner, 1980, p. 150). Moreover, the fracture extends not only to the practices but also breaches the structures in place. These are identified by Sara Ahmed as "moments of disorientation" when there's a movement away from the habitual (Ahmed, 2006, p.155 quoted in HadžiMuhamedović and Grujić, 2019, p.7). But after the breach, homing continues. In describing social drama, which I adopt here as a case of unhoming, Turner identifies its following steps: breach, crisis, redress, and either integration or schism (Turner, 1980, p.149). At the KulturHaus, after the ruptures, the community still met around the tables and cleaned dishes together. In the case of Newroz, people still sang and clapped together to the artist. This is not to say that those breaches didn't leave a mark. Rather, they enhance the constant evolution of homing as a non-linear process.

## Conclusion

In this thesis, I explored homing practices through the case study of the KulturHaus and its two venues, BrotFabrik and Stand129. Through a twofold analysis, I engaged with the physical, organizational, and social structures of the KulturHaus and the homing practices that emerge from them. In this way, I explored the entanglement and co-construction of the material, social, and emotional realm, both in the structures (as presented in *The House*) and the practices (as analyzed in *The Home*).

Furthermore, my thesis emphasizes the critical role of embodied sensorial practices as cooking, in creating and recreating the feelings and memories of home. Particularly in communities that hold multiple cultural and generational identities, the exchange and negotiation of different sensorial practices and customs allows for the creation of a home that is not only nostalgic. Instead, the home of the past merges with the one of the present and lays the ground for the home of the future, reflecting homing as a constant becoming in space and the community.

These findings contribute to the existing literature on homing by offering insights into how such practices can develop within semi-public contexts by demonstrating the significant role that cultural centers play. This becomes particularly relevant in the socio-political context of Vienna, as it proposes a way to tackle the unequal distribution of homing opportunities in the Austrian capital. Thus, this same model of semi-public spaces that foster homing through foodways, the act of sharing, and the roles one may take on in the community can be transposed to other contexts marked by socio-political oppression against homing.

However, my thesis comes with limitations. The language barrier led to a selected sample of interlocutors, which implies that this thesis may miss some nuances from the spectrum of experiences of the KulturHaus community. Also, as all the conversations and interviews were led in English between non-native speakers, there may be some gaps in translating one's ideas and emotions. Considering the relevance in this field of the intimate and emotional connection one has to homing, interviews in the interlocutors' mother tongue may reach a depth of understanding that is not achievable in translation. Future research should strive to explore home in the interlocutors' mother tongue, either through translators or better, through researchers who are fluent and possibly, native-speakers.

## Appendices

### **A. Thematization of migration: extract from interview with Tilman Fromelt, conducted on 26th February 2025, Vienna**

“If there are artists approaching me and wanting to do a participatory project with us, I try to ask them about their intentions. (...) There are some who have been so privileged in life and want to give back. That's somehow the wrong path. We don't go that way. And there's another path where there are artists who see a potential. (...) This is a more successful path because it is rather acknowledging strengths and potentials. (...) It's much more on one eye level.”

### **B. Permalight strategy: extract from interview with Tilman Fromelt, conducted on February 26, 2025, Vienna**

“There was a (...) strategy that the general secretary of Brunnenpassage called permalight. You know, permafrost? There's constant frost (...) [that's what we mean for] permanent suffering. (...) And there was this shift of doing different projects, like community work. (...) [The strategy became then] to work with people before they come to [the permanent suffering], to do community work, which stabilizes neighborhoods and builds up networks.”

### **C. Foodways: Ethnographic Vignette from April 2, 2025**

One evening, I was in charge of cooking Sholeh Zard, with a lady named Sooreyah. Although I had eaten the pudding multiple times, I had never cooked it. And that meant I underestimated the labor of love that goes into it. Sooreyah was a precise and knowledgeable cook, as I discovered through the different steps of handling saffron. First, she instructed me to pestle saffron with coconut powder. Then, she added an ice cube to the mortar (see Figure 6). After the ice melted a

bit, we poured the liquid into a glass and added hot water. Then we covered the glass with a plate so that the heat didn't escape. And again, every couple of minutes, add a bit of hot water to the glass and cover it with a plate. To say I was confused was the least. Switching from Farsi to English, a man explained to me: "It's like with tea or coffee". To better extract the properties of the saffron, it needs to be infused in a mix of cold and hot water, something that most people coming from Persian countries knew.

#### **D. Foodways: Ethnographic Vignette from February 8, 2025**

Once, I was at Viktor-Adler Markt to buy some vegetables, and I found myself talking to Özge, an employee at Stand129, who was running Chat&Chai that morning. She was sipping black tea in front of the stall, and we started talking about the different ways to cook the small, light zucchini I had just bought, a variety we both knew from our home countries but couldn't usually find in Austria. Talking and sharing recipes brought us back to "what we used to do back home". She then offered me black tea in a typical Turkish tea glass, which can be distinguished by its small tulip shape.

#### **E. Sharing food: Ethnographic Vignette from February 11, 2025**

I had just met Hans, an art student, when he fed me with a wooden spoon to taste if the rice was ready, during one of my first evenings at the Community Cooking. We giggled at the intimacy from this childlike gesture. So I took another spoon and fed him. Over the following weeks, I repeated the same gesture, pot to spoon to mouth, with a variety of people, strangers and friends alike.

### **F. Sharing emotions: Ethnographic Vignette from February 11, 2025**

Once, I was trying to hearten Mina, the Iranian girl in charge of that day's cooking session, whom I had just met. She seemed overwhelmed by the amount of people calling her name, asking about quantities, timing, and the thinness of slices. I offered my hands to comfort her. And so we held each other above the boiling pot, the vapor almost scalding our skin. For some time, we just quietly held hands, sharing bits and pieces from our lives. I learned she came to Vienna because of her Masters and because of the challenge she faced as a queer person in her home country. More than our stories, however, we just shared comfort and quietness.

### **G. Sharing memories: Ethnographic Vignette from February 10, 2025**

During a *Sprach Cafe*,<sup>19</sup> I started knitting a sock so that I had something to fidget with and distract me from the challenge of holding a conversation in German. Somehow, this made the conversation way smoother. Not really for improving my German skills, but rather for how it engaged everybody at our table. Amir, a tall Iranian man in his 30s, was enthusiastic about seeing me quickly going through the stitches on the needle. It reminded him of something that gave him a big smile. He told us of the old scarf his mother knitted for him in Iran a long time ago. However, despite treasuring this gift, he never really picked up the craft to replicate the gesture himself. Also, the lady sitting next to me, a retired Austrian teacher, was touched by my knitting. She shared with us how everybody had to learn how to *stricken*<sup>20</sup> in elementary school, so she started knitting scarves from a very young age. This made the young Turkish man at our table quite surprised, as he had never heard of learning knitting in school. For him, it was rather something taught at home, passed from generation to generation. The conversation then drifted

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<sup>19</sup>“Language Cafe”

<sup>20</sup>knitting

to a new topic, but I held tight to how one craft, actually, one sock could provoke everybody to participate and share parts of their biographies.

#### **H. Roles and care: Ethnographic Vignette from March 4, 2025**

Elena, a Russian lady who moved to Vienna twenty-six years ago for love, would always come and hug me when I entered space. She'd search for my hands while we were talking, and look me deep in the eyes to ask about my work, my studies, my family. I'd ramble something about the thesis and then listen to her stories about her daughter and her last Rummikub match.<sup>21</sup> Sometimes, she would sneak me a piece of cake or krapfen wrapped in some tissue paper, so that I had an energetic breakfast to start my day. She was embodying the role of the sweet, caring grandmother, something she couldn't do as her only daughter lived in Switzerland, and she didn't have other chances to interact with the youth.

#### **I. Roles and Scolding: Ethnographic Vignettes from February 12, 2025 and April 2, 2025**

During a cooking event at Stand129, an old Viennese man picked on my word choices when complimenting the food. He blurted out: "*Lecker* ist in Deutschland! Hier ist: *schmeckt gut*".<sup>22</sup> I had used the wrong dialect to express how tasty the food was (the German over the Viennese one), a mistake he promptly corrected. Another time, during a Community Cooking event, a Ukrainian lady kept correcting me and other younger people about how we were washing, cutting, and plating the meal. So we learned that potatoes should be soaked in water before being cut to remove excessive starch, that the slices of bread we were cutting were too thick, and that

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<sup>21</sup>A tile-based game for up to six players, that some of the elderlies of the Community Cooking play

<sup>22</sup>Translated: "Yummy" is in Germany, here [ we say ] "it tastes good"

bread is plated better on a large flat platter rather than in a bowl. Laughing, we joked about how we felt children being scolded for not properly setting the table.

**J. Unhoming: Ethnographic Vignette** from March 25, 2025, Vienna

During Newroz, the Persian New Year, cooking started around 16, one hour before the usual starting time, as there were more dishes to prepare and more people expected. The event featured a music performance by an Afghan artist and a dinner. For the special occasion, we arranged tables in a u-shape in the foyer, so that we could all sit around them and enjoy the performance at the same time. But around 18.30, when rice was still boiling and vegetables were being cut, a group of people sat down and started eating on their own. It was time for Iftar, and while some of the dishes were ready, most of them were not. Although this time there was no tension, a rupture still happened in the rituals of the KulturHaus.

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