

## “... One Cuisine in The Use Of Two Nations”<sup>1</sup> The Viennese Cuisine from Christmas to Hanukah (1918-1938)

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### **Abstract**

Material and intangible heritage meet in culinary practices. These can be tangible sustaining the physical body and documented in cook books, cultural accounts, and recipes. Most are intangibles, however, and not recorded. How people cook, revel in and recall smells and tastes and thus also celebrate festivals creates and recreates strong ties to life left behind. Interestingly migrant/refugee objects and practices can help rediscover lost culinary and larger histories back ‘home.’ In my encounters with Jewish immigrant families in the American Midwest who had left generations before myself, I discovered that my contemporary Viennese culinary traditions and theirs were surprisingly similar which pointed to a potentially shared cuisine by Viennese Jews and non-Jews before 1938.

To uncover this forgotten history back home, I use records from Vienna and from refugees who had tenaciously preserved memories, rhymes, practices, and recipes. I discuss three Viennese from the late 1700s to the 1930s before I analyze *the* authoritative Viennese cookbook pre-1938. The individuals are exemplary for typical food encounters amongst Viennese Jews and non-Jews over these years, and include two women and a man, a Catholic, a Protestant, and a Jew, a professional cook, a pastry chef, both cookbook authors, and a working class housewife, my grandmother. She used an impressive and then revolutionary cookbook of recipes and culinary advise, which was arguably *the* authoritative cookbook of the interwar period. To corroborate what I find in my history and this cookbook, I discuss general food encounters between the two groups, uncover a ‘lost’ Jewish recipe through an emigre Jewish author, and discuss memories/practices of other refugees. They continued using this cookbook and identifying with Viennese cuisine despite having been forced to flee. Knowledge about our shared history had been effectively erased through the Holocaust and the dispersal of Vienna’s Jewish community.

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<sup>1</sup> M. G. Saphir, “Badner Kipfel,” *Der Humorist*, June 26, 1852, 1.