

*Furnishing in
a Foreign Land*

Since arriving in Germany, this question has quietly followed me from one room to another. Living with the possibility that my stay might change at any moment made settling into a new place feel uncertain. I wanted to make my room feel like home, but at the same time, I kept thinking about what would happen to everything I invested in it if I had to leave. This became the starting point of my research into how people settle, inhabit, and make a home after migration, particularly among those who, like me, moved abroad to study and are trying to build a life there.

I came across Burcu Doğramacı's text *The Migratory Living Room: Dwelling and Furnishing in a Foreign Land* while thinking about the relationship between migration and domestic space. Her discussion of the ways migrants furnished and inhabited their living spaces made me look at the rooms of people around me. Together with the photographs in *Das Deutsche Wohnzimmer*, the text also led me to think about how people position themselves within their domestic spaces, which became the starting point for introducing portraiture into my research.

Throughout the semester, I visited the rooms of friends who were not from Germany and were living in Germany. I initially wondered whether the length of their stay or the type of accommodation they lived in (a student dormitory, a room in a shared apartment, or a more established home) would determine how much they had settled. Instead, I encountered very different ways of approaching the same uncertainty.

Some rooms were almost untouched. Their inhabitants had acquired only what they needed, and some could have packed almost everything into a suitcase and left. Others had been transformed through furniture, textiles, photographs, objects brought from home, or small arrangements that made the space feel more personal. I became interested not only in these interventions, but also in their absence. A room that had barely been changed was just as much a way of inhabiting a place as a room filled with personal objects.

I began to pay attention to the objects people chose to live with and to the small places they created within their rooms. A mirror, a carpet, a sofa, a dining table, a view from the window, or a small corner filled with photographs could become a point of attachment. I repeatedly encountered what I started to think of as memory corners: small collections of photographs and objects brought from elsewhere, gathered together almost like intimate, cheerful memorials. These objects seemed to carry stories of places, people, and lives that continued to exist alongside the new space. The visits were not only observations. They became conversations. Every room opened into stories, and every story changed the way I looked at the room. I began to understand that I could not look at these spaces as neutral architectural environments. I needed to look at the relationship between the person, their body, their objects, and the space they inhabited. This is where portraiture entered the research.

After encountering the domestic interiors represented in *Das Deutsche Wohnzimmer*, I became interested in how people positioned themselves within their own rooms. Rather than deciding where to photograph them, I asked each person where they wanted to be photographed. The chosen place (next to a particular object, in a corner, on a sofa, beside a table, or simply somewhere that felt comfortable) became part of the portrait. The photograph became not only a portrait of a person, but also a way of observing their relationship to the space. The research also led me to think about what happens to these relationships when people leave. I photographed objects that were meaningful to their owners but that could potentially be left behind when moving. This shifted my attention from the interior of the room towards the Wculation of objects in a city where people are constantly arriving and leaving. I began placing these objects into the *Kleinanzeigen*.



The resulting work consists of twentyfour photographs presented as Kleinanzeigen like postcards. Visitors were invited to take the postcards with them. In this way, the objects moved once again: from a person's room, into a photograph, into a fictional marketplace, and finally into the hands of someone else.

The research began with my own anxiety about investing in a place whose future was uncertain, but gradually became an observation of the many different ways people make spaces inhabitable. It made me realise that the amount of physical intervention does not necessarily determine how much a space can feel like home. Sometimes a small object, a familiar view, a conversation, or a corner is enough. Sometimes a person chooses not to change the space at all. There are still many stories behind these rooms that I have not recorded. I find myself wanting to return to them, to revisit the people and their spaces, to collect their stories and objects, and perhaps to explore what kinds of small spatial interventions might support the process of making a place one's own.





IKEA Sofa, weiß, 2-Sitzer

VB Nur Abholung

99423 Thüringen - Weimar

06.07.2026 0 0

***Mal sahibi
mülk sahibi,
Hani bunun
ilk sahibi?***



Art

Zustand

Stempel

in Ordnung

Farbe

Material

Baum

Leder

Beschreibung

Brown leather sofa,
than the bed. Signe

is made. Well used but very comfortable, reportedly more comfortable
as throughout. Still going strong.

Approx. dimensions: x 80 x 80 cm

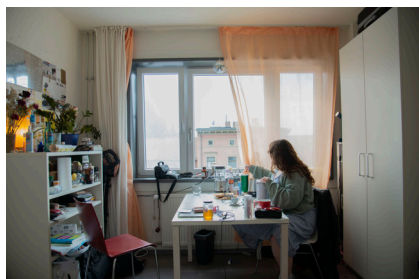
*Master of
wealth,
master of
land,
Tell me;
who first held
this in hand?*





Aml, 30

From Turkey, 4 years in Germany
MFA Architect, WG, Weimar



Bilge, 26

From Turkey, 1 year in Germany
Master Student, dormitory, Weimar



İdil, 30

From Türkiye, 6 years in Germany
Master Student, WG, Weimar



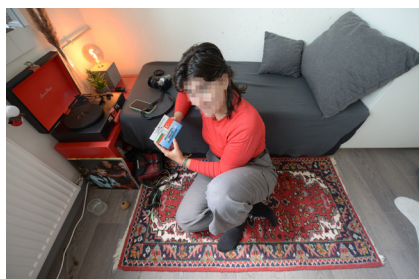
Mina, 28

From Türkiye, 3 years in Germany
Master Student, dormitory, Weimar



Aysenur, 28

From Türkiye, 3 years in Germany
Master Student, WG, Weimar



Elitsa, 23

From Bulgaria, 4 years in Germany
Bachelor Student, dormitory, Weimar



Keila, 32

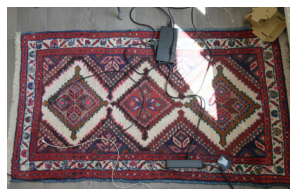
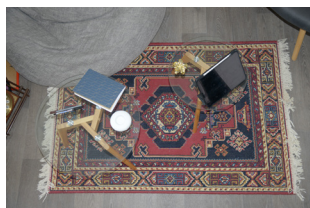
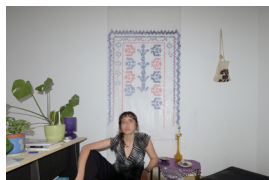
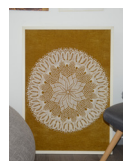
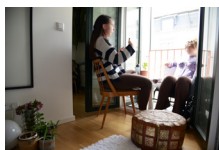
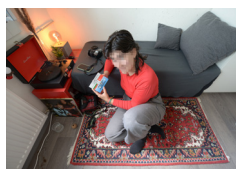
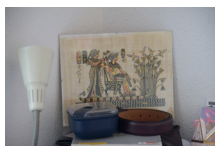
From Brazil, 1 year in Germany
Master Student, dormitory, Weimar



Salma, 25

From Egypt, 1 year in Germany
Master Student, dormitory, Weimar

felt like home



in pursuit of unsettledness

