Rosalie Sattler-Feuerstein: An Austro-Hungarian Official Female Physician in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1914–1919

Brigitte Fuchs¹, Husref Tahirović²

¹Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology at the University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria, ²Department of Medical Sciences of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Correspondence: htahirovic@anubih.ba; brigitte.fuchs@univie.ac.at; Tel.: + 387 61 720 740; Fax.: + 387 35 303 774

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Abstract
This short biography traces the life and medical activities of Rosalie Sattler, née Feuerstein (1883–19??), who was employed as an official female physician at the Austro-Hungarian (AH) provincial public health department in Sarajevo from 1914–1919. Born in 1883 into a Jewish middle-class family in Chernivtsi (then Czernowitz), Ukraine, in Bukovina, the easternmost province in Austria, Feuerstein moved to Vienna in 1904 to study medicine. After earning her MD from Vienna University in 1909, she started her career as an assistant physician at the Kaiser Franz Josef Hospital in Vienna. In spring 1912, Feuerstein moved to Sarajevo to work as an intern at the local provincial hospital (Landeskrankenhaus). In the same year, she married AH district physician Moritz Sattler (1873–1927) in Vienna. In 1914, Sattler-Feuerstein successfully applied to be an AH official female physician in Bosnia. She was an employee of the provincial public health department in Sarajevo and never functioned as an official female physician in the sense of the relevant AH service ordinance. After the collapse of the monarchy, Sattler-Feuerstein continued to be employed as an official female physician of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. She resigned from service in 1919 and established herself as a private general practitioner in Sarajevo with her husband, who had also resigned as an official physician and started to practice privately at that point. Widowed in 1927, she left Sarajevo for an unknown destination, likely in 1938–1939, and vanished from historical records. Conclusion. Rosalie Sattler-Feuerstein (1883–19??) came to Bosnia as the eighth AH official female physician and worked as an employee of the AH provincial public health department in Sarajevo from 1914–1919, after which she practiced as a private physician in Sarajevo for more than 25 years.

Key Words: Bosnia and Herzegovina 1878–1918 • Official Female Physicians • Rosalie Sattler-Feuerstein • Sarajevo.

Introduction

After Austro-Hungarian (AH) troops occupied the Ottoman province of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) in 1878–1879, the AH administration took unusual measures to transform the rural “backward” country into a “future province” of the dual monarchy. Among these measures was the recruitment of women physicians, particularly for the treatment of the female Muslim population in the context of widespread endemic syphilis. Though female physicians were not permitted in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (AHE) in 1890, joint minister of finance and BH governor Benjamin de Kallay was a staunch supporter of the use of state-employed women doctors to contribute to the modernization and hygienization of Bosnia’s “rural” population (1). Six women physicians were employed in BH starting in 1890–1902, and they practiced in the social-medical framework of “women’s doctors for women” with de Kallay’s approval. Most of these women had a personal background in the AHE or Congress Poland, and all had acquired their diplomas in Switzerland or France.

The “Bosnian” institution of AH official female physicians was an essential step toward the admission of women to medical studies at domestic universities in the AHE in 1895 (Hungary) and 1899 (Austria). After de Kallay’s death in 1903, the AH administration changed its recruitment policies
for female health officers to work toward a long-term goal of exclusively employing female physicians with domestic diplomas. Accordingly, the positions in Banja Luka and Travnik were never officially advertised, and provisory officials Gisela Rosenfeld Januszewska (Banja Luka) (2) and Rosa Einhorn Bloch (Travnik) (3), both of whom had obtained Swiss diplomas, were urged as married women to practice as private physicians with official functions. After the position in Tuzla was advertised in 1897 in the AHE and filled by Jadwiga Olszewska (4), the next advertisement to recruit an official female physician for Bosnia was not published until 1918 (5). Nevertheless, Kornelija Rakić (Bihać) was employed in 1908 because she was a young woman physician from Vojvodina who had obtained a Hungarian diploma; therefore, she perfectly fit the desired profile (6). The AH public health department in Sarajevo also appointed Rosalie Sattler-Feuerstein, a young Austrian physician with a MD from Vienna University, as the eighth AH official female physician, although she did not practice in her actual function until after the AHE collapse.

Rosalie Sattler-Feuerstein’s life and professional activities in Bosnia are the subject of this review. The latter topic is reliant on the sparse sources from Sattler-Feuerstein’s medical studies in Vienna and her short career as an official female physician in AH and in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

**Rosalie Sattler-Feuerstein’s Short Biography**

A detailed biography of Rosalie (also Rosalia) Sattler-Feuerstein’s is not yet available (7). She is briefly mentioned in Ctibor Nečas’ collective biography of the AH female health officers in BH as the AH female health official in BH who never took office (8). A grey literature research report by Barbara Martin (2017) based on Sattler-Feuerstein’s personnel file as an AH official female physician reveals little more, but adds the fact that she remained an official physician in the service of the SHS-State in 1918 and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in 1919 (9). She practiced as a private physician in Sarajevo starting in 1920 and left the city in 1938 or 1939; the circumstances, place, and time of her death proved untraceable (9). Rosalie Feuerstein was born on August 10, 1883, in Chernivtsi (then Czernowitz) (Picture 1), located in today’s Western Ukraine the capital of Austria’s easternmost province, Bukovina.¹

She was the only child of Abraham Feuerstein, a local cloth merchant, and his wife Anna, née Zellermayer.² Rosalie likely attended a “lycée”, a six-year higher education institution for girls in the AHE that did not qualify the female graduates for university entrance (10). Feuerstein decided to study medicine, so she registered as a private pupil at the (boys’) “imperial-royal I. state gymnasium”


²Archiv der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien (IKG), Trauungsbuch Wien-Alsergrund 68, No. 9.
in Czernowitz and passed her qualification for the university entrance exam (“matura”) in July 1904 at age 21. In summer 1904, Feuerstein moved to Vienna and enrolled at the Medical Faculty of Vienna University (Picture 2) as one of just 33 female students of medicine (11).

Women were first admitted to medical studies in Austria in 1899; however, the opportunities for girls to acquire the qualification for university entrance were still extremely limited. The number of female medicine students remained low but started to increase in 1910 (11). Most female medicine students in Vienna, including Feuerstein, came from the eastern provinces of Austria, due to the liberal Jewish middle-class preference in Galicia and Bukovina for female academic endeavours, including medical education (11-13). Feuerstein completed her medical studies in five years (Picture 3). She passed her third and final doctoral viva (Rigorosum) at Vienna University on December 16, 1909, and was awarded her MD on December 23 (Picture 4).

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At that point, female physicians were still sufficiently rare in Austria that the Daily Press in Bukovina noted that “our compatriot, Miss Rosalie Feuerstein, daughter of our local merchant Abraham Feuerstein” had received her medical doctorate at Vienna University (14) (Picture 5).

The number of female private pupils was comparatively high at the I. state-gymnasium Czernowitz because of the preference of the Jewish middle class for female academic education (see Wurzer, K.k. I. Staatsgymnasium in Czernowitz, p. 44). Rosa Welt, mariée Straus (1856–1938), the “first” (German) Austrian female physician at the fin-de-siécle, was the first girl in the AHE to pass her “matura” exam in 1873. The University of Vienna refused to accept her even as an “extraordinary student”; therefore, she moved to Berne, where she was awarded her MD in 1878. Welt worked as an activist for women’s academic education in Vienna and eventually emigrated to the United States in 1882 and Palestine in 1919.


The medical curriculum at AH universities did not require students to submit a thesis but did require them to take three comprehensive “rigorous” examinations known as “Rigorosa”.

"Rosalie Feuerstein", University of Vienna, University Archive, Doctoral viva records (Rigorosenprotokoll) Med No 4, 1903–1930, p. 136.

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"Rosalie Feuerstein", University of Vienna, University Archive, Doctoral viva records (Rigorosenprotokoll) Med No 4, 1903–1930, p. 136.
Feuerstein commenced her career as an “aspirant” at the “imperial-royal” Kaiser Franz Josef Hospital (today “Klinik Favoriten”) in the tenth district of Vienna on December 27, 1909 (8). In April 1910, she was employed as an assistant physician (“Sekundärztin”) at the clinic specializing in epidemiology, which was established in 1891. This hospital was particularly notorious for antisemitism. At the time, the hospital management had constructed palliase walls in all recreation rooms for the medical personnel to keep Jewish and “Aryan” physicians apart (15). In 1912, Feuerstein left Vienna for Bosnia, where she began an internship at the provincial hospital (“Landeskrankenhaus”); in Sarajevo on May 1, 1912 (9) (Picture 6).

Once employed as an assistant physician at the provincial hospital in July 1912, she asked the provincial government to approve her marriage to Moritz Sattler (1872–1927), an AH district physician from the Czech lands who had recently been appointed “physician of the police department” (“Polizeiarzt”) in Sarajevo (9). It is probable that

"Moritz" is the German spelling of the name; alternate spellings are “Moriz” and “Moric.”

Moritz Sattler, born on December 17, 1872 in Kozolupy, a village next to Plzen in the Czech lands, completed his medical studies at Prague University on July 18, 1898 (Archive of the Charles University, collection Registry books of the German University in Prague, inventory No. 2, Registry book of doctors of the German Charles-Ferdinand University in Prague/German University in Prague (1892–1904), p. 191; [cited 2021 Jun 7] http://is.cuni.cz/webapps/archiv/public/book/bo/1751652802704438/466/?lang=en. After working as an assistant physician in Professor Wöller’s private clinic in Prague, Sattler was appointed assistant physician of the provincial hospital in Sarajevo (Pilsener Tagblatt, 26. Sept. 1900, p. 5). He was employed in the Department for Venerology and Dermatology, which was headed by renowned Bosnian dermatologist Leopold Glück (1854–1907). According to Moritz Sattler’s obituary, he was denied the chance to succeed Glück as he had intended (16); instead, he was appointed district physician (“Bezirksarzt”) in the communities of (Bosansko) Grahovo at Bosnia’s western border and Bosanski Petrovac in the northwest of the country. Upon his marriage in 1912, he returned to Sarajevo as “physician of the police department” (“Polizeiarzt”) in 1912 or 1913. Sattler published materials on syphilis prevention during World War I. After the war, he did not request an extension of his civil service and retired as an official physician. In January 1920, Sattler and Sattler-Feuerstein’s names were included on an official list of private doctors in BH (17). Sattler died on November 28, 1927 (18), while visiting a patient (16), and he was buried in the Old Jewish Cemetery in Sarajevo. Sattler’s obituary, which was published in a newspaper for the Jewish community in Sarajevo, extols his human qualities and popularity in the local Ashkenazi community (16).
married on September 24, 1912, in Vienna. Daily newspapers in Vienna and Prague noted the extraordinary marriage between "physician and woman physician", which was considered "remarkable" (19) (Picture 7).

After her marriage, Rosalie (Rosalia) Sattler-Feuerstein continued to work as an assistant physician at the Kaiser Franz Josef Hospital in Vienna, and her parents moved to Vienna as well. Her father died in Vienna in 1916, after which her widowed mother moved to Sarajevo, where she lived with her daughter and son-in-law until her death in 1930. To enable her move to Sarajevo, Sattler-Feuerstein informally applied to the AH provincial public health department as an official female physician in 1914. Her application was approved, and she was appointed female health officer on August 31, 1914 (9). In her case, marriage was not considered an obstacle to employment, whereas Gisela Januszewska in Banja Luka and Rosa Einhorn in Travnik were both urged to resign from their office upon marriage (2, 3). However, Sattler-Feuerstein never exercised her office, but she worked as an employee of the provincial public health department, probably with administrative duties.

After the collapse of the AHE, Sattler-Feuerstein continued her employment as an official physician of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and she swore her oath of office to King Petar in March 1919 (9). Barbara Martin determined that Sattler-Feuerstein resigned soon after and practiced as a private physician in Sarajevo beginning in 1920 (9). Her practice was listed in an address and telephone directory of the Drina Banovina in 1938 but was missing from a Sarajevo directory of 1940 (9). Martin concludes that Sattler-Feuerstein, who had been widowed in 1927 and lost her mother in 1930, left Sarajevo around 1938 for an unknown destination. From that point on, her person cannot be traced; it is unclear whether she moved to another location in Bosnia or Yugoslavia, emigrated elsewhere, or was deported and became a victim of the Holocaust.

Rosalie Sattler-Feuerstein’s Professional Activities

In mid-September 1914, a series of German-language newspaper articles in the AH Empire reported that “Mrs. Rosalia Sattler-Feuerstein, MD” had been appointed official female physician in Bosnia and assigned to the provincial government’s public health department in Sarajevo (20). This assign-

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10 Archiv der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien (IKG), Trauungsbuch Wien-Alsergrund 68, No. 9.
12 Sarajevo Historical Archives. Census of the Sarajevo, 1925. Census form of Anna Feuerstein née Zellermayer [in Bosnian].
14 Rosalie Sattler-Feuerstein was never pronounced dead. Barbara Martin’s inquiries whether she became a victim of the Nazi persecution of Jews in Yugoslavia in 1941 and 1942 were negative (9). An investigation into a possible emigration of Sattler-Feuerstein to the US or Israel turned also out to be negative. She may have headed for a politically insecure destination such as the Czech Republic or Rumania in 1938/1939 and eventually sought refuge in Britain or France, possibly illegally and under a false name. However, a possible flight cannot be traced, nor Rosalie Sattler-Feuerstein’s residence after 1945. The situation is made even more complicated by the fact that both “Rosalie Sattler” and “Rosalie Feuerstein” are not uncommon names; among other, she must not be confused with “Rozalija Satler”, born 1858, a native of Zagreb who was murdered in the Holocaust [cited 2021 Aug 9]. Available from: https://yvng.yadvashem.org/index.html?language=de&s_id=&s_lastName=Sattler&s_firstName=Rosalie&s_place=&s_dateOfBirth=&cluster=true.
ment was unusual because female public health officers were generally assigned to the district in which they were expected to exercise their office. The responsibilities of a female health officer included operating outpatient wards that provided free care to women and children, educating local women about hygiene and disease control (including implementing vaccinations) and, after 1906, participating in systematic syphilis eradication campaigns (1). In Sarajevo and the Sarajevo district, these tasks were performed by official female physician Teodora Krajewska, who was appointed in 1899 (21). Although three districts (Travnik, Bihać, Mostar) had not had an official or semi-official female physician since 1912, Sattler-Feuerstein became an employee of the AH provincial public health department in Sarajevo (7-9). She is listed as a court-sworn expert for forensic medicine in an annually published AH address and telephone directory for BH (22). She also practiced as a private doctor at the address “Terezija ulica 87”, Sarajevo (23).

As an official physician, Sattler-Feuerstein presumably performed administrative tasks, and her provisory employment was made permanent on November 22, 1915 (9). It seems that she was selected to take over the office of the official female physician of Sarajevo when Teodora Krajewska (then 60 years old) retired. However, Krajewska did not retire before the end of the monarchy. After World War I, Rosalie Sattler-Feuerstein and Moritz Sattler both resigned from their offices to establish themselves as private general practitioners. Both are included in an official list of all physicians in BH published in January 1920 under the heading “Private Doctors” (17); however, little is known about their practice. Moritz Sattler’s obituary (17) and a public expression of gratitude to both his (24) and Rosalie Sattler-Feuerstein’s address (25) which were printed in local Jewish newspapers, suggest that the patients in their private practice were predominantly from the former AH Ashkenazi community in Sarajevo and elsewhere in Bosnia.

Concluding Remarks
Rosalie Feuerstein, born in Chernistvi, Ukraine (then Czernowitz, Austria) in 1883, was among the first women to study medicine at Vienna University after the first admission of female students to medical studies in Austria in 1899. At 17 years old, she started studying for her qualification for university entrance exam as a private pupil of the (boys’) state gymnasium in Czernowitz, and she passed the exam in 1904. After moving to Vienna, Feuerstein completed her studies at Vienna University in December 1909, after which she worked as assistant physician in the Kaiser Franz Josef Hospital in Vienna. Presumably at the instigation of her future husband Moritz Sattler, a physician from Plzen in the Czech lands in AH service in Bosnia, Feuerstein successfully applied for an internship at the provincial hospital in Sarajevo in 1912. Two years after her marriage to Moritz Sattler in Vienna in September 1912, she was appointed as an AH official female physician in BH. She was recruited as an intended successor to the soon-to-be retired official female physician of Sarajevo, Teodora Krajewska, and the possibility of her employment in one of the three vacancies at the time seems not to have been considered. Sattler-Feuerstein never took up her office; instead, she worked as an employee at the AH provincial public health department, presumably performing administrative tasks. After the collapse of the AHE, she initially remained as an official physician in the service of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and she quit the service in 1919. In the interwar period, she practiced as a private physician in Sarajevo with her husband Moritz Sattler, who died in November 1927. Rosalie Sattler-Feuerstein’s person cannot be traced in Sarajevo after 1938. The circumstances, place, and time of her death are unknown.

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