

The first female chemists of the University of Vienna 1902 - 1933

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In 1897, the first female students were admitted at the Faculty of Philosophy at Vienna University. The first dissertation in chemistry was approved in 1902. In the following years only one or two women were annually enrolled, while the number of male students of chemistry continuously fluctuated around 22. Whereas four women completed their doctorates in the first year of WWI, six followed in 1917, and ten more in 1919. Strikingly, in that year the number of female students even exceeded that of male colleagues. Until 1933 219 dissertations of female chemist were approved at the University of Vienna.

Margarethe Furcht, the daughter of a Jewish stockbroker, was the first female chemist with a doctoral degree certificate in the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1902. Following the occupation of Austria by German troops in March 1938, Margarethe Furcht emigrated to England and worked as an industrial chemist in London. One sad truth is the fact that an incredibly number of names of those women, who earned their PhD until 1933, can be found in the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names "Yad Vashem" in Jerusalem.

Examples of curricular vitae will be given and a collective-biographical analysis of all the data will be discussed.