

**“VWI goes to the University of Vienna“**

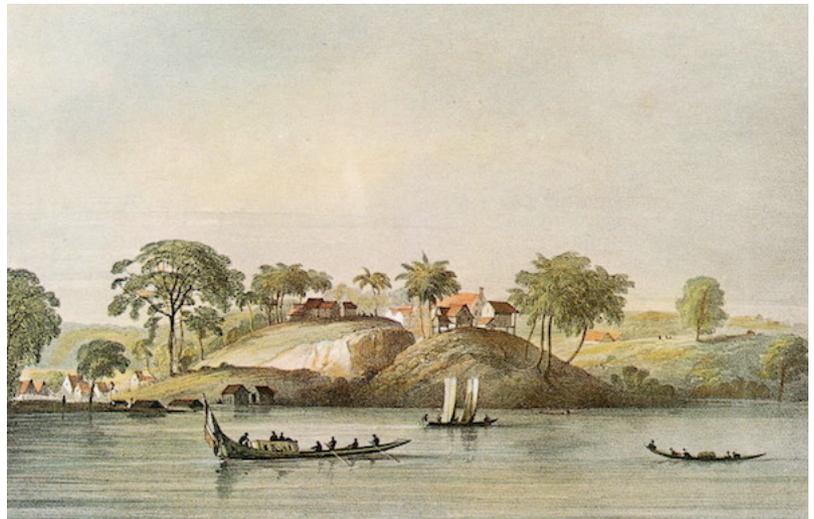
**Wednesday, 17 February 2016, 4 pm**  
**University of Vienna, Department of History**  
**Seminar Room No. 1**  
**Universitätsring 1, 1010 Vienna**

**Laura ALMAGOR**

**Forgotten Alternatives: Jewish Territorialism as a Movement of Political Action and Ideology, 1905–1960**

This presentation aims to shed light on the history of a largely forgotten Jewish political movement: Jewish Territorialism. It also demonstrates how the history of twentieth century Jewish politics is not confined to the realm of Jewish studies, but tells us something about larger geopolitical trends, especially in the immediate post-1945 period.

Starting with the so-called Uganda Controversy of 1905, the Jewish territorialists searched for areas outside Palestine in which to create settlements of Jews. They recognised an imminent threat to Central and Eastern European Jewry, consisting of both the physically violent treatment of Jewish individuals, and the damage or outright destruction of Jewish tradition and culture that this violence might in due course entail. The Territorialists believed that only concentrated Jewish settlement outside Europe could solve the Jewish plight. Following the disbandment of Israel Zangwill's Jewish Territorial Organisation (ITO) in 1925, the movement was reinstated in 1933 as the Freeland League for Jewish Territorial Colonization.



During the period under consideration, Zionism played an important role in the field of Jewish politics, but it was certainly not the only player. Studying the history of Territorialism thus helps to expand our understanding of Jewish political history, as the movement forms part of a broader Jewish political and cultural narrative during the first half of the twentieth century. After providing a general overview of the movement's history, this presentation will show how this history's relevance also reaches beyond a specifically Jewish historical analytical framework. Territorialist thought and discourse reflected more general contemporary geopolitical trends and practices connected to international policymakers' (post-)colonial approach to peoplehood, territory and space before, but also directly following the Second World War.

**Comments by Martina STEER**

*Laura Almagor* is Junior Fellow at the VWI. She defended her PhD thesis at the European University Institute in Florence in 2015. She was a visiting researcher at UCLA's History Department, as well as a fellow in the 20th Summer Institute of the Holocaust Educational Foundation of Northwestern University. Previously, she was affiliated with the Netherlands Institute for Military History. She has published on Jewish history, Dutch military history, and Second World War remembrance culture.

*Martina Steer* is assistant professor in the Department of History at the University of Vienna.