

# THE ACKERMAN CHRONICLE

## UNWELCOME EXILES: LECTURE REVIEW

General Consul Gilberto Bosques Saldívar, “The Mexican Schindler,” is most commonly believed to have issued visas that saved 45,000 Jews during the Holocaust. However, Dr. Gleizer discovered documentation as part of her research that proved that Bosques Saldívar had instead revoked visas and condemned many of the lives he was credited for saving. Why would popular sentiment override evidence that contradicted this popular tale?

In her lecture “Unwelcome Exiles: Jewish Refugees in Mexico,” Dr. Daniela Gleizer discussed Mexico’s exclusionary practices and policies of refugee immigration during the Holocaust. She challenges the “open door policy” belief claiming that it is one of myth creation. These stories have grown increasingly more popular in recent years among political and private groups as an influential tool to promote agendas.

Backed by these groups, the Mexican government excluded ethnic groups, professions, and even entire countries from immigrating to Mexico by categorizing them as “un-useful” or unable to assimilate into their vision of society. ►

Jewish immigrants experienced more stringent policies – even if they were otherwise considered “useful,” they were limited in numbers because they were deemed as impossible to assimilate.

Dr. Gleizer concluded that the construction and acceptance of fictitious assertions based upon historical dichotomous “roles,” like the rescuer or the hero, have replaced historical fact and become a part of historical memory and collective self-identity. By examining exclusion policies that pertain to individual groups rather than as refugee immigration as a whole, Dr. Gleizer discovered that the “open door policy” was much more selective than people are led to believe.

*Dr. Gleizer is an associate researcher at the Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). This lecture was presented jointly by The Ackerman Center for Holocaust Studies, Center for U.S.-Latin American Initiatives, AJC Dallas and the Southwest Jewish Congress. ▲*



## SPOTLIGHT

The Museo de la Memoria y Tolerancia will have three interns as part of their partnership with CUSLAI and the Ackerman Center: CUSLAI interns Tiffany Nguyen and Jack Sollows and Ackerman Center intern Dianna Briones.



*Dr. Daniela Gleizer presented her enlightening lecture "Unwelcome Exiles: Jewish Refugees in Mexico."*