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Hershey Cuba: Chocolate, Rum, and Nostalgia , Lecture by Galina Bakhtiarova

Cuban Research Institute, Florida International University

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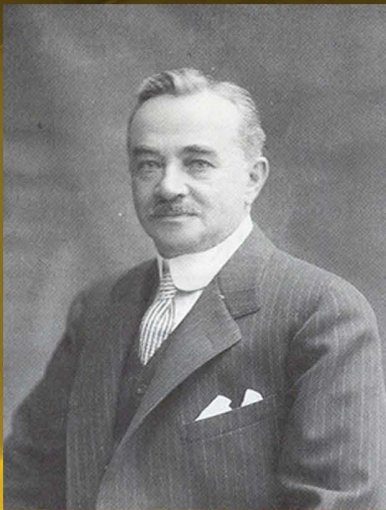
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Cuban Research Institute

School of International and Public Affairs



Hershey Cuba: Chocolate, Sugar, Rum, and Nostalgia

Lecture by Galina Bakhtiarova

March 17, 2014 | 12:30 PM | FIU Modesto A. Maidique Campus | Room GL 220

In the early twentieth century, American industrialist Milton Hershey spread his chocolate empire far beyond his Pennsylvania homestead. In search of control over a sugar supply for his chocolate production, Hershey purchased abandoned sugar plantations in Cuba and built a highly efficient sugar mill and a refinery. To facilitate supply and transportation, he added the first electric railroad on the island and model town that mirrored Hershey, Pennsylvania. Molasses produced at the Hershey sugar mill were sold to a nearby Arechabala rum distillery built simultaneously with the Hershey sugar mill. The original Arechabala rum distillery is now the site of the largest rum production facility on the island. This lecture will explore the history and consequences of Hershey's involvement in Cuba and its impact back home. It will also explore the connection and cross-fertilization between Hershey enterprises and Cuban sugar, rum, and the tourist industries even today.

Dr. Galina Bakhtiarova holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in translation from Moscow Linguistic University, and a Master's and a Ph.D. in Spanish from the University of Southern California. She teaches Spanish language, literature, and culture at Western Connecticut State University. She writes on nineteenth and twentieth-century Spanish, Catalan, and Caribbean culture. She has published an array of essays and is currently working on a book-length biography on American band leader Xavier Cugat.

The event is free and open to the public. For additional information and to RSVP, please call (305) 348-1991 or write cri@fiu.edu.