The Slow History of a Sugar Beet

Hannah Penny Nichols

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First Advisor
Julie Carr

Second Advisor
John-Michael Rivera

Third Advisor
Noah Eli Gordon

Abstract
This thesis is a memoir of poetry and prose that attempts to navigate through the personal, emotional and spiritual discourses of an esoteric family, using inherited language to connect a poetic presence with a disjunctive and illusive history. The sugar beet is the metaphorical and literal model at the heart of the project. Various themes include, relationships, sexuality, contraception, divorce, trauma, mortality, and the nature of "self". It is a series of stories about loneliness and coming of age in a violent world, interspersed by poems which transition the reader through a narrative of childhood and parenting, looking through the lens of ancestral lineage. The family becomes characters in the imaginative drama of self, as the narrator attempts to understand the strange and wonderful spiritual knowledge and gestures. The poetry and prose push toward a transformative understanding about violence in a personal and social context.

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Sugar cane and sugar beets have the greatest quantities of sugar and are commercially exploited. The sucrose found in them is identical. Today sugar is derived from about equally from sugar cane and sugar beets. Americans consume an average of about 20 kilograms of sugar a year, derived from both sugar cane and sugar beets. In addition, they consume about 21 kilograms of high fructose corn syrup. History of Sugar. Growing sugar cane Sugar is thought to have originated from a perennial grass native to Southeast Asia or the South Pacific. Sugar was domesticated in New Guinea as far back as 12,000 years ago and was used by people in India as far back as 800 B.C. In the Atharvaveda, a sacred Hindu text, a king made a crown from sugar crystals. Throughout the history of the sugar beet industry in the U.S., many factories have been started but operated only for a short period of time. These start-up efforts often were done on a trial and error basis, moving around frequently from place to place, trying to find that right combination of factors that would result in greater long term success. Many of the problems encountered were due to the sugar beet seed that was being imported from Europe. It was learned early by researchers with the Department of Agriculture that superior results were obtained when using home-produced cultivars, yet Sugar beet was first identified as a source of sugar in 1747. No doubt the vested interests in the cane sugar plantations made sure that it stayed as no more than a curiosity, a situation that prevailed until the Napoleonic wars at the start of the 19th century when Britain blockaded sugar imports to continental Europe. By 1880 sugar beet had replaced sugar cane as the main source of sugar on continental Europe. Those same vested interests probably delayed the introduction of beet sugar to England until the First World War when Britain's sugar imports were threatened. Today's modern sugar