



Ætna: Production and circulation of knowledge about Sicily's volcano in early modern sources

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While Vesuvius has received much attention in recent years, the copious writing produced around the time of some major eruptions in Sicily has been explored remarkably less. This paper will explore the rich array of sources written between ca. 1630-1669 dedicated to the nature and composition of Etna. This paper will illustrate how Aristotele's extremely limited attention to volcanoes in the *Meteorology* left space for the development of a plurality of theories that drew both on the writings of other classical authors such as Seneca and Lucretius and on experience. Astrological, alchemical and natural philosophical explanations all contended for primacy over other theories. I shall argue how some of these lesser-known sources, written in both Latin and vernacular, present and develop alternative theories of the Earth that will later shape the work of better-known scholars such as Giovanni Alfonso Borelli and Athanasius Kircher.



Time: Tuesday, 25. March, 6 pm

Place: Zentrum für Alte Kulturen, Langer Weg 11, SR 5