



## Man and the Volcano

Genre	Nature / Culture / Scince / History
Length	3x52'
Episode(s)	3
Shooting Format	DVCPROHD 720p / Betacam SP / DVCAM
Distribution Format	DVCPROHD 720p / Betacam SP / DVCAM
Director	Gaetano Adriano Pulvirenti
Production Company	Bellini Broadcasting Service
Year of Production	1999 / 2010
Status Production	Start

### Synopsis:

“Man and the volcano”, History saw through the centuries of approaching to the Mt. Etna. Starting from our days, with the help of an anchor man or narrator, going through the following history around the volcano.

Today in just 90 minutes by car or bus, on perfect panoramic roads, can be easily reached the Rifugio Sapienza, the cable cab, will take you to the Torre del Filosofo, to reach on foot the main crater. A walk unique in the world, where tourism is favoured by the scary show of eruptions that for centuries have been threatening towns, farms and the people who lives on the slopes of the volcano, that will surround the traveller.

The populations that through the past centuries till today, established their houses and their life on the slopes of the Etna, they have been assisting, to the scary sceneries of destruction provided by the Etna, trusting the will of the volcano. The lesson of civilisation that comes from the Etnean urban environment is that people didn't give up, wasn't totally frightened, and what was destroyed by the strengths of nature has been punctually rebuilt.

“Sicani”, population installed along the river Simeto during the 4th century b.C, they have been eye-witness of the great eruption, mainly composed of explosive activity, with the emission of “volcanic bombs”, that determined in 1200 b.C. the collapse of the last part of the Valle del Bove. The people that used to live in this area, frightened, moved to the west coast of Sicily, away from every kind of volcanic activity.



The volcano Etna feared, as a god, was prayed with rituals by the endemic people but also by people who saw it from far. Zeus, Efesto, Bronte, Piracmone, the Cyclops, Poliremo, Ulisses, Empedocle, Demetra, Kore, myths and legends invented by the man to give an answer to all of the questions about the strengths of nature and were also useful to stimulate the fantasy of those used to live on the sides of the Etna.

During the roman period, eruptions of the Etna were considered as a forecast that something terrible was going to happen, as the one of 44 b.C. year of death of Caesar. Very impressive was the eruption of 122 B.C. of the Plinian kind, with heavy emission of volcanic ash, pyroclastic lava flows and mud flows. The damages were so high that Rome exempted for 10 years the people who lived in Catania from the payment of a tax called "gabella". After the restoration of Augusto (21 b.C.) Catania became a centre of culture, was built the circus of the Naumachia, the thermal baths, and also a great amphitheatre where would seat till 20000 people. Also the emperor Adriano in the 125 b. C. visited the city and wanted to assist the show "of the birth of the day".

In the first centuries of the Christian age and till last century by ignorant people, it was believed that Etna was the door of the hell, and that in the flows were burnt the souls of the sinners. This statement was also affirmed by people as Platone, Clemente Alessandrino.

Already since the first century a.C. scientists as Stradone, Aristotele, teofrasio, Lucrezio, Epicureo, they began studying the volcano Etna in a scientific way, making their own theories. Through the medieval age it was believed that Etna was the door of the hell, till 1400 when Fasello, after having been on the edge of the main crater stated "to this fires there is no other explanation apart from the natural event." In 1560 Antonio Filoteo began carefully studying the volcano, he described the caves, the flora, the main crater's diameter and found information about all of the flows from the Greek period.

During the 17th century Etna continuously erupted since 1603 till 1651, more or less strongly about 30 times: "March Monday 11th, the fire opened the ground on the Mongibello, that other many times was invaded."...so used to begin the novel of Don V. Macrì, in which it is described the terrifying eruption of the year 1669, when a great flow went through many towns on the south slope of the volcano, totally destroying everything it met. In 4 months it reached Catania, that wasn't totally destroyed, to then get into the sea making the beach 2 km longer than before. But this time, Man, reacted in a clever way, succeeding for the first time in the will to deviate the flow from its own way, digging embankments, giving a first reference of what man was able to do against this kind of phenomenon

The 17th century began as the worst ever seen and so it finished. As the people of the towns that were destroyed, Catania included, had just began again their trading activities and a normal life a great earthquake made useless every effort. This event dates January 1693. Everything along the Noto valley was destroyed, in Catania the only things that resisted to the furious nature were a few houses, the Ursino castle and the Duomo. The deaths were more than half of the total population, 18,000 of 27,000



In opposition to what can be thought, the survivors of the earthquake suddenly began rebuilding everything possible following certain schemes. The protagonist of this rebirth were the kings Uzeda, the Duke of Camastra the Spanish military engineers, the architects of the church coming from Messina, noble literates. The great innovator was Gianbattista Vaccarini, who was able to use the work of the stone breakers, of the wall makers that were called “lapidum incisores” The eruption of 1669, the earthquake of 1693, the reconstruction of a lavic baroque city, the Etna, the myths , the roman ruins, the Ursino castle surrounded by the flow, made in the 18th century lots of literate people and also scientists get to Catania to see how people reacted to the power of nature.

Eruption 1991/93. Local earthquake accompanied the opening, on the east side of the volcano, of a big fracture at the height of 2400 m. on the sea level, from where began the biggest eruption of the last 300 years. It risked to destroy Zafferana after having met many rural houses. It was tried to deviate the flow and for the first time in the history of the man we succeeded totally deviating a flow from its path.

In 3x52' minutes will be told about culture, myths, art, tourism, it will be tried to tell about the report man/volcano in a different way, going through history with many historical reconstructions and using about 100 ancient pictures, not forgetting about the natural scenery of the sites of which it will be told, Etna, Catania, Noto, Taormina.

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