

Nuova Rivista Storica

Anno CVII, Settembre-Dicembre 2023, Fascicolo III

Abstracts

EMANUELE PIAZZA, *Aetnaei ignis imitator*. Un *excursus* sul Vesuvio nell'immaginario medievale

This paper focuses on the symbolic dimension of Vesuvius in the Middle Ages, with particular reference to its characterisation as a place devoted to the punishment of the sinners. Starting from a comparison with Etna, a volcano that enjoyed a more deeply rooted “infernal” tradition, the sources examined (ranging from Jordanes to Pier Damiani) are analysed not so much to retrace the chronological succession of Campania volcano’s eruptions as to highlight how lava became an effective metaphor for interpreting the moral sense of reality. The magmatic spectacles, in fact, had contributed to making Vesuvius a popular literary topos for representing infernal punishments, although the damage caused by its eruptions was also well known, and these destructive events had also contributed to the creation of legends.

Keywords:

Vesuvius

Etna

Medieval Symbolism