

Andrea G. G. Parasiliti. All'ombra del vulcano: Il Futurismo in Sicilia e l'Etna di Marinetti

Martino Lovato

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Andrea G. G. Parasiliti. *All'ombra del vulcano: Il Futurismo in Sicilia e l'Etna di Marinetti.* Florence: Casa Editrice Leo S. Olschki, 2020. Pp. xvi + 288. ISBN 9788822266729.

In *All'ombra del vulcano: Il Futurismo in Sicilia e l'Etna di Marinetti*, Andrea Parasiliti traces Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and Futurism's relationship with Sicily. The book responds to the dispersion—in archives and private collections in Italy and abroad—of the original documents necessary to reconstruct the development of early Futurism in Sicily. In the first of the book's two parts, the author offers a selection of unpublished materials that fosters the current research on the subject. In the second part, he moves to discuss the role assigned to the volcano Etna in Marinetti's writings and, more broadly, Marinetti's own relation to Sicily.

After the first introductory chapter, each of the chapters in part 1 is devoted to a single case relating early Futurism to Sicily. Chapter 2 traces the beginning of Marinetti's relationship with the young Guglielmo Jannelli (1895–1950), who later became one of the movement's leading figures on the island. This introduction provides useful insights for Parasiliti's analysis of *La Balza Futurista*, the review founded by Jannelli in collaboration with Luciano Nicastro and Vann'Antò, and described by Marinetti as the first “truly Futurist” review (11). The author underscores the review's value as Marinetti's official venue, immediately after the tumultuous ending of his collaboration with *Lacerba* in 1914. Providing a rich visual documentation, Parasiliti presents the review's three issues, published between April and May 1915, and points out its role as a model for the later *L'Italia Futurista*. As he situates *La Balza Futurista* in the broader context of Futurism's history, the author also studies the history of the printing house Piccitto & Antoci, where the review was printed, redressing the current view that this was simply a “small press” and providing evidence of the quality of its works since the 1870s.

Chapter 3 moves on to consider another Sicilian Futurist review, *Haschisch*, published in seven issues in Catania between February 1921 and January 1922. By analyzing the dedication of the review's first issue to Mario Carli—also known by the pen name Mario Shrapnell, and who was among the key animators of Futurism and of the Italian Regency of Carnaro led by Gabriele D'Annunzio—the author reconstructs the social ties existing between Futurist and irredentist groups in Catania and Fiume. Supported by original documents from Mario Carli's family collection, the author casts light on *Haschisch*'s history, providing a visual and

critical overview of its contents while updating the bibliographical information currently available on it.

The figure of the young Salvatore Lo Presti (1903–80), one of *Haschisch's* main contributors, serves as *trait d'union* between chapters 3 and 4, where the author follows the steps of the seventeen-year-old Lo Presti, who moved from Catania to Fiume to enroll in the Regency's army. Critically framed after Claudia Salaris's study *Alla festa della rivoluzione* (2002), the six letters sent by Lo Presti to his father between September and December 1920 provide a first-hand account of Fiume's life during the last months of the Regency.

While part 1 presents Sicilian contributions to early Futurism, part 2 investigates Marinetti's own relation with Sicily. Chapter 5 surveys the contents of Maria Corti's book *Catasto magico* (1999), a study of Mount Etna's representations in literature from ancient to modern times. This survey helps situate the treatment of the volcano's presence in Marinetti's works in a broader literary perspective.

The long and final chapter 6 is divided into multiple sections. It begins by retracing the influence of French authors such as Victor Hugo on the young Marinetti. Through a close reading of selected passages from *Le Roi bombance* and *Le monoplan du Pape*, Parasiliti begins to outline what he defines as Marinetti's "poetics of the volcano," that is, Etna's symbolic value as the "synthesis and genesis of all poetry," the embodiment of the Futurist principle of "Art-Life" that "destroys to create and then destroys again" (179). Connecting thematically the contents of the previous part of the book, after discussing the representation of Messina in *Zang Tumb Tumb*, the author continues his survey by reconstructing the genesis of Marinetti's theatrical play *Vulcani* (1927). Parasiliti employs archival materials from Marinetti's archive at Yale University to document the camping trip he took to Etna in August 1925. The study of this trip introduces the close reading of the eight Futurist syntheses constituting *Vulcani*, and the author provides an informed study of the play. After a brief analysis of Marinetti's works throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the book closes with *L'aeropoema di Gesù*, when Marinetti, close to his death, seems to distance himself from Etna, his former "Master of Futurism."

In *All'ombra del vulcano*, Parasiliti studies the controversial heritage of Futurism with the passion of a bibliophile, and as a literary critic approaching his subject according to its own internal logics. His accessible writing style takes the reader into the scrupulous work of a specialist who is intent on assessing the value of his findings. Among the valuable outcomes of this research are the rich annotations to the text, which guide the reader across many still unconcluded research

paths. Particularly interesting is the attention the author pays to situate the Sicilian and Futurist subjects he studies in dialogue with broader Mediterranean contexts. Whether by relating the Futurist groups of Catania and Fiume, or by articulating Marinetti's relation to Sicily in the light of his own Egyptian upbringing, the extent of Parasiliti's inquiry allows for this well-documented work to stimulate further research directions on Futurism and Marinetti.

MARTINO LOVATO

Università di Urbino