

# ETNA: Mythology and History



## General Information:

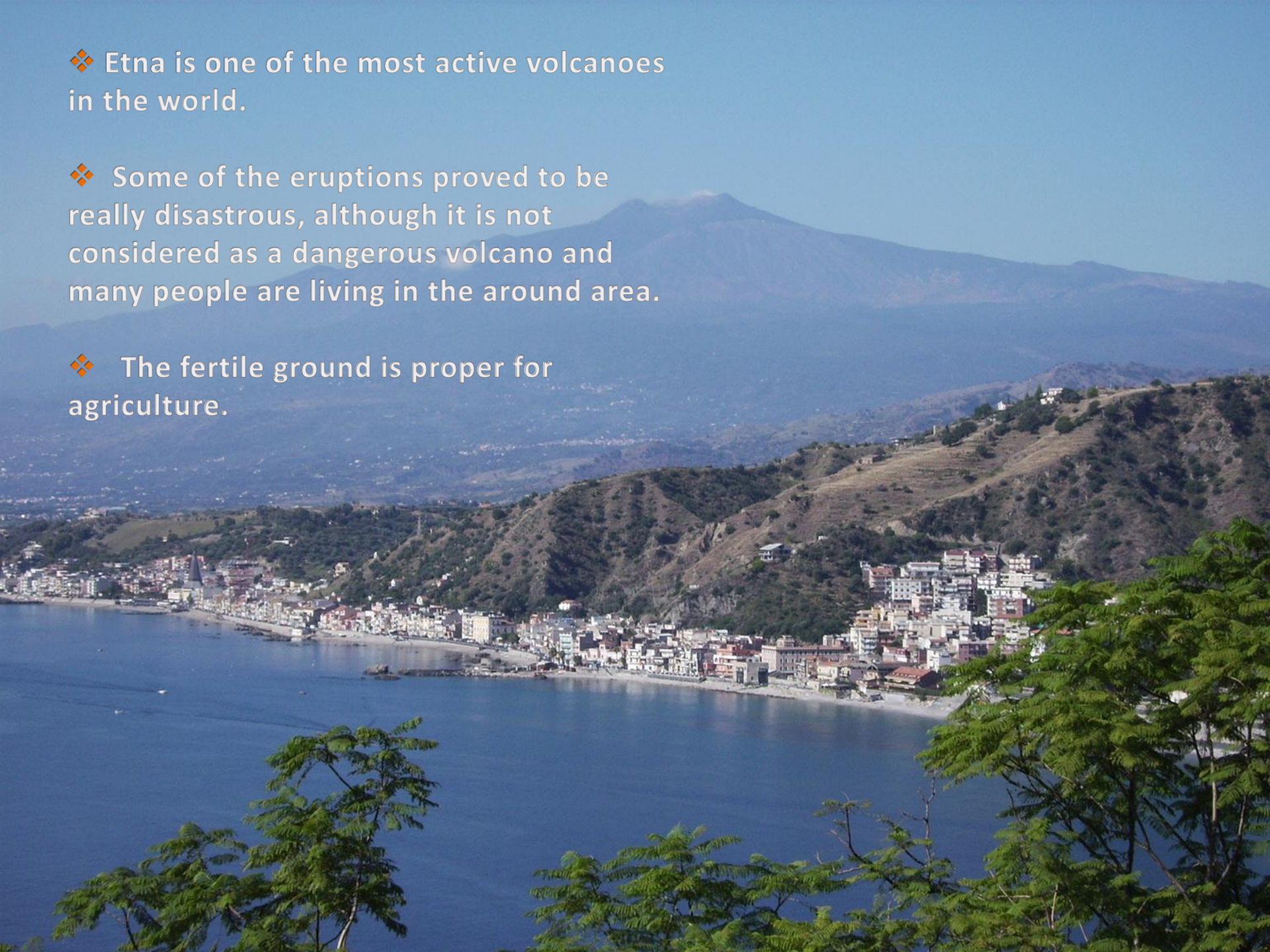
- ❖ Etna is an active volcano, in the eastern coast of Sicily (height: 3,350 m.).
- ❖ Etna covers an area of 1,190 km<sup>2</sup> with a regional base of 140 km<sup>2</sup> which means three times the size of Vesuvius.



❖ Etna is one of the most active volcanoes in the world.

❖ Some of the eruptions proved to be really disastrous, although it is not considered as a dangerous volcano and many people are living in the around area.

❖ The fertile ground is proper for agriculture.





# NAME ORIGINATION

The name "**Etna**" might be originated from the **Greek** word «**αιθω**» pronounced as /aitho/ which means "to burn (oneself)" or the **Phoenician** word «**attano**».

**Arabs** used to call the mountain **Gibel Utlamat** ("the mountain of fire"). This name developed later to **Mons Gibel**, so in the local dialect the volcano is called **Mongibeddu**.



# MYTHOLOGY



- ❖ In *Greek Mythology*, *Aeolus* (the God of the Winds) had trapped all the winds in the caves under Etna.
- ❖ The giant *Typhoon* was crushed under the mountain Etna, according to the poet *Aeschylus*, and he was the cause of the volcanic eruptions.



❖ In *Roman Mythology*, *Vulcan* (the God of Fire), had his laboratory under Etna.







# Geological Evolution and Historical Eruptions

Etna's volcanic activity started *500,000 years ago*, with underwater explosions across the coast of Sicily



**35,000 years ago, and for a period of about 20,000 years, some particularly powerful eruptions took place, ash of which reached even Rome, about 800 kilometers north of Etna.**







**3,500 years ago** a volcanic eruption caused a giant sliding in the eastern slope of the mountain.

This event is mentioned by **Diodorus Siculus** and it constitutes the first known testimony for Etna's eruption.

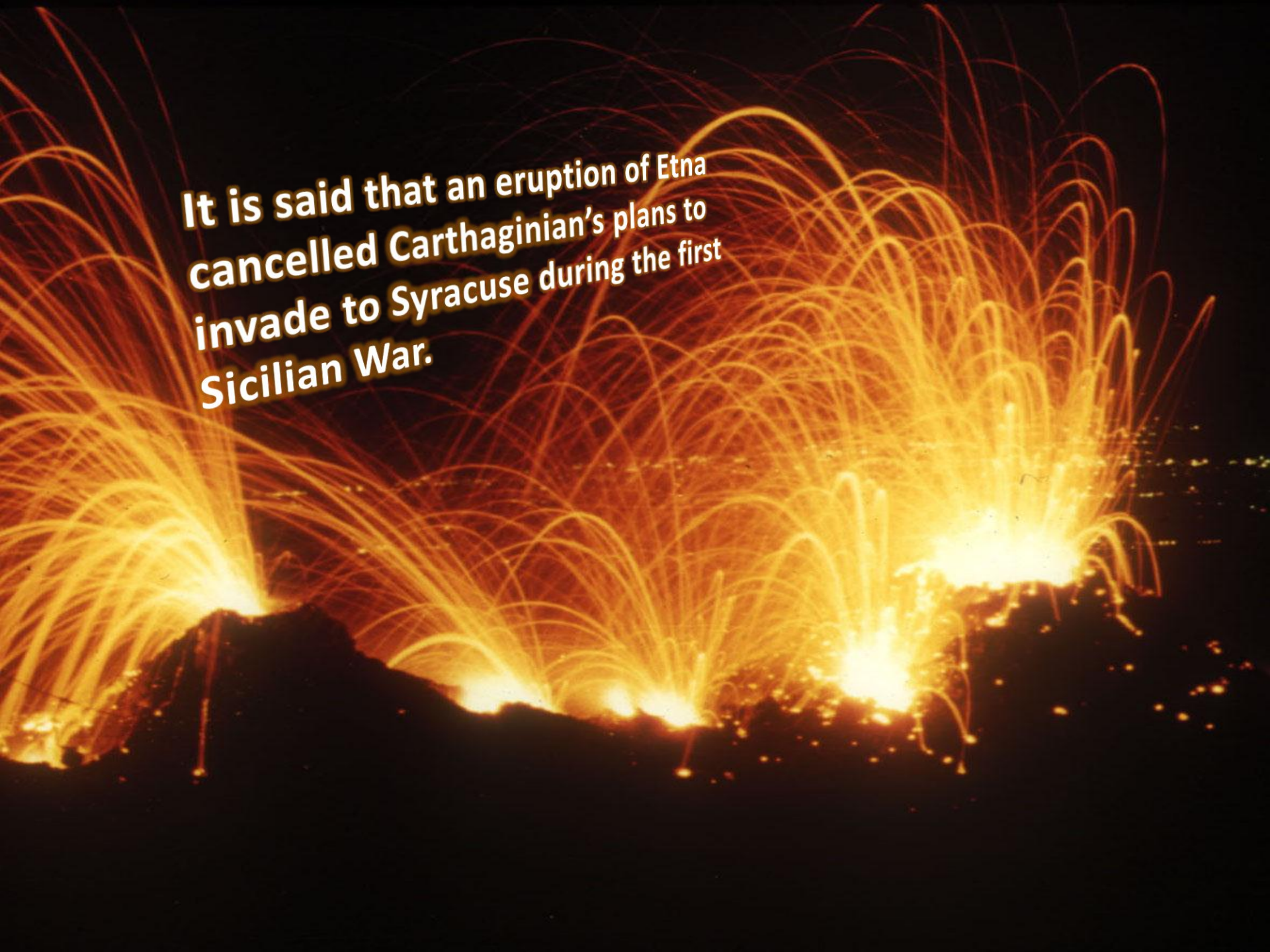


The next sliding would be at about 15,000 years later,  
creating a *caldera*.





**It is said that an eruption of Etna  
cancelled Carthaginian's plans to  
invade to Syracuse during the first  
Sicilian War.**





An aerial photograph of Mount Etna, a large volcano, erupting. A massive, dark, and dense plume of ash and smoke rises from the summit, extending towards the top left of the frame. The surrounding landscape is a mix of dark volcanic slopes and green vegetation. The sky is clear, and the overall scene captures a powerful volcanic event.

# Recent Eruptions

*30 October 2002  
Etna ash cloud*



*Etna ash plume towards Libya  
2002*





*4<sup>th</sup> September 2007  
(from the south east crater )*







*23<sup>rd</sup> October 2011  
(from the southeast site of the mountain)*



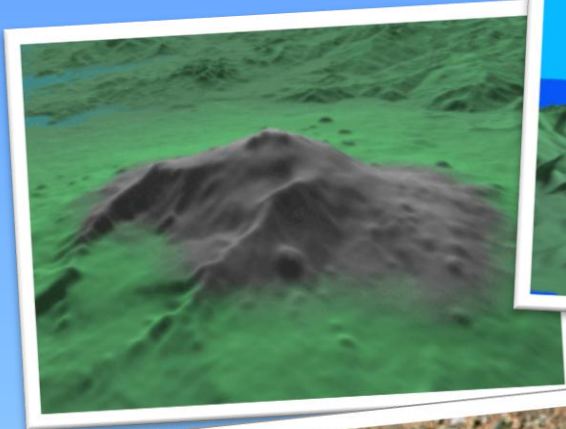
*Etna erupting on February 9, 2012 with the village of Milo in the foreground.*





3D simulation

PICTURES



House ruins around Etna