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Spirits and Rocks: An Azorean Myth

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Spirits and Rocks: An Azorean Myth

Abstract

This is a review of the short film, *Spirits and Rocks: An Azorean Myth* (2020), directed by Aylin Gökmen.

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Spirits and Rocks: An Azorean Myth (2020), dir. Aylin Gökmen

The Azores are a group of volcanic islands in the North Atlantic. They are one of two autonomous regions of Portugal. Those who live on the island of this film must face the fact that the volcano that created the island will erupt every so often, again and again.

The people of the island must deal with this recurring nightmare. Some people respond by giving the experience a spiritual or religious meaning. The Azorean myth is that when human beings moved to the island they brought with them their sins. Their sins bring ghostly figures down from the top of the mountain—the eruption of the volcano. In order to rid themselves of the ghosts, the residents burn fires, hoping that the smoke from the fires will take the ghosts back to the top of the mountain. This is how the people make sense of the continuing eruptions of the volcano and the damage those eruptions bring to the villages of the people. The myth gives meaning to this continuous cycle of destruction and rebuilding.