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Interactive comment on "In my remembered country: what poetry tells us about the changing perceptions of volcanoes" *by* Arianna Soldati and Sam Illingworth

Anonymous Referee #3

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This study presents a method to evaluate the changing perceptions of volcanoes and present its results when applied to a pool of 34 poems written between 1800-pst. This is an interesting study, which however requires in my view several significant improvements.

General comments

1. The title does not reflect well the study: it is too general for the collection of poems considered
As the authors indicate, they had to impose several constraints (time period, language,

length, preferred writing-style, etc), resulting in a collection of only 34 poems, which is a very limited pool of poems for such an ambitious title.
In addition to the importance of the language/culture restriction, limitation underlined in the conclusion of the manuscript, the time period considered (1800 - present), selected because it coincides with the emergence and development of volcanalogy, might also have a strong impact on the final results. In Europe/US (where the majority of the artists come from), this period coincides with many scientific discoveries and social changes (related to the industrialisation) compared with previous centuries, which modified in particular spiritual/religious believes and human-Nature relationship, two themes which are considered in this study. Hence, the results regarding the temporal evolution of the various categories, would have likely been different if the time period considered would have included centuries prior to the 19^{th}. For these reasons, the title should be more specific (or the pool of poems studied extended).

2. The manuscript (particularly introduction and methodology) would benefit from various clarifications:

- **what is the exact object of the study ? Is the study about the perception of active volcanoes or of all volcanoes ?**
  The introduction develops several arguments related to active volcanoes, however some of the poems considered concerns non-erupting volcanoes (eg as mentioned in the section about "Landscape")
- **Please clarify throughout the manuscript that the results are about the poets' perception of the interaction between Men-volcano (although it can be generalised to a certain extent)**
  For example the way the RQ is formulated does not give an active role to the poets' subjectivity ("RQ: what does poetry written about volcanoes reveal about the relationship between humanity and volcanoes?", **p5, l30-31**), contrarily to the

aims of the study given just before ("understand the way in which poets have interpreted the relationship between humans and volcanoes" (**p5, l26-27**))

Specific comments

p3, l13-19
Please clarify the main message of this paragraph. Is it to justify the choice of "significant eruption" (Table 5) ? The eruptions impacting the most human societies are not necessarily those with bigger VEI, but that population can be affected significantly by small eruptions and associated hazards. With the development of medias, transportation, etc, information about an eruption -even small- can also reach much more people.

Please in the introduction give explicit examples of various ways in which volcano and the link humanity-volcano can be perceived ?
This could be done re-writing the section **p4, l1-9** ("We can conceivably use art pieces to guide us in our understanding of how volcano-human relations have changed through time. [...]"), highlighting what the artworks demonstrates of the volcano-artist interaction, rather than eg describing the painting and the physical phenomenon.

p8, l40-42 "However, as outlined by Morse et al. (2002), our methodological coherence, sampling strategy, and saturation of emergent codes ensures the reliability, and thus repeatability, of our approach in this qualitative analysis."
Although I agree this approach would give similar results if the same two authors were two repeat the experiment, how can you ensure the results would be similar if the study would be carried out by two (or more) people, with potentially different backgrounds, etc and hence likely to interpret the poems differently ?

p11, l10 "the poets perceived very clearly their [the volcanoes'] relationship with

humanity"; p21, l32-33 "with humans ultimately of neither benefit nor concern to the volcanoes that they write about":
In several instances throughout the manuscript, such as in thes examples, the authors personify the volcanoes. Please could you modify the manuscript such that it is clear in your analysis that the only subject(s) is/are the poet/humans and that all human emotions assigned to volcanoes are only perceptions. In the first example above, the sentence could be modified to eg "the poets perceived very clearly how humanity relates to volcanoes" (ie volcanoes are objects)

p11, l13-14 "poetry acts to position volcanoes as an awesome part of our shared landscape, perhaps explaining in part why humans were first drawn to them before they became valued for more tangible goods":
I suggest you suppress this assumption. Overall, population settlements are unlikely to have been drawn primarily by the beauty of an area. The people attracted by the spectacle given by active volcanoes are usually not the people who live nearby, and potentially risk their life and their families', livelihood, properties, etc.

p20, l21-22 "many communities are willing to accept the associated risks of living near a volcano, in order to experience the cultural and societal benefits"
Could you precise if that is for active volcanoes ? During the 1995-pst eruption of Soufriere Hills, Montserrat, 75% of the population left the island which would contradict the statement above. Those would stayed, did not for the cultural and societal benefits, but mostly for either economical reasons, or because they could not imagine loosing their roots.

p22, l24-25: "the emergent unidirectional nature of this relationship, this study also challenges us to re-consider the importance of humanity in our interactions with volcanoes.Unlike many other elements of our natural environment that have a strong sense of cultural and social identity attached to them (for example,

glaciers, rivers, and rainforests)"
Please include in your **introduction** a short paragraph (perhaps at the very beginning of the paper) mentioning studies (possibly as yours) about interactions between other natural elements and humans

p22, l28 "by anthropogenic climate change"
Anthropogenic climate change is not the only way humans affect the environment.

p22, l28-31 "Indeed, aside from humans, volcanism is itself a key driver in short-term climatic variations (Robock, 1991), with the net result a cooling at the Earth's surface due to the scattering of incoming solar radiation by secondary sulphate aerosols formed from volcanic eruptions (ColeDai, 2010).":
Please suppress, this is outside of the topic.

p23, l7-9 "We hope that this study has demonstrated that poetry is a powerful medium through which to consider perceptions of our natural environment, and that the results might better inform our communication with communities living nearby active volcanoes.
Please suppress "We hope [...] that', there is no need to demonstrate that, however could you indicate more practically how the results could be used to work with communities ?

Technical corrections

p3,l11 "Certainly, they do not leave us indifferent"
Please suppress this comment: that is the authors' opinion, however it can surely not be applied to everybody, even those leaving near an active volcano.

p3, l33 "yet while these works have great merit"
Please suppress, it sounds condescending

p3, l35 "volcanic activity clashes with human life"
There is probably a less informal term than "clash" eg impact, affect, etc

p8, l39 " described here represents a somewhat subjective approach"
Please suppress "somewhat"

p18, l3 "respectful of the human space"
No need to change your interpretation, but isn't it just a way to show that humanity can't be at peace, even when everything else is 'purified' by fire ?

Figures 1 and 4:
It would improve their readability (in particular the years) and help the comparisons between categories, if you would merge the various subfigures in one figure. For example you can use a color per category. Please also indicate what decades were not represented.

p21, l6-8: This might in part be explained by the tensions between poetry and religion that had manifested themselves throughout the Victorian age
Also, society and arts were impacted by WWI and WWII.

p21, l23 "that there is a strong sense of identity associated between humans and volcanoes":
Could you rephrase more clearly please ?