Fault Lines
Earthquakes and Urbanism in Modern Italy

Giacomo Parrinello
## Contents

List of Illustrations ............................................. ix
Acknowledgments ................................................... xi
Sites of Disaster Map ............................................. xiv

Introduction. Can Earthquakes Speak? .......................... 1
The Voice of the Earthquake ................................... 2
A Tale of Two Earthquakes ................................. 6
The Structure of This Book ................................. 10

### PART I. THE 1908 MESSINA EARTHQUAKE

Chapter 1. The 1908 Messina Earthquake .................. 21
Earthquake, Tsunami, and Fire .......................... 22
Earthquake Science ...................................... 30
Earthquake-Proof Urbanism .............................. 36

Chapter 2. Urban Reform 1880–1908 ......................... 48
Sanitizing the City ...................................... 49
A New Geography of Urban Water ................. 57
Engineering the City's Environment .......... 65
To Live Happily and Forget the Quake ........ 70

Chapter 3. The Modern City 1909–1943 .................. 84
The Provisional City (and Its Permanent Consequences) 85
The Master Plan ..................................... 91
The City Developers versus the Hut Dwellers .... 98
The New City and Its Darker Sides ............. 104

### PART II. THE 1968 BELICE VALLEY EARTHQUAKE

Chapter 4. The 1968 Belice Valley Earthquake .......... 121
"Like an Atomic Wasteland" .......................... 122
The Disaster of Poverty ................................ 128
Road Maps to Development .......................... 133
Chapter 5. Rural Modernity 1933–1967
   Reclamation and Redemption 151
   Development Plans 156
   Grassroots Countermeasures 161
   The Many Virtues of Water 166

   Tents, Barracks, and Committees 182
   The City-Territory 186
   New Towns and Ghost Factories 191
   Rural Urbanism 197

Conclusion. Fault Lines
   Tales of Earthquake Urbanism 214
   Fault Lines in a Seismic Country 218
   Hazards, Urbanization, and Nature 222

Bibliography 231

Index 251