

Chronicles of recent disasters. Are Agencies and Civil Protections getting sloppy?

D. Miozzo (1,3), M. Altamura (1), L. Ferraris (1,2), and L. Musso (1)

(1) CIMA Research Foundation, Italy (davide.miozzo@cimafoundation.org), (2) DIST (Department of Communication, Computer and System Sciences), University of Genoa, Genoa, Italy (luca.ferraris@cimafoundation.org), (3) DISMEC (Department of Modern and Contemporary History), University of Genoa, Genoa, Italy (davide.miozzo@cimafoundation.org)

Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) models and forecasts have a paramount role in the real time decision making command chain. It is thanks to them that Civil Protection (CP) across Europe and the World were able to redeploy towards preventing calamities rather than passively awaiting for their happening.

However, from the implementation of these new methodological and procedural instruments stems the process of codification of a generalized *Ius Commune*. This natural drive towards Positive Law grants the fruition and tutelage of new rights but, if not adequately controlled, can initiate vicious circles leading towards the overcriminalization of the system.

Trials, intended against CP operators and guardians or guarantors, according to civil law acception, showed how meteorological weather prediction can be faulty and dangerously underestimate an incoming event. The margin of error unfolds on both a temporal and a spatial plan. The discrepancy which emerged from ex post analysis (Molini et al. 2009) tells us that state of the art instruments can possibly induce CP operators to make wrong decisions. In addition to these computational and modelling problems, the complex orography of our territories impedes to deterministically assess and characterize hydrometeorological risk. The best instrument in our hands, a part from radar and satellite data (which both have a yet important delay in the acquisition of data due to its transfer), is still represented by NWP models and by the experience of whom, on a daily basis, issues meteorological bulletins and alert whom are the foremost link between CPs and the population.

Envisaging the problem of the overcriminalization phenomenon and its social consequences, unpredicted flash floods are extremely rare to count. Nevertheless they do happen and create the basis for a much more dangerous problem: the lowering of the alert threshold to an excessively precautionary level, thus, eliminating any kind of discretionality in assessing incoming risks. In order to reduce the possibility of being convicted, CP guardians are augmenting the number of alerts issued. Generalized, and more frequent, alerts are being issued, by so doing risk perception of the population is unwarily declining. The recent events in the French region of the Var are explicative of such a reality. The similarity that ties two systems of CP (Italy and France) to similar difficulties, in the first place demonstrate how the problem is transnational and not tied to national deficiencies, whilst, in the second place, makes necessary a critical analysis of the real risks that CP organizations are facing in terms of functionality and ability to communicate the real level of risk to the endangered citizenship.

It is in these terms that we must think or, rather, rethink agencies and CP organizations. Implementing the best strategies, with the most advanced technologies, will not compensate the eventual disjunction between the core structure and the administrative periphery. Establishing operative mechanisms for the “last mile” and educating both the citizenship and the jurisprudential orders of our society to the undergoing risk of a collapse of CP institutions represents the main effort of our research and of this work.