

Natural Hazards and Disaster Risk Reduction Policies
Loredana Antronico, Fausto Marincioni (Eds.)

Anthropology of the Vesuvius Emergency Plan: history, perspectives and limits of a dispositive for volcanic risk government

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Abstract

The goal of this chapter is to discuss the case of the Vesuvius Emergency Plan: this is the only risk prevention tool existing for the Neapolitan volcano. In 1995, Italian Civil Protection presented the long-awaited “National Emergency Plan” that organized the area into “zones” of danger (red, yellow and blue). This certification of the territory as “at risk” had a double effect. On one hand, it contributed changing the relationship with the places, as for the red zone that from area of building expansion became a non-building land; on the other hand, it modified the sense attributed to time: the catastrophe is no longer a hypothetical eventuality but, to some extent, has been officially announced. In 2001, the Emergency Plan was updated and the time slot needed to forecast an eruption was reduced from two to one week. Subsequently, in 2013, the red zone perimeter together with the twinning between its 24 municipalities and other regions of Italy were redefined. The main limit of the Plan is that, being only inspired by an emergency logic, it lacks any ecological approach that would guarantee a better risk reduction. Conversely, a planning of the future emergency, as well as the current management of the territory, should be the results of a constant listening process, the meeting points of a complex, heterogeneous and multi-vocal reality; planning, in other words, should be meant as a strategy able to learn from events and no longer as a pre-established program, aimed at anticipating all the moves.

Keywords: Debate, Disaster, Emergency, Preparedness, Risk.

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