



Did UFOs start fires?

Unexplained phenomena on several farms in the village of Laroya in Spain in 1945, and in Canneto di Caronia in Italy from 2004



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Image by [Николай Егошин](#) for [Pixabay](#)

Two scientific studies, two different temporalities.

Spontaneous combustion phenomena surrounded by unexplained anomalies, two cases with similar facts and testimonies, and more questions than answers: here is an account and analysis of unexplained phenomena that have affected the lives of populations in sparsely populated areas.

Laroya Almeria, Spain, 1945

At 8pm on June 16, 1945, at the Pitango farm in the village of Laroya Almeria, the apron of four-year-old María Martínez spontaneously started to burn.

A family member extinguished it but it reignited, as well as a sheet, both of which were put out once again. Minutes later, in another room, some rye straw similarly caught fire, as well as a bundle of [esparto grass](#) and some straw in the hayloft, all of which were extinguished. However, the fire resumed and intensified, eventually destroying the roof.

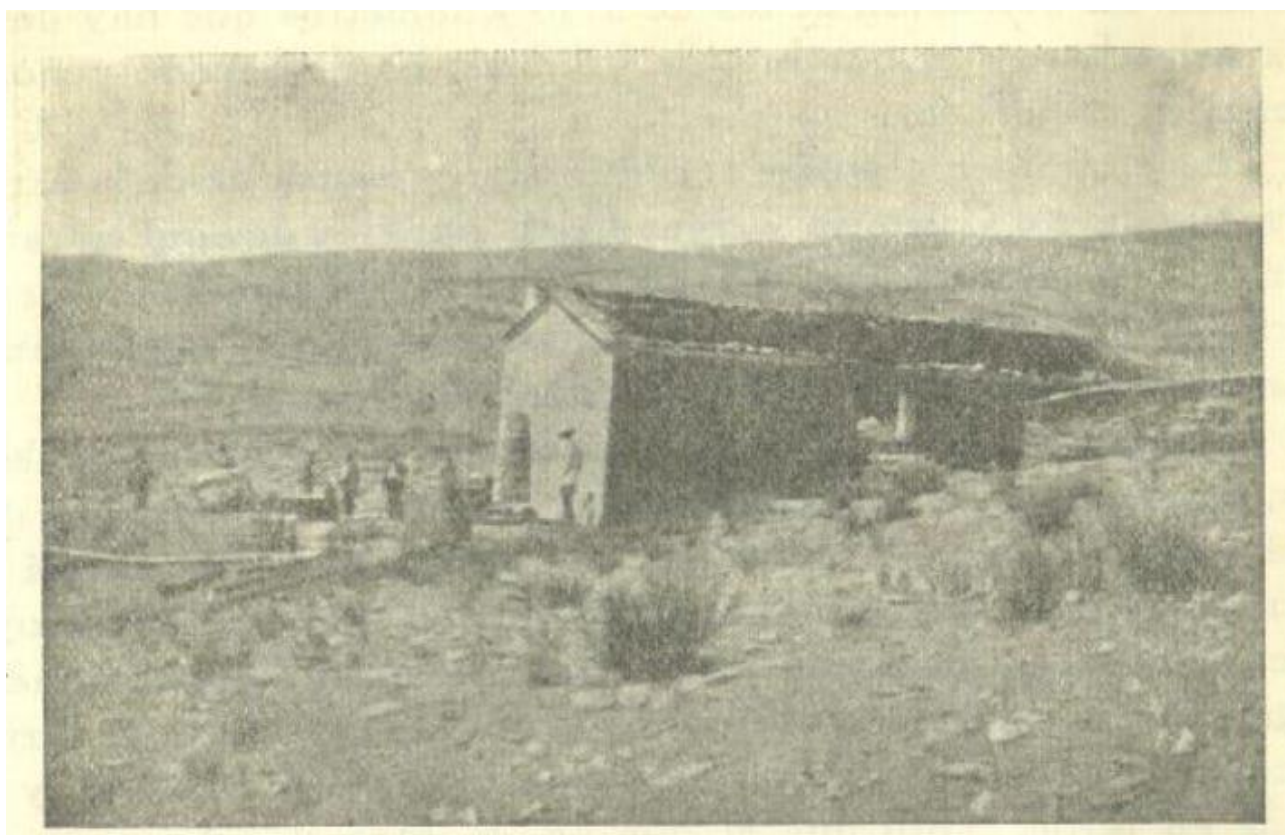


Figure 1: Photo of the Pitango barn, where the fires started on June 16, taken from the report on geophysical phenomena in Laroya (Almeria) in June 1945 by geographer José Cubillo Fluiters (source: Obra derivada de Biblioteca del Instituto Geográfico Nacional, CC BY 4.0 ign.es).

This case would have remained isolated, had it not been for another event on June 23, 1945, 7 days later.

On that day, at around 9pm, at the *fuelle del saz* farm in Laroya, piles of barley and rye started to burn on the threshing floor, without anyone being present. A large quantity was destroyed. The fire was extinguished by alarmed farmers, but it rekindled at the opposite end. Separated from the other piles, two heaps of barley more than a meter apart caught fire. A bale of hay, some esparto grass necklaces and several other objects were hit one after the other by the phenomenon of spontaneous combustion. In the farmhouse, with the door closed, a bed also started to burn. According to the locals, there was no outbreak of fire and it would have been impossible for a spark to travel from one object to another.

At dusk, at *Jesús Martínez Morales'* farm, a fire started in the manure, then in the stable roof, in a bed and in the pantry.

The following day, on June 24, at 5 a.m., at *Don Miguel Acosta's* farm, a pile of rye caught fire on the threshing floor, consuming 23 pieces. At noon, another haystack went up in flames, separately from the previous one. Owner *Don Miguel Acosta* explained that everything was normal, but that suddenly, above the haystack, a flame came out, passed over his head and instantly descended until it ignited the entire bale. Until 7pm, several fires broke out in succession, consuming 15 objects, including a chair, an esparto broom hanging on the wall and clothes in various rooms of the farmhouse. The flames were whitish and odorless. The weather was rather calm, with a light east wind, very warm, and the presence of [stratus](#) clouds to the southwest.

At 10 a.m. the same day, a thatch fire broke out some twenty meters to the north-east of the *Pitango farm*.

Then at 10pm, at the *locksmith's* farm, esparto grass caught fire and burned on a stake. Numerous other events took place, such as the burning of wheat flour and the sudden ignition of four or five bundles of wheat on the threshing floor.

On the same day, at 11:30 p.m., this time at *Franco's* farm, on both threshing floors, two bundles caught fire on the highest level. Then, inside the building, in the kitchen, the papers, some vases and a cupboard were burned. All this happened while the access door was closed. *Franco* headed for a bed in the next room, where part of the mattress and sheets were consumed. A quarter of an hour later, another fire started in the wall, simultaneously attacking the lentils in the threshing floor. The Guardia Civil corporal present at the time saw the lentils burning. He observed a flame at one end, coming from above, some two or three meters away, which reached the ground with a very bright red color then spread over a few square meters, igniting the lentils. The flames were then extinguished by those present, and no further fires broke out. A smell of gunpowder was noted in the wheat straw, and a smell of sulfur in the lentils. The smoke was described as clear and bluish.

On June 26, from 4 p.m. until 10 p.m., Corporal Santos of the Guardia Civil saw 20 small crates and a bale of hay start to burn with a red flame and thick bluish smoke. At the same time, the presence of white clouds with light streaks was noted.

On June 26, at 11 a.m., wheat in a field also caught fire a hundred meters north of Laroya. At 3 p.m., around ten objects ignited in succession, including a cattle truck and a jacket. The flames were described as whitish with bluish smoke.

The weather during these events was variable. On June 16, 1945, it drizzled, while from June 23 to 25, the weather was dry, windless and very hot. On June 26, early in the morning, light rain fell, and from midday onwards, the weather was hot.



Figure 2: A panoramic view of the Laroya lands affected by the fires, taken from the report on geophysical phenomena in Laroya (Almeria) in June 1945 by geographer José Cubillo Fluiters (source: Obra derivada de Biblioteca del Instituto Geográfico Nacional, CC BY 4.0 ign.es).

These facts were reported by Rodríguez Navarro, Head of the Seismological Observatory, and Contreras Vilches, Head of Mining, at the request of the provincial authority. They were compiled on November 9, 1945, in the *report on the geophysical phenomena that occurred in Laroya (Almeria) in June 1945*, by geological engineer José Cubillo Fluiters, with the participation of geological engineer Luis de Migue González Miranda. The report was commissioned by the Civil Governor of the Almeria region.

In 1945, Laroya was an inaccessible village, situated in a mountain range with numerous peaks ranging from 1500 to 2600 meters. To the north, from east to west, lies the Sierra de las Estancias mountain range. To the west of Laroya lies the Sierra Nevada and to the east the Sierra de Filabres. To the south, from east to west, lies the Sierra Gádor and finally, the southernmost of all, the volcanic Sierra de Gata. Laroya is therefore situated in the middle of large elevations and around 45 km from the sea.

Geologically, Laroya is located in a region characterized by clay-talc phyllite, limestones and dolomites. There is also a tectonic fault.

The fact that this report was produced and even the official investigation ordered by the governor at the time are exceptional. The Second World War had only just ended and Franco's regime was still in power. It is surprising that a state body would send scientists to study a phenomenon like this.

The report consists of four chapters. The first one deals with physics and chemistry, the second with electrical phenomena in the atmosphere, the third with spontaneous combustion, and the last concludes with the Laroya phenomena.

On June 30, 1945, engineer and head of the seismological observatory José Rodríguez Navarro drew the following initial conclusions:

The events were not caused by volcanic activity or by geological disturbances leading to the release of ignited materials or flammable gasses. The mineralogical composition of the terrain could not have given rise to the release of gasses or easily flammable bituminous materials. The observed and documented events are not internal or external to the ground surface.

The authors of the report also ruled out an ash shower, such as the one that occurred in Almeria in 1741, which could have originated from Italian volcanoes. They explained the phenomenon by a type of cloud that would have been limited to a small area and its surroundings, extending no more than two kilometers in an east-west and north-south direction. Moreover, this cloud would have produced damage in one and the same area, returning to the same spot at regular time intervals.

They rule out electrical phenomena, despite the affected area being located on high ground. On days of great drought and heat, conditions would favor ionization of the atmosphere and an increase in electrical potential. Additionally, there were no rising thunderclouds, which could have caused significant disturbances on equipotential surfaces and increased the earth's field strength. Although witnesses reported the presence of a whitish cloud to the east and a continuous milky cloud to the west, beyond the divide, these cloud formations may be stratus or [fractocumulus](#), which do not necessarily indicate strong electrical disturbances. Moreover, the cloud was not located directly over the affected area, but rather to the west.

Even assuming a significant electrical disturbance, its effects would probably have appeared on the edges and high points of the buildings, similar to the [St. Elmo's fires](#) seen on the tips of ships' masts on stormy nights.

However, it is unlikely that these electrical manifestations could have ignited objects such as hats, chairs, jackets and esparto hanging from wooden stakes in the buildings.

Furthermore, according to him, the fires that broke out cannot be attributed to the thermal effects of solar radiation. The sun may have caused small spontaneous combustions in the stacked vines on the threshing floors, but this explanation cannot account for the overall facts. This might have been plausible if the fires had only occurred once. However, given their recurrence at different times and on different days, it's unlikely that the sun was the only cause.

The village was a small community where everyone knew each other. This series of unexplained events caused panic and forced the inhabitants to flee their homes.

According to the report, given the limited extent of the area affected and the proximity of the inhabitants, it is unlikely that a malicious act was behind these incidents. The nature of the damage and the instinctive reaction of the inhabitants to the situation rather suggest the presence of a natural phenomenon, although there were no probable explanations at the time of the events.

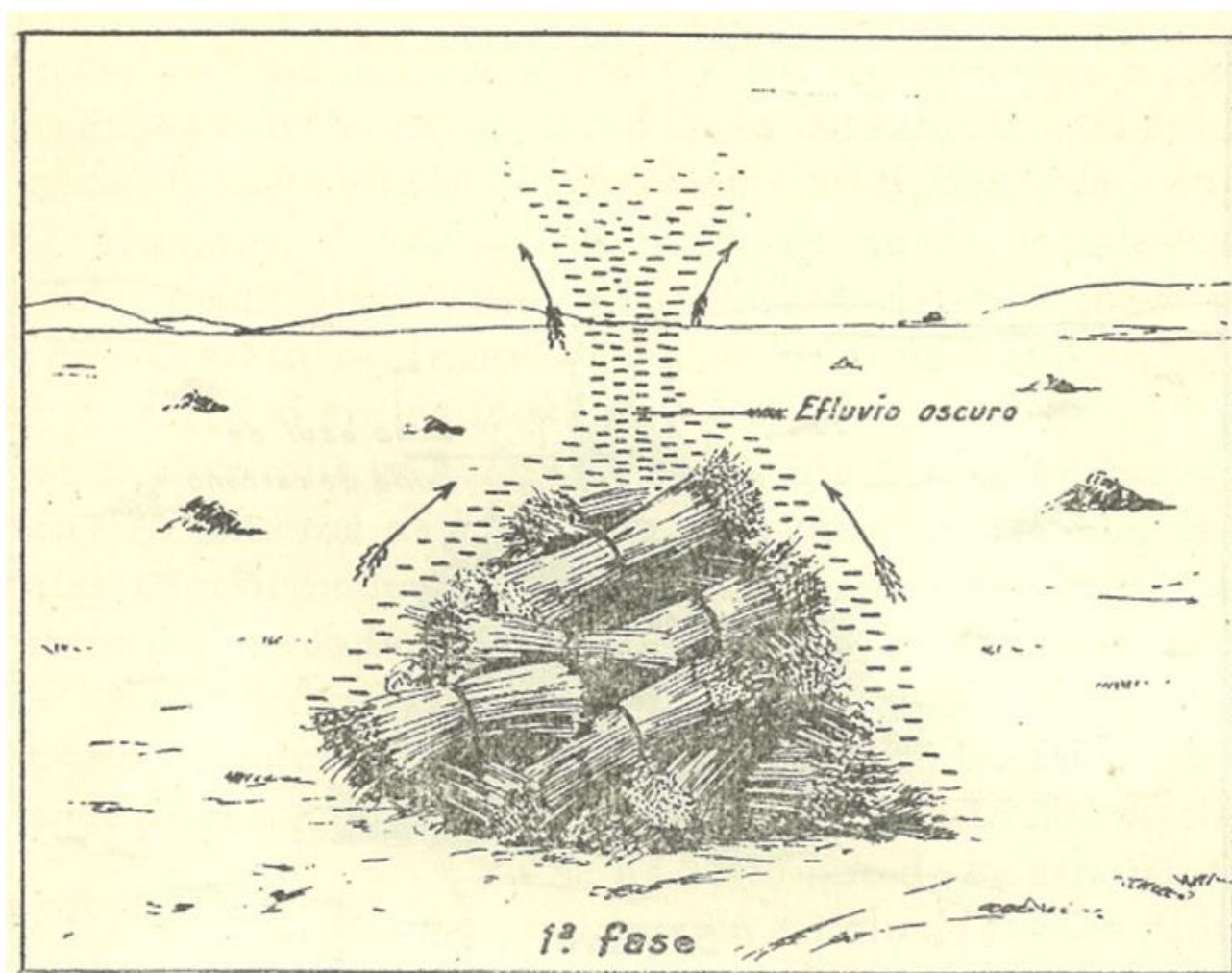
Hypothesis A, developed by geographic engineer José Cubillo Fluiters, is as follows:

These could be diffuse microceramic phenomena, combined with a fairly high degree of atmospheric ozonation, as well as the stillness and dryness of the air and other concomitant causes that give the phenomena the character of a complete eventuality.

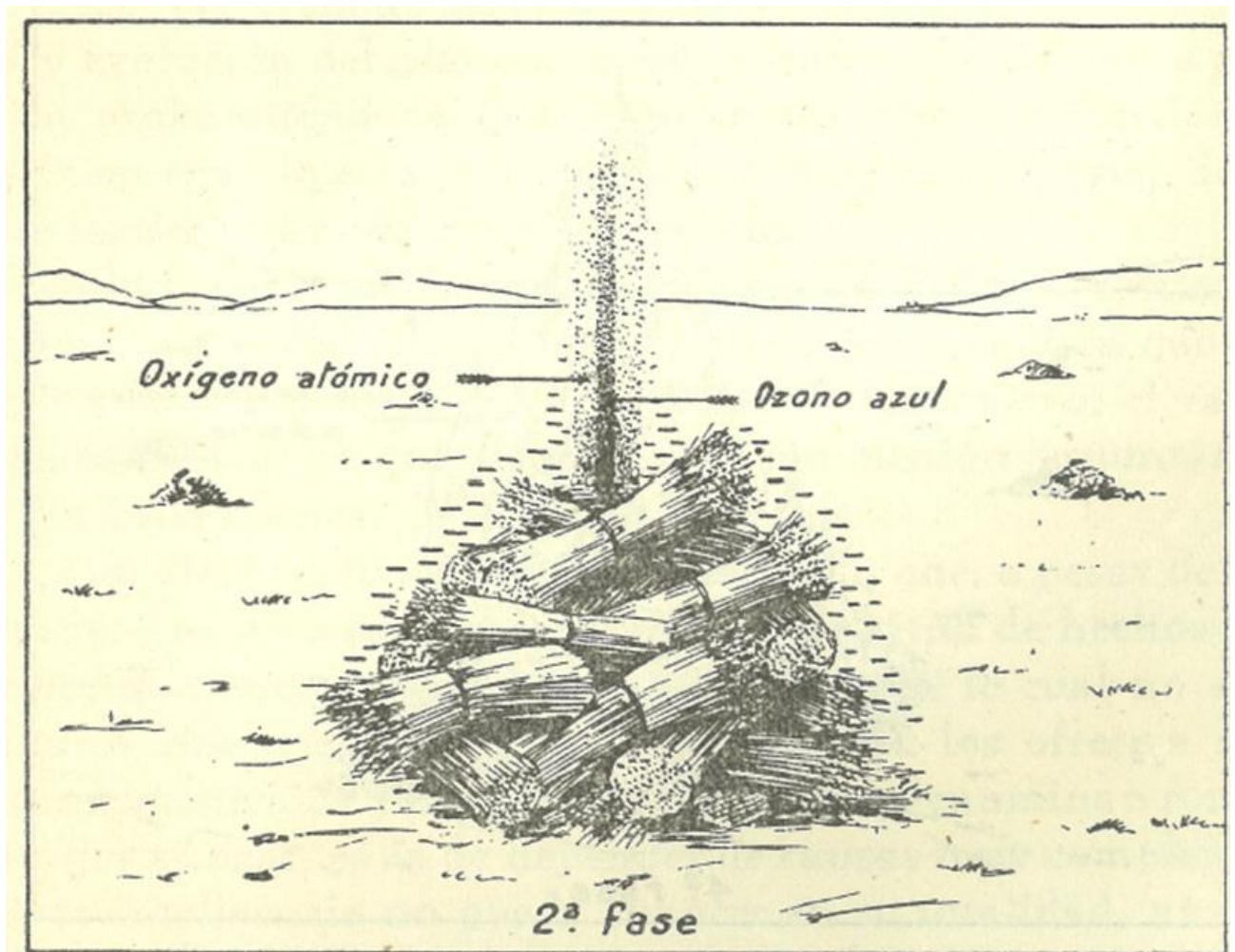
He explained that to resolve the unexplained phenomena affecting the region, a simple, economical and immediate palliative solution could be considered: the lighting and maintenance of large bonfires. These bonfires, lit at an appropriate distance around the most affected areas, could have contained the phenomenon. Although this solution is not a definitive answer to the origin of the events, it would mitigate their potential effects, by deterring their approach or modifying local conditions that would seem to favor them.

The thermal action of the flames would lead to energetic bracing of atmospheric gasses, resulting in the equalization of potential, and the electrical action would neutralize atmospheric ionization.

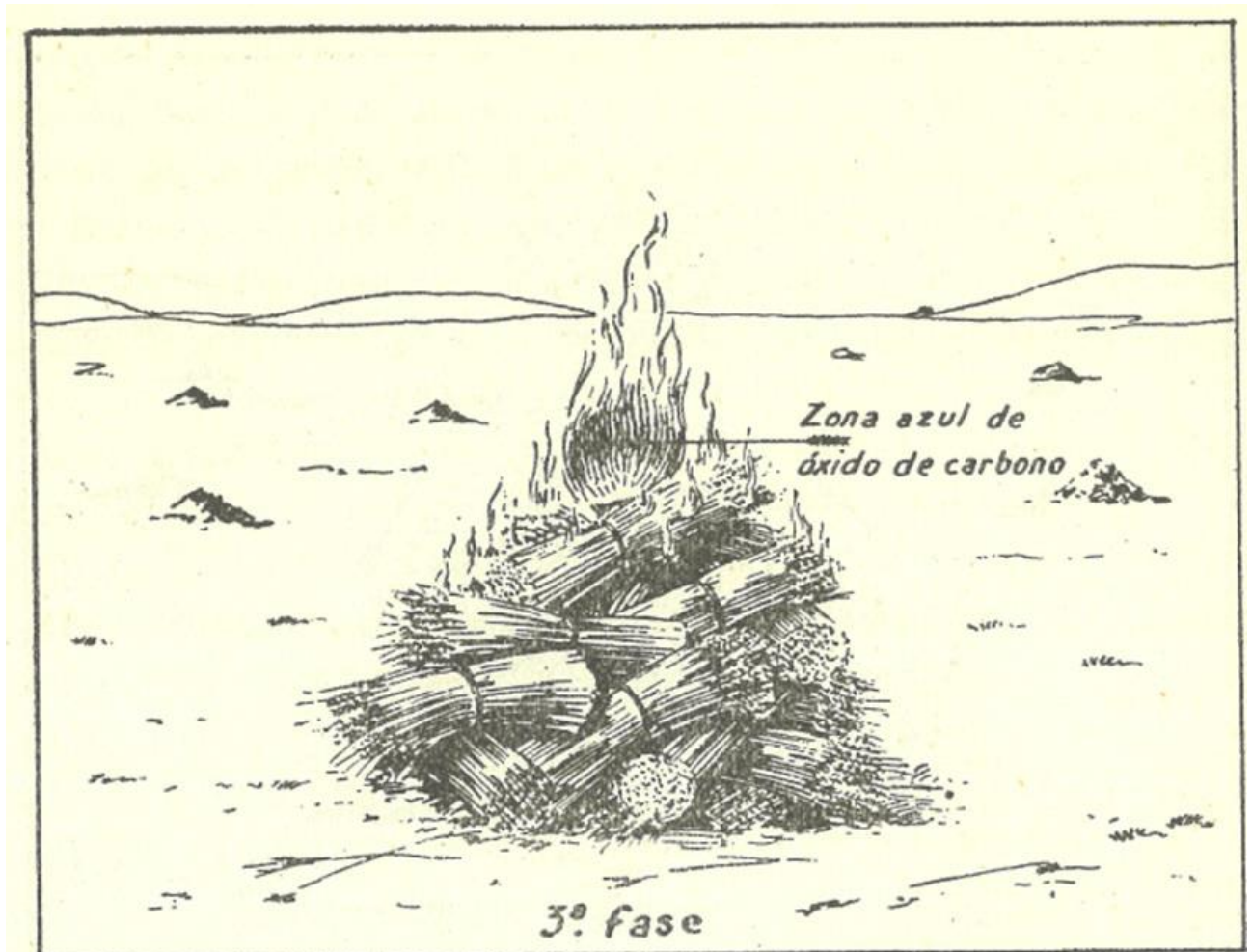
José Cubillo Fluiters explained that the story told by Corporal Santos of the Guardia Civil resembles and could be explained by the spontaneous combustion mechanism explained in 4 steps below (*source of images: Obra derivada de Biblioteca del Instituto Geográfico Nacional, CC BY 4.0 ign.es*). He considers this process and its propagation to be sufficient evidence, leaving no doubt as to its origin.



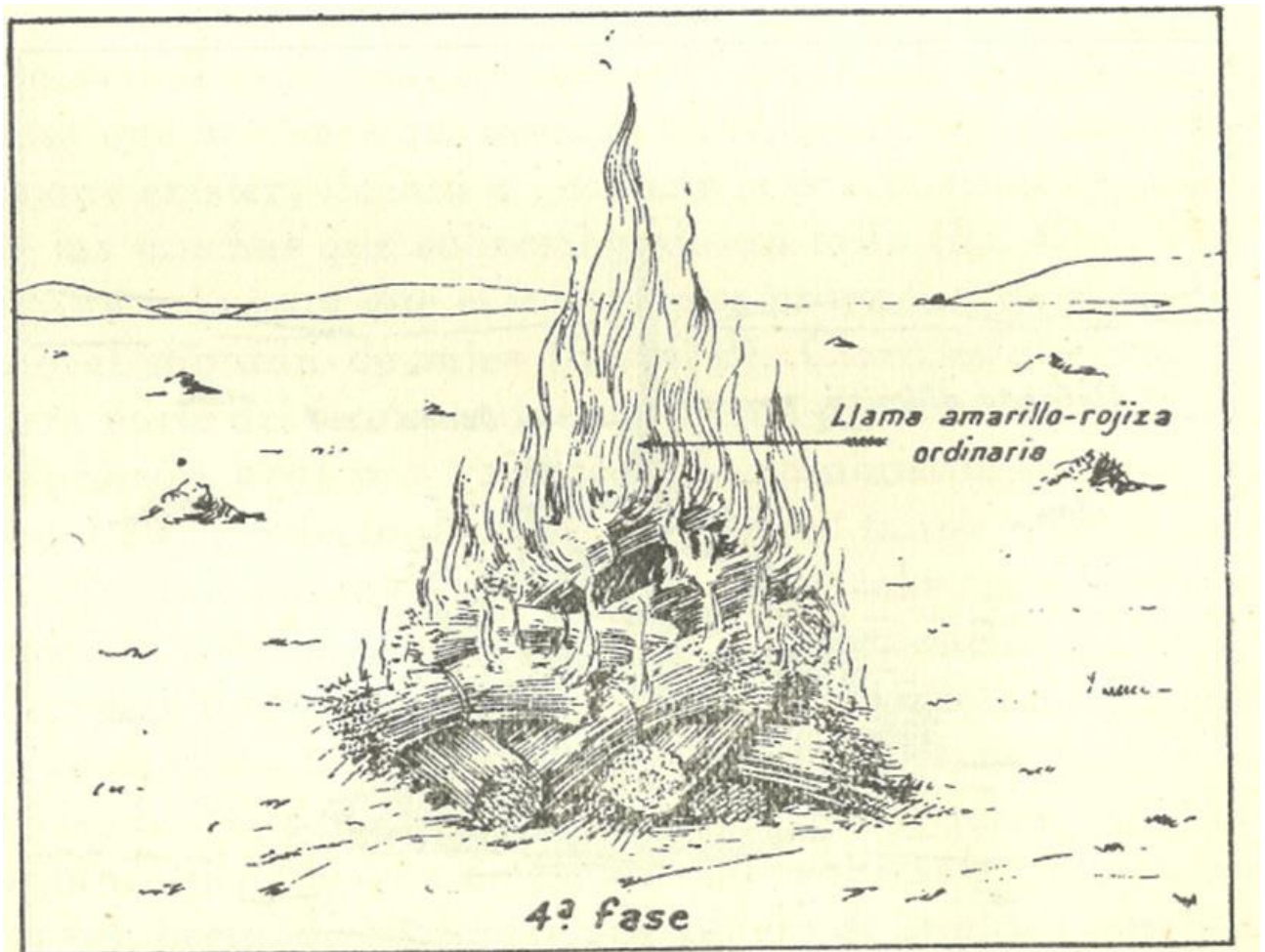
Stage 1: Appropriate atmospheric electric field conditions determine the accumulation of electric charges at the top of the pile, from which a dark electric effluent emerges.



Step 2: The effluvium produces blue ozone and atomic oxygen, two unstable elements with a strong chemical affinity.



Step 3: The atomic oxygen produced by the cellulose's dual electrical and adsorptive action combines with the cellulose, resulting in the combustion of a fine micelle that serves as bait to spread the fire. The fire starts in the pile with a blue flame, as the lack of oxygen produces carbon monoxide.



Step 4: The fire spreads from the top to the bottom of the stack, which is not the natural path of an arson fire, as the ignition would typically occur at the lower part of the stack.

As this report went to press on June 11, 1946, spontaneous combustion of the adsorption type had occurred in the rags, soaked in turpentine and petroleum, used to clean the lithographic machines in the workshops of the Institut Géographique et Cadastral. Combustion occurred several times in 1945, the cause being attributed to safety negligence on the part of the operators. The circumstances were similar to those described in general: summer (season), basement, no drought, no personnel present on the premises, etc.

José Cubillo Fluiters explained that some cases are associated with ancient legends, such as the “*rains of blood*”, which are now understood as the fall of colored dust carried by southeasterly winds from central Africa, held in suspension due to its fine particles and an upward component of the air. Rain is then produced at the heart of the same air mass, and the dust falls with it, forming mud, sometimes red, sometimes yellow or in intermediate hues. He suggests that Laroya's phenomena could transition from possible legend to fully explained events in the coming years.

He explained that one might ask, “*But why did they occur on the Laroya peaks and not in other places?*” He retorted that only this case has been the subject of scientific analysis. It's possible that many bushes in many unstudied places around Laroya

could also have caught fire.

The engineer's hypothesis B is that “*a secret, highly intelligent organization might have tried to imitate natural events for profit*”.

He and his team believe that this matter is not for science to debate, but for justice.

Part of the report draws connections with other events in Spain, both before and after Laroya, that share similar characteristics.

Thus, around 1925, a guardhouse located one and a half kilometers from the town of El Perdigón (10 km from Zamora), suffered fire outbreaks every day from June 19 to 27. Several objects and items of clothing also inexplicably caught fire.

Another case occurred in Málaga after the events in Laroya. In one house, a fire broke out around 2.30pm in the main south-facing room, and the mattress of a bed next to the window ignited. Part of the window showed burn marks, where the paint had disappeared.

At 5 p.m., and at short intervals, additional fires broke out. In the main room, with its window facing north on Calle del Pintor Sorolla, an armchair was set ablaze. The burn marks were deep, conical in shape and about four or five centimeters in diameter. On several items of clothing that *José Cubillo Fluiters* could examine, all the burn marks were circular and the size of a 0.10 [peseta](#) coin.

Shortly afterward, another fire broke out in a room overlooking the courtyard of the house, on the south side. A mattress placed on top of a chest caught fire, and the front door of the room was also burned. Almost at the same time, another fire broke out in the kitchen.

The next day, at the same time, the phenomenon repeated. The windows remained closed for three days, and the phenomena ceased. The next day, the windows were reopened and a fire broke out again in the kitchen, burning tablecloths on the table. One of the sons had the rear of his shirt catch fire while turning his back to the window in the kitchen.

José Cubillo Fluiters explained that hypotheses A and B on Laroya's phenomena should not be dismissed. Hypothesis A, of diffuse micro ceramic phenomena, has a much higher degree of probability in his view than Hypothesis B, of a supposed secret organization being the real cause of the events being examined.

He concludes that, in giving explanation A: We haven't forgotten that “*errare humanum est*”, an aphorism that could be extended by saying that error is not only human, but scientific, and all the more so when science is interpreted by someone who is far from believing himself to be in possession of science. Truth is something that constantly eludes man; it flees from him, mocking his pride, and if we seek it in good faith, it always arrives through irregular primers that disfigure it, always

through reflections in curved mirrors that distort it, and yet such is the harmony of life, that the impossibility of arriving at the truth is often salutary; for perhaps many minds would not resist the horror of seeing the naked truth.

We must be content, having cleared our consciences, to have done all that depends on our will to achieve it and, consequently, to have paid due homage to the community to which we belong, by contributing to the clarification of this truth with all its means. We must be content, we say, to look to the heavens, to reflect deeply on the immensity of the Universe, on the enigma of our destiny, and to utter, in our being, those liturgical words which are a consoling balm for our smallness and powerlessness: *Spera in Deo ...*

According to the *Diario de Almeria* newspaper [article](#), following the conclusions of *José Cubillo Fluiters'* report, the Guardia Civil, instructed by the local government, ordered the inhabitants to keep quiet. The newspapers stopped reporting on the case.

According to the article and the [summary of](#) the video “ *Los sorprendentes fuegos de Laroya* ” on the YouTube platform, journalist [Iker Jiménez](#) went to Laroya to investigate and talk to the last living witnesses to the tragedy. One witness to the events, 84-year-old *Ramón Rubio Domenech*, described seeing strange lights and a childlike figure with a large head and huge eyes during the fires. Other witnesses also reported seeing “*white spheres in the sky at night , illuminating everything as if it were daytime*”. Practically the whole village witnessed these flying lights, and spoke of the figure of “*El Niño*”, a very unpleasant little child with lights coming out of him. *María Martínez*, the four-year-old girl who was the first to experience the phenomenon was nicknamed “*the girl of the lights*”, as her clothes burned three times. Tragically, she, her sister, and her brother committed suicide a few years later. After this series of deaths, the fires apparently stopped.

Thanks to the publication of this report, a number of hypotheses have been put forward about events that might otherwise have remained an obscure anecdote, especially at such a time and in such a complex geographical situation. Many questions remain unanswered, and we can only wonder whether the phenomenon was only localized in Laroya or extended to the surrounding area. The testimonies gathered from witnesses by journalist *Iker Jiménez* and the descriptions presented in the report differ, or have been interpreted differently. In 1945, scientists confronted with a phenomenon that was difficult to quantify and to relate to established science would have proposed only prosaic hypotheses. A governor mandating a team of scientists to clarify unusual events would have risked discrediting himself and worrying the population, at a time when maintaining order was essential.

This raises the question of the true nature of these phenomena. The conclusion of *José Cubillo Fluiters'* report presents two hypotheses: diffuse micro-ceramic phenomena or the existence of a secret organization. In contrast, the testimonies

gathered by journalist *Iker Jiménez* described strange lights and a child-like figure with a large head.

Canneto di Caronia: complex unexplained phenomena

Almost 48 years later, another series of as-yet unexplained phenomena affected a small municipality in Italy. Let's take a look at this much-discussed case.

It's December 23, 2003, in Canneto di Caronia on the north Sicilian coast, in the Messina region. The television set of *Antonino Pezzino*, nicknamed “*Nino*”, a 43-year-old insurance employee, exploded two days before Christmas. He calls the electricity company ENEL, who sends a technician to redirect the electricity to another meter. That evening, in the bathroom, the water heater cable suddenly begins to heat up. ENEL disconnects the meter and installs a generator, but the phenomenon continues. The electricity is then completely cut off, but a meter catches fire. The *GÉO* newspaper [article](#) mentions that “*this almost always happens when a train is passing by*”. Some clothes also start to burn. Antonino's wife Lucia sees her carefully-guarded wedding dress catch fire.

This event, like the one that took place in Spain in 1945, could have remained contained, but other houses were affected, including that of *Antonino* and his wife's neighbor, *Teresa Fortunato*, whose storeroom went up in flames.

A few days later, the cable of the neighbor's refrigerator burned, likely due to a short-circuit.

On February 7, as reported in the *GÉO* newspaper, smoke came out of sockets and switches, as well as small flames out of distribution boxes. The street next to the house where the phenomena were occurring was evacuated, and ENEL technicians tore the electrical cables from the walls. Meanwhile, scientists, technicians, journalists, firemen and the Civil Guard swarmed the village. Scientists and technicians carried out electromagnetic and electrostatic measurements, checked humidity and examined the railroad and cell phone transmission towers.

The hypothesis of geothermal energy explosions was put forward. These explosions would have reached the Earth's surface just below Canneto and ionized the air, causing electrical discharges and consequently fires. On February 8, 2004, in response to this hypothesis, the National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology declared the theory impossible, as according to Sicilian standards, Canneto lies in a “*calm*” zone.

In an [article](#) in *L'Unità* newspaper, Sicilian Civil Protection through engineer Tullio Martella suggests that the most likely hypothesis is an electrotechnical phenomenon. In other words, a continuous flow of electronically-charged particles collected at electrically-charged points, such as meters.

Over the following months, a number of hypotheses were put forward, ranging from the natural to the supernatural. Numerous telecommunications experts, electricity company agents and volcanologists came to study the railroad passing near the village. *Dr. Giuseppe Maschio*, a specialist in electromagnetic fields, was present.

He [said](#) he was investigating whether an electromagnetic disturbance could be the cause of the problem. Canneto was a hamlet with a population of 39 at the beginning of 2004. It is located between Palermo and Messina, nestled between a railroad line and the Tyrrhenian Sea.

At the time of the incident, as reported in the *NBC News* [article](#), *Pietro Spinnato*, the mayor of the three municipalities that make up Caronia, said:

We are working in the shadows. We don't have any leads at the moment .

He added:

Every time a new scientist arrives in town, he thinks that everything has been invented or that he'll solve the mystery in two minutes. They're all wrong.

In addition, the municipality and its residents have to deal with “ghost hunters” and figures such as *Father Gabriele Amorth*, who is considered one of Italy's most renowned exorcists. The latter, as reported in *The Week* newspaper [article](#), declared: “I've seen things like this before. Demons occupy a house and appear in electrical appliances.”

The people of Canneto reject this hypothesis and church members are thus kept at bay.

As the French newspaper *La Dépêche* [reported on](#) March 29, 2004, citizens were evacuated because the danger was too great. Eight houses in Via del Mare were evacuated, for a total of 39 people. A state of natural disaster was then declared, due to “the serious damage caused by abnormal electrical phenomena”, by Civil Protection [deliberation](#) no. 48 of February 23, 2004.

Several events were reported by local residents. *Antonino Pezzino*, whose first house was affected, declared:

“I saw an air conditioner catch fire and burn out in 30 seconds. These are not normal events, but I think we'll have to look for another kind of help.”

The navigation system in *Antonino Pezzino's* car caught fire while he was driving along Via del Mare. *Antonino's* neighbor *Antonio Siracusano* honked his horn at the entrance to Canneto and his car burst into flames.

Other facts reported by locals are mentioned in the *BBC News* [article](#). *Gaetano Pezzino* declared:

My daughter's wedding presents, left piled up in one of her bedrooms, caught fire, causing a blaze that burned down half the house.

Multiple electrical appliances, such as vacuum cleaners, and even furniture underwent spontaneous combustion.

[Massimo Polidoro](#), a member of the investigating commission and the secretary of the Italian Committee for the Control of Declarations on Pseudoscience (CICAP) stated:

The fact that the phenomenon occurred only in the presence of people makes it difficult to believe it is a natural, or even supernatural phenomenon. But we won't rule out further investigations if things aren't finally explained.

Mayor Spinnato, as desperate as the residents, said:

“Someone wrote to us saying that the solution was to sacrifice a black goat and collect its blood. At some point, this will start to sound like a good idea.”

The Italian and international press is increasingly inclined to create a “*buzz*” by over-interpreting the data and evoking supernatural leads. The newspaper *La Dépêche* makes this observation.

A Danish journalist declared in front of the TV cameras of her Italian colleagues:

“ We're surprised that nobody in this Sicilian village believes in the supernatural. We're a bit disappointed “.

This reveals the sensationalism of certain media, who prefer to share unverified data over relaying credible witness accounts, to create more “*buzz*” with their audience.

In March 2004, all phenomena came to a sudden halt following the deployment of the Sicilian Civil Protection. The first results they communicated showed that the phenomenon was natural, linked to electric fields and their conductors.

After the experts left at the end of March 2004, the phenomena resumed. Houses were once again affected by fires, the locking systems of several cars opened and closed by themselves, while cell phones left behind by residents began ringing even though their batteries were flat. A delivery truck reportedly caught fire as it left the area. According to the [article](#) in *La Dépêche*, “*strange signs appeared on the screen of one of the cell phones.*”

In March 2004, residents had been told not to return home.

According to the *L'Espresso* newspaper of November 1, 2007, a special military satellite control technology was in use at the Sigonella US air base and also at Niscemi in Sicily. This was the *Mobile User Objective System* (MUOS), replacing the *Ultra High Frequency Follow-on* (UFO) system. It revolutionized high-speed military communications, as it enabled maintaining real-time data transmission for US military forces worldwide. A challenge was that the ground stations designed to operate MUOS would be heavily loaded with electromagnetic emissions. The first [Radhaz](#) tests, or *Radio and Radar Radiation Hazards Model*, developed a model to verify the risks of electromagnetic radiation on weapons systems, in the area of the American base on the outskirts of Catania. The results were alarming. The [article](#) in the newspaper *Reporterre*, stated:

“ The U.S. military, with the agreement of the Italian government, wants to install new radars in Sicily. This MUOS system is extremely dangerous for the health of local residents, and serves as a relay for U.S. military actions. For several months now, a citizens' movement has been successfully preventing the installation of this high-frequency system “.

Furthermore, in a [report](#) on multi-service operational test and evaluation, former Director of Operational Test and Evaluation [J.Michael Gilmore](#) stated:

“Similarly, the RAF (Radio Access Facility) at Niscemi, Italy, is not yet operational due to local Sicilian legal challenges against the commissioning of MUOS and its electromagnetic radiation.”

At the time, all hypotheses were debated, with some suggesting that ball lightning could be a possible cause. Engineer *Francesco Valenti* explained that the cause could be energy quantum emissions due to strong storms in January and February 2004, or solar storms. The railroad line linking Messina to Palermo is also targeted. To date, these hypotheses have not been accepted.

In July 2004, the Italian Navy dispatched a special vessel to study electromagnetic fields, which remained anchored at Canneto for a month, but no conclusive results were obtained.

Numerous instruments were installed to measure radio waves and monitor meteorological, geomagnetic, electromagnetic and electrostatic indicators.

The theory that an arsonist was behind the fires was dismissed after several people witnessed electrical wires catching fire without being connected to the grid.

In April 2004, the hypothesis put forward was that the phenomena were resulting from a build-up of electrical energy, caused by the railroad's earthing wires, a rare “*natural phenomenon*” involving electrical surges rising from the Earth's core.

One night in autumn 2004, many of the village's water pipes burst, and residents were evacuated once again.

The phenomena then suddenly stopped, until a final wave between January and February 2007. More than 300 events were recorded between the end of 2003 and 2007.

According to the [article](#) in *il Giornale*, most of the fires occurred in January and February. In January 2007, the electrical system of a boat stranded on the beach reportedly melted and liquefied. In the same month, a cell phone was said to have recharged itself, without the charger being plugged in. Interestingly, on this subject, an [article](#) published in the journal *Proceedings of the Association for Computing Machinery on Interactive, Mobile, Wearable & Ubiquitous Technologies*, on January 8, 2018 reports that a team of researchers from the University of Washington developed a device that would allow a smartphone battery to be recharged without plugging it in, using lasers.

Residents were finally able to return to their homes for good in July 2007. The [article](#) also reports that, before returning home, Canneto's residents had reorganized.

“Virtually all the houses have sophisticated fire prevention systems and latex mattresses without springs, to prevent fires during their sleep.”

The inter-institutional study group

An inter-institutional study group was set up in 2005 by *Silvio Berlusconi*, President of the Council, to investigate and shed light on the origin of the phenomena that impacted the village of Canneto di Caronia, as revealed by the Italian newspaper *L'Espresso*, in an [article](#) on October 26, 2007. The group was made up of various military and civilian experts from universities, the National Research Council, the National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology, the Ministry of Communications, the Navy and the Air Force, and, according to the newspaper, a NASA researcher. Over a period of 3 years, in addition to the Canneto phenomena, they studied almost 400 strange episodes along the Tyrrhenian axis, but also towards the Sicilian Channel, for which no natural cause could be proven.

As stated in the [report](#) of the 294th public session of the Italian Senate of July 29, 2014, one of the first hypotheses of the technical-scientific research carried out by multiple institutional bodies, attributed the causes of these phenomena to electrical dispersion problems in the power supply system of the rail network of the nearby Messina-Palermo line. This hypothesis was subsequently ruled out by scientific evidence, since the fires also occurred in conditions of power failure, i.e., in the complete absence of electricity. The report also ruled out natural causes, based on the investigations and checks carried out. No abnormal values were detected in relation to physical, geophysical or geochemical environmental parameters. The experts were able to rule out the technological systems in the area as the potential source of the phenomena, with particular reference to the electrified railroad, electricity distribution network and radio telecommunication systems falling in a vast area centered on the hamlet of Canneto.

Heading up the group was Francesco Venerando Mantegna, regional coordinator of the Sicilian Civil Protection Committee. He declared:

Canneto di Caronia was hit by electromagnetic phenomena of artificial origin, capable of generating great concentrated power.

These would be “*ultra-high frequency*” microwave beams ranging from 300 megahertz to a few gigahertz. To produce and achieve a similar amount of energy, according to the *L'Espresso* article, “*a machine would have to reach a power of between 12 and 15 gigawatts.*”

As demonstrated by experiments on directed-energy weapons, now supplied to the world's leading armed forces, these effects are fully compatible with the advanced technologies available at the time.

This report, or rather these confidential periodical reports, the fourth of which is said to have leaked, were made available to journalists *Giuseppe Lo Bianco* and *Piero Messina*. The origin of the electromagnetic emissions was detected by the study group and lasted only a few nanoseconds. They are believed to be located around the Aeolian Islands. These islands lie to the north of Canneto, in the Tyrrhenian Sea, some 60 km away.

In an [interview](#) with the *Meridio News* newspaper, *Francesco Venerando* stated that the reports have indeed been handed over to the authorities, and that they are not classified, but “*reserved*” to avoid exploitation by the media. He goes on to say that it was not the task of the group to examine the presence of military experiments in the area, as their objective was to investigate the possible origin of these phenomena from an exclusively technical-scientific point of view.

According to the *L'Espresso* article, the two hypotheses adopted by the group's scientists were:

Either secret military tests or non-terrestrial experiments. The Canneto di Caronia incidents could have been attempts at military engagement between unconventional forces, or a non-aggressive test aimed at studying behaviors and actions in an indeterminate and sparsely anthropized territorial sample.

However, the group did not know the exact origin of the emission. A network of dozens of sensors tracked the impulse from the sea for 2 years. The challenge was that the emissions only lasted a few nanoseconds.

Finally, in 2007, the inter-institutional group had to close its study. According to *Francesco Venerando*, this was “*not their fault*”, as the Civil Protection authorities ordered the return of the apartment in which the device was located to its owner. His team offered to install a container to continue the search, but the proposal was not accepted. Cost may also have been a factor in the decision to call off the search.

In the *Gialli* newspaper [article](#), *Francesco Venerando*, said:

We can no longer control the area, there is no money and every member of the Group is operating without reimbursement and without a budget.

Following the shutdown, sensor control of the area ceased. It was carried out via the intranet in the Canneto system.

I contacted Francesco Venerando by e-mail and he told me: The interruption was due to the owner's request to recover the apartment where the observation equipment had been installed, as he needed the property for his family's use. I then proposed to use two containers placed in a space belonging to the municipality of Caronia to continue the surveillance activity. Surprisingly, however, the municipality did not agree to this request. I then expressed my opposition and that of the observation group to the Civil Protection authorities, because of the interruption of an experiment which, for the first time in Italy, was studying phenomena of complex origin.

The project for an autonomous reorganization of activities with the instruments available, for 24-hour observation of the phenomena, was not accepted by the Civil Protection. On behalf of the Group I was coordinating, I strongly expressed my opposition and surprise at this defeatist attitude, precisely at a time when we had focused our attention on the plausible electromagnetic origin of the phenomena, through other observation stations in the Aeolian Islands and at the far end of Calabria.

It should be emphasized, as stated in the [stenographic report](#) of meeting no. 261 of December 5, 2007, that the citizens of Canneto declared that they considered the monitoring system managed by the Inter-institutional Group to be “*a genuine instrument of safety and prevention*”, due to the very fact that, since it began operating, the phenomena have diminished considerably, with the fires coming to an almost complete halt.

Francesco Venerando confirmed other facts reported by the press. A few kilometers from Canneto, precisely along the axis of the broadcast, the roots and leaves of [Ampelodesmos Mauritanicus](#) plants caught fire, without other plants being affected. This is a robust, perennial, rhizomatous herbaceous plant that can reach 2 to 3 meters in height, composed of long, broad leaves that could have acted as a receptor. The report details: The burns on the roots were the same as those found on electrical wires in houses with traces of flames; they are present in a sequence governed by multiples of 4.

The technicians concluded that the signs were compatible with electromagnetic wave emissions.

On this event, Francesco Venerando told me:

In a field upstream from Canneto, the group observed an abnormal phenomenon. Hundreds of plants of the *Ampelodesmos Mauritanicus* (only these and not the other species of plants and trees) were affected by the combustion of their roots and leaves, with intervals of “stellar combustion” found in the electric cables of the Canneto houses involved in the combustion phenomena. The phenomenon was studied in particular by physicist Clarbruno Vedruccio, captain of the Italian Navy frigate. The phenomenon was plausibly attributed to the same emission of highly concentrated electromagnetic impulses on the alignment between the houses of Canneto and this locality. All the *Ampelodesmos* plants located in the same hilly area were unaffected, confirming that this was a narrow trajectory.

A university chemistry professor, a member of the coordinating body, took part in the direct observations with me and the other people present at the inspection. The terrain involved was aligned between the Canneto building and another building upstream, in a straight line (see figure 5). In the critical phase of the phenomena, other abnormal combustion phenomena were observed, such as a vehicle that caught fire and, after being extinguished, caught fire again while being transported by tow truck. Another vehicle parked in Canneto was also involved, with the front glass melting in the area corresponding to the built-in antenna, to the point of being perforated.



Figure 5: Foreground, electric wire, background, 3 leaves of the Ampelodesmos Mauritanicus plant, both with the same burn marks (source: Francesco Venerando).



Figure 6: The village of Canneto circled in red on the coast and point D, also circled in red, indicating the plot where the plants were found burnt (source: Francesco Venerando).

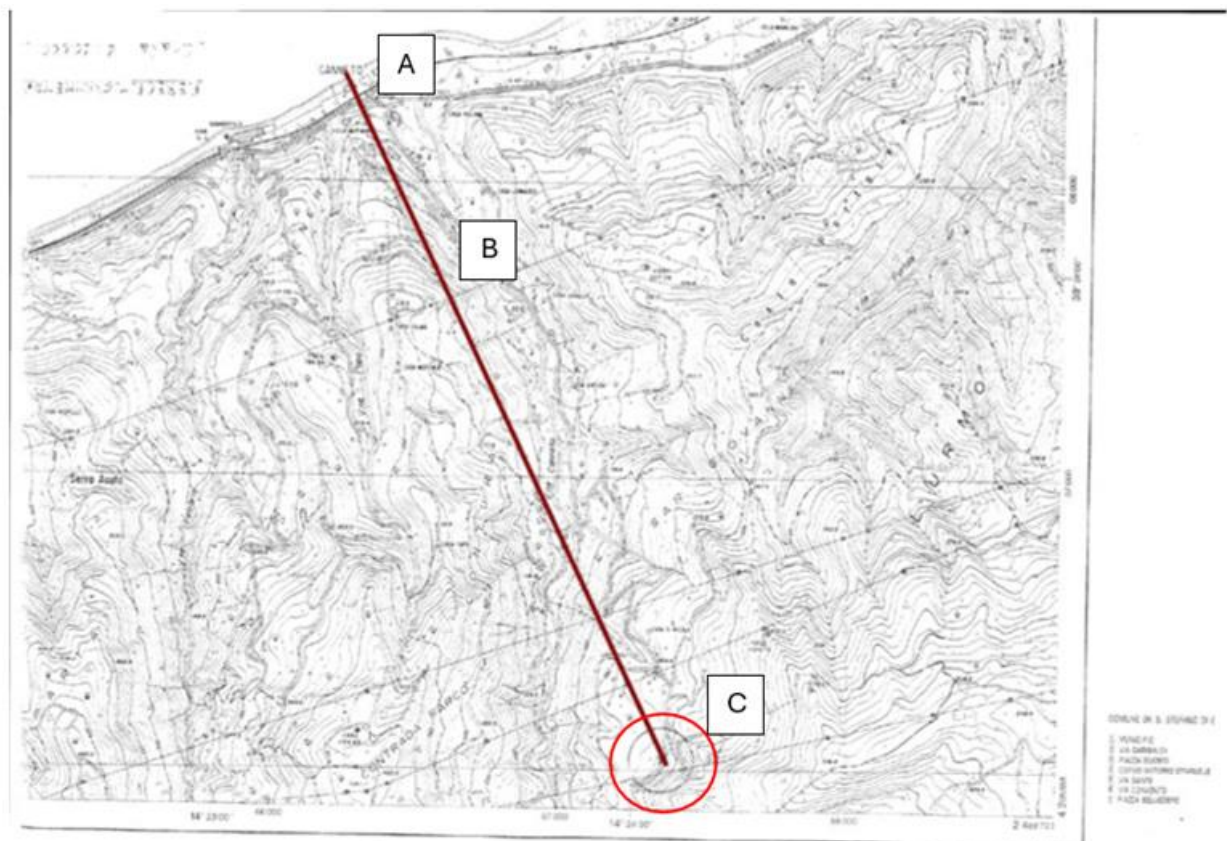


Figure 7: Supposed trajectory of the electromagnetic phenomenon (source: Francesco Venerando)

A - Houses in Canneto di Caronia

B - Intermediate houses south-east of Canneto involved in the burning of electric cables

C - Land with burnt *Ampelodesmos* plants

To date, in the public domain, no biological analysis has been conducted on the plants supposedly affected by these phenomena. Only observations have been made.

One particular [case](#) forced a Civil Protection helicopter to make an emergency landing in 2006, while flying over the Tyrrhenian Sea, as reported by Courier International. Three of the propeller's four blades were severely cracked, even though the aircraft had apparently not hit anything.

Francesco Venerando told me:

I think it's worth drawing attention to the accident involving a helicopter we used for reconnaissance and measurements in the coastal and marine area of Canneto, which was forced to make an emergency landing. Three of the four rotor blades were hit in the same place, and the next day we received a photo showing the presence of a dark object a few hundred meters from the helicopter, but the poor definition of the image at magnification did not allow us to investigate the structure of the unidentified object.

Antonio Rampulla, whom I also contacted, pointed out that this “*artifact*” could very well be a bird. He declared:

A single, ill-defined photo taken by a local man, Antonino Spinnato, who at the time liked to photograph everything that flew in the sky, purely for fun? Only to discover that almost all the photos included reflections, double exposures, birds, etc.

[Antonio Rampulla](#) is regional coordinator for Sicily for the Italian Center for Ufological Studies (CISU).



Figure 8: Antonino Spinnato's photo of the helicopter and the anomaly behind it (source: Francesco Venerando)

According to *Felice Cavallaro's* [article](#) in *Corriere della Sera*, the photo shows the damaged blade in detail. Laboratory analysis reportedly ruled out any trace of organic matter in the affected areas. There would therefore have been no contact with birds or other objects. The investigation did, however, reveal a variation in electrical conductivity inside the blades.



Figure 7: Photo of damaged helicopter blade (source: Francesco Venerando).

He also reports that the resident of Canneto, who saw the helicopter in difficulty, took a photo of it and discovered an anomaly behind the vehicle.

Numerous sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs), now called Unidentified Aerospace Phenomena (UAP) by [GEIPAN](#) or Unidentified Aerial/Anomalous Phenomena by the Pentagon as [defined](#) by the *Cambridge Dictionary*, were recorded in the area during the events. As described in the *L'Espresso* newspaper [article](#):

Some shots are so precise that researchers from the inter-institutional group developed graphics describing the flying objects, and attached them to the file submitted in September of this year (2007).

An [interpellation](#) was submitted on October 31, 2014, to the Senate of the Italian Republic for the creation of a new working group. *Francesco Venerando* clarified to me that this interpellation was in no way intended to create a new observation group, but rather at the need to continue the activity of the Group he coordinated, which was made up of scientists, university professors and experts, with the participation of specialized components of the Air Force, Navy and other public institutions.

In [Legislature](#) 17, Inspection Audit Act No. 4-02560 published on July 29, 2014, *Bruno Mancuso*, addresses the Ministers of the Environment and Protection of the Earth and Sea, the Interior and Defense and asks:

whether they are aware (as reported in the press) of a report by the Ministry of Defense to the effect that “advanced military technology, even of non-terrestrial origin, could expose entire populations to undesirable consequences in the future”. The incidents at Canneto di Caronia could be attempts at military engagement between unconventional forces, or a non-aggressive test to study behavior and actions in an indeterminate, sparsely populated territorial area.

I therefore asked *Francesco Venerando* if he was aware of any report published by the Italian Ministry of Defense, and he replied:

As far as the various periodic reports I have sent to the Civil Protection Department of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers are concerned, I am not aware of any other reports. I am not aware of any, and I think I can rule out the possibility that there have been any. The reference I made to a hypothetical activity of non-terrestrial origin was made in the logic of not being able to exclude any possible cause to be verified, given the numerous UFO sightings reported. In addition, the hypothesis of the supposed use of military technology in this area of the Lower Tyrrhenian Sea was linked to the presence of military vessels of various nationalities. So we couldn't rule out experimentation with new directed-energy weapons, which has been fully confirmed subsequently and recently.

According to the [article](#) in *L'Espresso* newspaper, residents of the Canneto and Caronia area claim to have observed “*undesirable luminescent flying phenomena*” for two years. They attribute these events to the flames that burned their curtains and mattresses.

The article stated:

“Strange and gigantic footprints, rectangular in shape, 40 meters long and 15 wide, were found a few kilometers from Caronia, in a field”.

I asked *Francesco Venerando* about this supposed “*strange and gigantic footprint of rectangular shape*”, and he replied:

The Institutional Observation Group for the Phenomena of Caronia has not attributed the phenomenon of the plot of land involved in the burning of all the plants in Ampelodesmos to the hypothesis of the landing of an extraterrestrial spaceship. Instead, the hypothesis considered plausible was that of the concentrated, high-power emission of electromagnetic waves.

We're not saying that little green men from Mars started the fires, but that unnatural forces capable of creating large amounts of electromagnetic energy are responsible. That's just one possibility; we're considering another, which involves the testing of top-secret weapons by an unknown power, also capable of producing huge amounts of energy.

As mentioned earlier in the article, *Francesco Venerando* gave an [interview](#) to the *Meridio News* newspaper, including an answer to a question about military-style weapons capable of using “*electromagnetism*”. He stated:

“Yes, we're talking about directed-energy weapons, electromagnetic weapons systems, lasers and the like. In particular, electromagnetic weapons are non-lethal and designed to neutralize the attack or defense systems of the opposing force.”

What are energy weapons? What are their advantages and disadvantages?

The French Center for Intelligence Research (Cf2R), published a [bulletin](#) on the subject in June 2017: “*Directed energy weapon: possibilities and limitations.*”

These are weapons capable of propagating a beam of electromagnetic waves towards a target. This includes weapons using lasers and those using a microwave beam.

Laser weapons are highly directional, enabling them to be fired over long distances (several hundred kilometers in theory) without dispersing the energy. However, laser beams are highly sensitive to weather conditions. Clouds, rain and the presence of dust are all factors that can greatly reduce range and power. A large proportion of the energy will be absorbed, diffracted or reflected by these elements. Fog or sandstorms, for example, can render this type of weapon inoperable.

Microwave weapons can be aimed at any target with electrical or electronic circuitry. This type of weapon has no direct effect on living organisms (unless exposed for prolonged periods). It is therefore potentially non-lethal and non-destructive, as it has no mechanical effect on structures. This makes it “stealthy”, as it becomes difficult to attribute responsibility. It will be difficult to distinguish whether the cause is internal or external to the system. However, there are physical and operational constraints. The beam cannot be focused as precisely as a laser weapon, and above a certain power, a phenomenon known as “air breakdown” occurs. This causes a very strong ionization of the air molecules (creation of a plasma), making it conductive. The result is a ball of plasma, particularly at the antenna, impervious to any electromagnetic waves. Since propagation can no longer take place, the effective range becomes zero. The hotter the air, and the higher the humidity, the faster the phenomenon of air breakdown will occur. This equipment is therefore highly sensitive to weather conditions. The most favorable conditions are dry, cold air.

The bulletin added that armored vehicles, combat ships and reinforced concrete bunkers appear to be naturally protected against this type of weapon, provided they have no communication antennas. However well protected a system may be, as soon as an antenna, an unprotected cable (power supply, for example) or a ventilation system leaves the armored zone, the coupling phenomenon can occur.

The only structure perfectly protected against this type of weapon must be totally isolated from the outside world (no means of communication, energy autonomy, no openings, etc.).

They conclude by stating that, apart from use in the vacuum of space, atmospheric effects are and will remain a major limitation for directed-energy weapons.

Energy weapon systems are not new, and several tests have already been carried out, with platforms such as the YAL-1A [airborne laser](#) (ABL) - a chemical oxygen-iodine laser (COIL) mounted on a modified Boeing 747-400F US military aircraft. During tests, it destroyed two missiles. In addition, the same [system](#) tested on the ground on November 10, 2004, although invisible to the naked eye, succeeded in igniting dust particles on the firing trajectory.

The phenomena that impacted the coastal village of Canneto appear to have been active in January and February for 4 years, from 2004 to 2007. It is conceivable that such energy weapons could have been tested at that time, under favorable weather conditions.

In 2007, a report by the Office of Technical Consultants (CTU) at the request of the Italian Public Prosecutor's Office was published under procedure no. 55/04 R.G. (shared with me by *Edoardo Russo*), following further investigations into the events at Canneto since January 2004. This group of technical consultants was made up of 4 scientists. Their conclusions were: Expert witnesses conclude, by exclusion, that the fires in the Canneto houses are to be attributed to local human intervention. Francesco Venerando told Mehdi of the YouTube channel "[Sylartichot](#)":

I would like to point out that the group of expert witnesses appointed by the public prosecutor's office carried out their investigations only in the restricted area of the Canneto building and its immediate surroundings, but not in the wider territorial area of Caronia.

It is enough to mention the phenomenon that occurred on the heights of the Caronia stream, when the Inter-institutional Group I coordinated directly observed the combustion of the root systems of all (hundreds) of plants of the species *Ampelodesmos Mauritanicus* in a plot of land (in the entire remaining area, the thousands of similar plants were not affected), to make credible the hypothesis of the (experimental) application of directed energy weapons .

In fact, it is inconceivable that someone, equipped with appropriate equipment in an inaccessible area, could have burned hundreds of roots with a blowtorch, replicating on thousands and thousands of leaves the same combustion intervals observed in the burned electrical cables inside the Canneto houses, as noted by physicist Dr. Clarbruno Vedruccio, member of the Inter-institutional Group.

The same applies to the helicopter crash during a fact-finding mission, according to the documentation sent to you. A unique episode that has never happened before.

The CTU group appointed by the Public Prosecutor's Office had no report on these phenomena and several others observed it, as it did not fall within their mandate .

In the summer of 2014, new fires broke out, and *Antonino Pezzino* 's house was affected. As *GQ Italia* [reports](#), *Antonino* describes to journalists how the flames started from a wardrobe and reached the bedroom, injuring him and his son Giuseppe in the arms. During the same days in July, a hair dryer caught fire without

being plugged in. The Regional Environmental Protection Agency (ARPA) installed a monitoring unit to begin surveillance.

At the end of 2014, *Antonino* and his son *Giuseppe Pezzino* were arrested on suspicion of setting fire to homes in order to receive financial compensation. Investigators discreetly installed cameras to monitor the incriminated area. The surveillance lasted several months, from July to December 2014. The father and son were also bugged, to prove that they had staged all these events in order to replicate those that had taken place from 2004 to 2007. The trial lasted 3 years, from 2019 to 2022. They were found guilty of the 2014 events and sentenced.

According to a 2014 [report](#) to the Italian Parliament on the application of framework law no. 36 of February 22, 2001 by the Interministerial Committee for the Prevention and Reduction of Electromagnetic Pollution, representatives of the Ministry of the Environment and ISPRA (Institute for Environmental Protection and Research) were appointed as members of a working group of the Civil Protection Department for the assessment and investigation of the phenomena of alleged spontaneous combustion that occurred in Canneto di Caronia (ME). Participation in the aforementioned working group consisted in providing technical support in the field of electromagnetic fields, attending both technical meetings and the on-site inspection carried out to acquire cognitive elements of the locations and events that occurred.

Mayor *Calogero Beringheli* of Canneto declared: “There will soon be a technical table in Rome and I hope we will make progress in the study of these phenomena, which have been recurring for several years and cannot be attributed to an arsonist.” In an interview to the print newspaper *Gazzeta del Sud* on November 11, 2014, *Francesco Venerando* declared: In fact, what's paradoxical is that last October the National Department of Civil Protection set up a new working group. They even invited me to the meeting of the new group with the scientific coordinators of the inter-institutional group. We declined the invitation, expressing our surprise formally and without delay. There's no sense in starting from scratch after four years of hard work and no remuneration. In the end, they had words of appreciation for us, and we wished the new group good luck in its work.

However, the working group was not created in October 2014, according to *Francesco Venerando*, who explained:

The new working group was created many years later, when other fire outbreaks were observed, which later turned out to have been caused by a local young man, almost for fun, who was then convicted by the courts. The new observation group invited me to join them, but this was ridiculous, as it was paradoxical to start again from scratch after the long interval of time that had elapsed. That's why I rejected the invitation. As far as I know, this new group produced no results and carried out no significant instrumental investigations, and its duration was completely limited.

Abnormal consequences related to the Canneto events

According to *Flavio Vanetti* (in *il Corriere della Sera's Mistero bUFO* column), the [theory](#) that all the phenomena that have taken place since the end of 2003 are attributable to a single man does not hold water.

Especially since, according to reports and eyewitness accounts, these phenomena have had mysterious consequences. Anomalies recorded in the region include the stranding of quintals of mussels, and eggplants exhibiting particular discolorations and growing abnormally large in size.

I asked *Francesco Venerando* if the animals had been affected by the phenomenon, and he replied: As far as the health complaints of the inhabitants of Canneto are concerned, several cases were reported at the time of the concentration of the phenomena. In addition, there have been several cases of deaths of domestic animals (chickens, dogs and rabbits).

Flavio Vanetti declared that observations of unidentified abnormal phenomena cannot be ruled out; they have indeed taken place, and photos are available.

An article in the *Gazzetta del Sud* newspaper of February 2, 2007, stated that a worker from Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto in Sicily, 51-year-old *Domenico Giarrotta*, observed a strange “*object*” emitting a strong red light. It was around 4:45 a.m., and *Domenico* was returning by car from Milazzo, on Barcellona's seafront. Immediately after crossing the creek, he was almost at Via Catili, when he was struck by the light coming from the bridge.

He parked the car, got out while looking carefully and noticed, about a kilometer away from the beach, a round object about 25 meters in diameter emitting a strong red light. Just then, another car arrived. The motorist also stopped and asked *Domenico Giarrotta* what it was. He was unable to answer, and neither witness was able to explain the phenomenon. The huge white ball with red reflections, which radiated a sparkling light, as reported by the witnesses, remained motionless on the water. After five minutes, it slowly disappeared to the bottom of the sea. The whole area was then plunged into darkness. *Domenico Giarrotta* and the other motorist, shocked and in disbelief, returned home.

The facts were reported to the Milazzo port authority. *Domenico Giarrotta*, told the *Gazzetta del Sud* newspaper: I was on my way back from Milazzo, it was about 4:45, when on the sea, about a kilometer from the shore, appeared a large white ball that turned bright red. It looked to me like a truck engine. It was round, deep red, and emitted a very strong light. Another motorist approached me. We looked on, intrigued and amazed. But as we talked and watched, the strange object sank and disappeared. The sea remained calm. This vision lasted four or five minutes. I'd never seen anything like it. What struck me was the red light emanating from the

ball, illuminating a vast expanse of sea. At first, it looked like an optical illusion. Then, with the other motorist, we realized it was real. I don't know, maybe it was a submarine. Although the size was strange, so was the red light radiating from it. On May 20, 2008, *Ivan Ceci* blogged about an [article](#) by *Angelo D'errico* on the *UFO Skywatchers* website. During a stay in Sicily, *Angelo* passed through Canneto and shot several videos. One of them was filmed late morning on May 2, 2008. When he downloaded the video, he noticed that two dark anomalies seemed to be moving around. These could be insects or artifacts, but there were several indications that they might belong to the spectrum of unidentified anomalous phenomena. The two anomalies seemed to stay at equal distances from each other, they passed behind a street lamp, and they were neither insects nor spots on the camera lens. Their presence is confirmed by the four shots taken from the video. To the naked eye, the witness didn't notice or hear anything like a passing plane. The video was shot in MPEG format, at 30 frames per second, using a Sony Handycam video camera.

In 2004, an anomaly was documented in the *Corriere della Sera* newspaper concerning the beaching of millions of [Velella](#) at Marina di Caronia. *Velella* is a floating marine organism known as “*San Pietro's little boat*”, because it resembles a mussel without a lid, but with a sail. Large quantities sometimes reach the coast following strong winds or sudden temperature changes. However, such weather conditions would never have been reported in the region at that time.

Antonio Rampulla told me that this natural phenomenon has been recurring for centuries, as described in the [article](#) by marine biologist *Angelo Vazzana* published in May 2020.

These events should be viewed with caution.

Angelo Vazzana, stated: In the Strait of Messina area, the stranding of both species (*Velella* and [Janthina pallida](#)) has become periodic in spring and particularly when the strong tidal currents between the Ionian Sea and the southern Tyrrhenian Sea (Novi- and Plenilunio) develop.

These events need to be qualified to avoid any comparison with “*abnormal*” events linked to the Canneto phenomena. However, to investigate such complex events, they must all be considered and studied before they can be dismissed.

On August 2, 2004, a photo of a circular object was taken by an Italian naval vessel in the waters off the island of Vulcano, north of Canneto. The two phenomena appeared to be suspended over the island, reminiscent of “*flying saucers*.” According to the article published by *Felice Cavallaro* on September 11, 2008, in *il Corriere della Sera*, the hypothesis of a montage was ruled out by the technicians within the various bodies in the inter-institutional working group after enlarging the photogram and studying every detail of the shot.

The coordinator of the inter-institutional group, *Francesco Venerando*, told me:

The acquired photos do not have sufficient resolution and do not allow us to formulate any hypotheses about the actual size and structural geometry of the objects at altitude.

This photo was featured in an [article](#) in the *Lipari* newspaper. All these strange phenomena are said to be concentrated between the Aeolian Islands and the Caronia coast.

Felice Cavallaro, in his paper of September 11, 2008, declared that a database of over 400 events existed. It would include sightings, magnetic field readings, “sea bubbles” a kilometer in diameter, stretches of “rainbow-colored” eggplants, etc.

“The inter-institutional group was set up to shed light on phenomena, not to catalog UFO sightings,” said *Francesco Venerando* in the same article. However, he confirms that they also had to consider these sightings within the scope of their research. He added that *“for each report, we obviously tried to check the radar recordings”*, but the “phenomena” would have left no trace.

The electronic database of over 400 events, including photos, is still confidential. The events are color-coded.

- Purple: illnesses and animal deaths;
- Blue: sightings of unidentified abnormal phenomena;
- Yellow: fires;
- Green: electronic and electromagnetic phenomena.

Cautiously, *Francesco Venerando* told journalist *Felice Cavallaro*:

“It's no coincidence that a technical report fresh off the press mentions numerous testimonies of daytime and nocturnal UFO sightings, sudden lightning and streaks, strong luminescence in the inlet between the Aeolian islands, in particular the Alicudi and Filicudi islands, and the Caronia coast, which began in 2004 and have repeated quite often, right up to the present day...”

He continues cautiously, confining himself to speaking of an “artificial origin of the phenomena, impulsive electromagnetic emissions” capable of generating “great power concentrated in extremely small fractions of time”.

What could be the source?

Regarding the “source” or “subject”: *“It could also be experimental applications of industrial technologies, without excluding those aimed at recent electromagnetic energy weapon systems...”*

On the “source”, he added *“Perhaps the sea. Perhaps underwater. ‘Deep mystery’.”*

To study this phenomenon and answer the question of the “*source*”, it had been decided to install a network of infrared and thermal cameras all around Canneto and several sensors on the coast and on the Aeolian Islands. According to the leaked confidential report, the source's impulse came from the sea.

“The system enabled us to collect multiple data around the phenomena,” said *Francesco Venerando*.

The group also wanted to install further sensors in the inland valleys of Caronia, Lipari and Salina, to create a network capable of identifying the “*source point*”.

According to Francesco Venerando, this interrupted a unique experiment in Italy, “in an objectively sensitive geographical area”. He also speaks of “*an activity of scientific interpretation combined with the recent studies and experiences of so-called ‘border’ research.*”

According to [Legislature](#) XVII in Appendix B to the reports of the October 31, 2014 session, a public, extraordinary and urgent council meeting was held to show solidarity with the residents of the area affected by the strange phenomenon.

On this occasion, Mayor *Beringheli* announced that he had obtained the establishment of a new task force at ministerial level, responsible for following the underground trail due to the presumed presence of a fault affecting the territory.

During the same meeting, another hypothesis emerged: a local councilor handed over two photocopies of newspapers and a sheet of paper with a map on which military exercise routes right within Caronia territory were marked.

The origin of this map was attributed to unspecified informants of the advisor in question.

They suggest that a document based on the confidential file of the previous study group may have suggested the presence of advanced military technologies. The Canneto incidents could thus be clashes between unconventional forces.

The facts recounted would be reported, among others, in the article published by the *Gazzetta del Sud* newspaper on October 30, 2014 entitled “The fault under the Via del Mare will be studied”.

An [article](#) by scientist *Dr Massimo Teodorani*, published in December 2011, mentions the Canneto phenomena. He stated that:

“This specific case showed a suspicious correlation between the manifestation of highly energetic, focused microwaves (probably of human origin) and the appearance of ‘luminous spheres’ in the area.”

He added that this reminds him of laboratory experiments where the injection of microwaves into the atmosphere can trigger “*ball lightning*” plasma phenomena.

This reference comes from an [article](#) published in *Nature* on March 14, 1991 by researchers Y. H. Ohtsuki and H. Ofuruton, “*Plasma fireballs formed by microwave interference in air.*”

The phenomena that occurred in and around Canneto di Caronia and in the Tyrrhenian Sea remain unexplained to this day. The conclusions of the inter-institutional study group before the studies’ discontinuation were structured around three points:

1. The phenomena are of unnatural origin. This conclusion was reached after numerous measurement and verification campaigns carried out in the air, on land, at sea, on the railroads, on everything that transmits and receives within a 5 km radius centered on Canneto, and on the territory of Caronia.
2. They found plausible the hypothesis that the area was involved in concentrated high-power electromagnetic pulse emissions.
3. A number of reported anomalies were recorded in a special register that *Francesco Venerando* organized, allowing regular updating (over 400 anomalies and testimonies recorded between 2004 and 2009), not only in the village of Canneto, but in a vast territorial area. These anomalies and recorded testimonies led them to focus their attention on the plausible hypothesis of an electromagnetic origin, without ruling out the possibility of experiments in the area.

Francesco Venerando told me that, as a result of his decision, a register was established for all the phenomena and anomalies identified in Canneto and the large surrounding area. He added:

The recording of cases was transmitted simultaneously to the Carabinieri company of Santo Stefano di Camastra and to the national Civil Protection in a confidential manner so as not to create alarmism among the population and possible exploitation through press articles.

The register has been kept confidential, and the only reference authority is the National Civil Protection. As the unexpected interruption in the observation of the phenomena did not allow scientifically-founded conclusions to be drawn, I consider that the confidential nature of the register has been maintained.

On the subject of “*non-terrestrial*” phenomena, *Francesco Venerando* concluded by explaining:

The hypothesis of the use of weapons of extraterrestrial origin was only one that could not be categorically excluded, in the face of numerous unprecedented anomalies, both in number and in characteristics; but it was never recognized as plausible, due to the absence of specific elements, such as the technical characteristics of the observed UFOs. Their distance and the low resolution of the photos have never made it possible to discern their structure.

The numerous anomalies observed in the Caronia region led the Institutional Group to adopt a method open to all possible hypotheses, but we had no elements to attribute the phenomena to an extraterrestrial origin, having always followed a method of scientific rigor. The Group's conviction was that the phenomena observed had an unnatural and therefore anthropogenic origin.

According to the facts recounted in this article, the hypothesis of a non-natural origin, i.e., a “human” or “non-terrestrial” agent, must be retained. The most difficult thing is to determine “*who or what is responsible for these phenomena.*”

We can, however, speculate on the “reasons”:

- Was the aim to test new directed-energy weapons?
- Was the aim to randomly study the reaction of a sparsely populated area?

It has been [noted](#) that when the police arrived in Canneto, the phenomena diminished, then resumed following their departure.

Would such a study have targeted only the inhabitants, or was the source of the phenomena not meant to be readily detectable?

From Laroya in Spain to Canneto in Italy.

These phenomena all start the same way, with inexplicable fires. However, it is difficult to compare the two cases, as the temporality is different. In the village of Laroya in 1945, there was no electricity, no electrical appliances, whereas the main fires in Canneto were attributed to appliances with electronic components or electrical cables.

Nonetheless, in both locations, furniture, beds and clothing suffered the same fire-starting effects. In both cases, the first phenomena did not occur in several buildings or locations, but were confined to only one dwelling.

Canneto is a coastal village, while Laroya is some 50 km from the Mediterranean coast. Could the Laroya phenomena have originated from the sea? The Laroya phenomena took place in 1945, and it is very difficult to put forward the hypothesis that directed-energy weapons were in use at that time.

If scientists were to determine the origin of the events at Canneto, they could eventually provide an answer to those at Laroya, by re-examining the data.

The anomalous phenomena at Laroya and Canneto manifest themselves both tangibly, through documented factual data and physical readings, and enigmatically, with inexplicable anomalies that seem to defy modern science. Some media outlets, in search of sensationalism, are ready to report out-of-the-ordinary information to create a “buzz”, without verification or sometimes by distorting the reality of what is being said. However, the witnesses are often in good faith and the information is factual. For the moment, most hypotheses remain open. Sharing all the data with the scientific community, which still has “*reserved*” or “*confidential*” access, could perhaps provide new elements and answers.

I wish to extend my warmest thanks to Mehdi of the YouTube channel Sylartichot for his video on the unexplained phenomena at Canneto di Caronia, and for his advice and encouragement.

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