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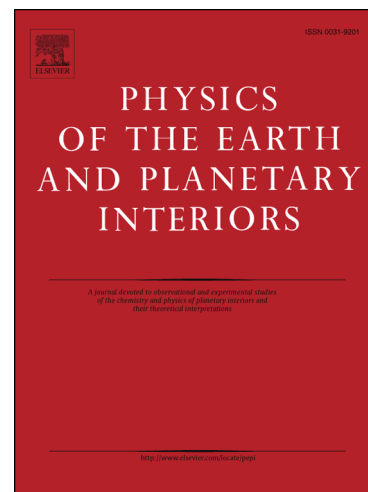
PII: S0031-9201(16)30280-1  
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pepi.2017.02.011>  
Reference: PEPI 6011

To appear in: *Physics of the Earth and Planetary Interiors*

Received Date: 17 November 2016  
Revised Date: 8 February 2017  
Accepted Date: 22 February 2017

Please cite this article as: Gentili, S., Di Giovambattista, R., Pattern recognition approach to the subsequent event of damaging earthquakes in Italy, *Physics of the Earth and Planetary Interiors* (2017), doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pepi.2017.02.011>

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# Pattern recognition approach to the subsequent event of damaging earthquakes in Italy

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## Abstract

In this study, we investigate the occurrence of large aftershocks following the most significant earthquakes that occurred in Italy after 1980. In accordance with previous studies (Vorobieva et al., 1993, Vorobieva, 1999), we group clusters associated with mainshocks into two categories: “type A” if, given a main shock of magnitude  $M$ , the subsequent strongest earthquake in the cluster has magnitude  $\geq M-1$  or type B otherwise.

In this paper, we apply a pattern recognition approach using statistical features to foresee the class of the analysed clusters. The classification of the two categories is based on some features of the time, space, and magnitude distribution of the aftershocks.

Specifically, we analyse the temporal evolution of the radiated energy at different elapsed times after the mainshock, the spatio-temporal evolution of the aftershocks occurring within a few days, and the probability of a strong earthquake.

An attempt is made to classify the studied region into smaller seismic zones with a prevalence of type A and B clusters. We demonstrate that the two types of clusters have distinct preferred geographic locations inside the Italian territory that likely reflected key properties of the deforming regions, different crustal domains and faulting style. We use decision trees as classifiers of single features to characterize the features depending on the cluster type. The performance of the classification is tested by the Leave-One-Out method. The analysis is performed on different time-spans after the mainshock to simulate the dependence of the accuracy on the information available as data increased over a longer period with increasing time after the mainshock.

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