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EVOLVING FRAMEWORK FOR AN ALTERNATIVE RESILIENCE TO RESILIENT CAPITALISM[3]

Abstract

Resilience is contemporary theoretical and practical mainstream framework approach in risk management. Emerging new forms of response to crisis and novel dynamics in addressing it challenge it and spur changes. Changes in relations are being initiated at global, regional, and local scales. Post-liberal social practices are being generated within the neoliberal practice itself, as an open-ended and potentially transformative process of resilient subjects that actively participate in those processes. In contrast with neoliberal practice, post-liberal practices rest on individual capacity for change, not on an actors' agency to adapt. If choice between transformation and adaptation is a matter of free autonomous action, it implies that the subject is not reduced to the level of mere adaptation to changes and that autonomous actor has capacity to exercise influence.

The main idea highlighted in this article is that of human agency as the central point of resilience. In the course of social learning process and participative decision-making, resilience becomes rooted in social actors fostering collective transformation in challenging times. The aim of this article is to contest the concept of resilience as a feature of mainstream theoretical discourse on resilient capitalism, by highlighting elements of an alternative perspective on neoliberal, individualistic, entrepreneurial forms of 'resilience'**.** *The authors use this idea to suggest a paradigm shift in humanities on the basis of alternative routes of development as offered by alternative resilience to resilient capitalism.*

Key words: *resilience, capitalism, neoliberalism, change, agency, individual.*

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Introduction

Resilience has grown into a widely accepted concept within various scientific disciplines (organizational sciences, security, emergency management, humanitarian campaigns planning, infrastructure, global and national economy). The notion of resilience has originated from engineering and environmental sciences, and it entered humanities only relatively recently. Resilience stands at the core of the idea of fostering the ability to cope with trauma and adapt to adverse, risky, and stressful circumstances. It is primarily understood as the ability to bounce back into shape. However, there is more to it than just coping with stress. Resilience is not only the ability to retain the original shape and size when confronted with a risk, challenge, or emergency, but also it is ability to overcome adversity, to learn from experience, and flourish.[4]

The notion of resilience has developed into a concept that has great discursive power, hence, it gained significant prominence (Jakola 2015). However, in the general *humanities* and social sciences *discourse, concerned with the* way the social world is arranged and organized, discourse of resilience makes a part of "socially constructed system of power and meaning that affects the subjectivity of individuals by shaping their sense of identity" (Connolly 1998, 14). If aiming at understanding contemporary subjectivity and answer the question of whether this specific discourse acts in accordance with neoliberalism or has the possibility to critically adapt to the dominant neoliberal paradigm, the analysis of dominance that discourse of resilience has can be useful Pavićević, Bulatović, and Ilijić 2019).

As an ideal, resilience changed the ideal of security, both as a structure of individual subjectivity and a principle of social and national policy. In a way, resilience resonates with the idea that "what doesn't kill me, will make me stronger" and promotes the idea of becoming stronger, tougher. Strength here is understood as flexibility, as opposed to rigidness, and the essential demand is to be ready for a challenge, to prevent risk or deal with a disaster, likewise (Pavićević, Bulatović 2018, 128). An ethical perspective of resilience is related to ability to overcome a threat in a way that will not inflict damage to personal resources, but rather instigate their growth. The ultimate goal of being resilient evolves about connecting systemic, organizational and political resilience with personal resilience. Outlined trait of resilience ultimately becomes a dominant feature of proliferating self-help literature. Namely, resilience is the main prescription for an individual providing for source of tools on how to deal with uncertainty and

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[4] Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as an international oganisation whose goals are set towards development and it defines resilience as "the ability to face changes in capacity, efficiency and legitimacy", looking upon resilience only from positive perspective. (Mitchell 2013)

instability that comes with contemporary capitalism. Resilience is a champion of neoliberal worldview, as it enables adaptation to capital rather than confrontation to it. A critical perspective on resilience could be briefly outlined by using Marc Neocleous paradigm of resilience: resilience is opposing to colonisation of political imagination (Neocleous 2013).

Understanding resilience requires to understand complexity given that resilience is never independent of other functions of a complex system. In the central space of resilience discourse, complexity is an unquestionable truth (Jakola 2015). Neoliberal subjectivity must survive and maximize its performance in the context set as: "an ontology of emergent complexity", and "ontology of objective unknowability" (Chandler 2014a, and 2014b). The growth of resilience becomes the final response to the demands placed on neoliberal subjectivity while shaping it at the same time. Hence, the resilient subject cannot change and transform the outside world, or he or she can only do that to a limited extent, as the latter is impervious to understanding and intervention. In order to survive and possibly thrive in the face of uncertainty, changes, and multiple shocking experience, resilient subject must abandon liberal modernist hubris 'of seeking to shape the external environment through conscious, autonomous and goal-oriented decision-making', and embrace a resilience-oriented form of agency as constant work 'on inner life through learning from exposure to the contingencies of ontological complexity' (Schmidt 2015, 404).

A resilient subject is at the same time an extremely vulnerable, and, paradoxically, at the same time, it appears that such subject is a creator of its own vulnerability (Evans 2013). The ethics of resilience formed on the basis of ethics of responsibility requires the individual to cope with external circumstances over which he or she has almost no control, by timely and efficiently anticipating, absorbing emerging risk situations, and finally adapting to them with creative recovery from possible consequences. Creative recovery means that the crisis ended with improvement and better adaptation, and also, with possible capitalization of damage, which stands as a sort of reward for exposure to stress and misfortune.

Discourse of resilience acts as a mean used to systematically lower public expectations by placing great emphasis on difficulties as only "partially solvable" and, practically, inevitable, what is sending the message that we cannot expect protection from everything and that we certainly cannot rely on the state (Amin 2013, 150). This leads to the conclusion that, in the complex order of things, the state ceases to be the center of any form of regulation, that new networks of solidarity and less rigid, and that changeable ways of doing things are created. New forms of post-state sovereignty are emerging — mobile, multiple,

and contextual. They should be harmonized with the spread of private management, non-governmental organizations, foundations, think-thanks, trade associations, mafia structures (Abeles 2014, 128). Resilience reached the status of a doctrine at different levels of management and organization, hence, distinction between resistance and resilience. The concept of resilience aims at reducing or absorbing damage caused by systemic injustices what certainly moves away the idea of resisting policies that lead to harm.

"Building resilient subjects involves deliberate disabling of political habits, tendencies and capacities of peoples and replacing them with adaptive ones. Resilient subjects are subjects that have accepted the imperative not to avoid difficulties but, rather, to adapt to depriving conditions. This renders them fully compliant to the logics of complexity with its concomitant to adaptive and emergent qualities. Resilience is transformed from being a political capacity aiming to achievement of freedom that is not endangered, to a purely reactionary impulse aiming at increasing the capacities of the subject to adapt to perils and simply reduce the degree to which it suffers" (Evans and Reid 2014, 85).

Insecurity, heterogeneity, and elusiveness of modern neoliberal practices still hold governing hegemonic position despite the extensive and sustainable criticism that is coming from various social and public spheres what points towards rationality that has become the penetrating and intangible Hydra monster of our time (Higgins and Larner, 2017). The adaptive capacities and hybrid nature of neoliberalism limit engagement in everyday practices through constant movement, uneven applications, mutations, and adaptation to local settings, with heterogeneous elements that merge into something incoherent that has limited duration and is difficult to analyze. The hybridity of resilience and its integration into the neoliberal requirements, that include adaptation through mutation, raises concerns that everything that is said or done falls under the so-called TINA argument (acronym for: there is no alternative) (ibid). New patterns of governance and new dynamics have changed the relationship between global, regional, and local, towards such discourse of resilience where it can be discussed both as a dominant-macro discourse and as a possible space of confrontation.

The needs of society should guide the public interest, and represent the purpose of an action when public power is conscientiously used with the aim of increasing the general well-being of society. Normative solutions and institutional mechanisms are indicators of readiness to recognize the needs in society, while the assessment of the functional and instrumental aspects of institutions enables consideration of their adjustment according to recognized needs in society,

given that institutions have obligations to act in accordance with society's needs (Bulatović 2019, 171).

Taking a critical perspective on normative approach to resilience in this paper means comparing and discussing different attitudes towards interpretation of that subject, different from seeing it as an ideological tool of neoliberal governance. It is aiming at retreating from the catastrophic social and natural landscape produced by the neoliberal agenda, and reveals arguments that support understanding of resilience as a post-liberal social practice ⌧ as an actor of change, not as an agent of adaptation.

1.The concept of resilience - between the neo-liberal and the post-liberal context

Created as a critique of homogenization and "pathology" of top-down management, resilience theory has transformed itself into a panacea for system adaptability, abandoning its original critical postulates (Walker and Cooper 2011). In this way, change has become something that always works in favor, not against the system (Luhmann, 1990). Resilience is positioned as a political tool, not only flawed but false solution for unstable economies, because "resilient spaces are exactly what capitalism needs - spaces that are periodically rediscovered to meet the changing demands of capital accumulation in an increasingly globalized economy" (MacKinnon and Derickson 2012, 254). In this sense, neoliberalism can be spoken of as a very resistant doctrine capable of "adapting to the dangers of criticism" (Evans and Reid 2014, 71).

However, resilience is recognized in its original idea as the capacity of an individual or entity that is able to spontaneously self-organize with a high degree of local autonomy, especially in crisis resolution circumstances. In this sense, it is necessary to analytically distinguish between resilience as a policy tool and resilience as a social capacity (Jakola 2015). The emphasis on self-organization tends to align with the modern neoliberal economic paradigm (Walker and Cooper 2011). However, living systems have the innate ability to react resiliently outside the discursive practice of holistic approaches based on expert knowledge and (neo)liberal governance. In that sense, understanding social resilience refers to knowledge, resources, abilities and efficiencies as resources that encourage and develop the capacity of social actors to act when faced with forces that greatly overcome their individual strengths (Pavićević 2016).

Some theorists alternate neoliberal resilience with post-neoliberal resilience, what belongs to the spectrum of post-neoliberal changes (Chandler 2014, b; Mavelli 2019). "The 'frustrations' of the liberal and neoliberal paradigms performed by the post-neoliberal discourse of resilience may open up the possibil-

ity for new forms of self-reflexive governance in which individuals are not mere targets of top-down or bottom-up frameworks of government, but empowered selves in a constant process of learning" (Mavelli 2019). Post-neoliberal resilience both arises and emerges from the neoliberal paradigm, establishing itself outside the state and the market. An increasing number of actors are intervening in the space of network connectivity, with the change of management instance influencing the formulation and reformulation of problems and decision-making methods. "Action in a world of uncertainty implies changes between politicians and experts, as well as the inclusion of parameters that elude the action of the state" (Abels 2014, 189). Accordingly, "states as well as international organizations, political parties, trade unions, and other traditional associative institutions cannot be transcended, but must rather be re-appropriated as sites of political contestation of existing neoliberal logics" (Mavelli 2019).

The perspective of survival and the social practice derived from it (examples of communities involved in disaster prevention, learning and resilience through the involvement of individuals), show that there is no and that it has never existed a resilient entity that would, could, as such, be characterized as stable or durable (Abeles 2014, 184). Resilient subjects are not universal, they are changeable, dynamic and context dependent. The absence of a single, universal resilient subjectivity in practice opens up opportunities for resilience and encourages political and collective participation (Hill and Larner 2017, 278). Thus, although resilience, as a political discourse or management technique, emerges as a set of programs that develop the capabilities of a resilient subject as a generalized subject ready to adapt to the unpredictable and undesirable scenario, plurality and diversity of resilience offer diversity and open up space for resistance to power. Defining everyday resilience as routine, one that is not politically or formally organized, can be important for understanding a resilient subject as a bearer of undiscovered, unrecognized resilience (Pavićević, Bulatović and Ilijić 2019, 42).

Despite the political invisibility of everyday resilience, it can be included in the resilience that emerges as the ability to resist the heterogeneous, decentralized, and pervasive distribution of managerial power that takes over the bodily and affective components of subjectivity. Every actor is a subject and an object of power because he or she is the bearer of hierarchies and stereotypes, as well as their changes. Resilience as an act, not intention or effect (absence of consciousness, recognition or intention) acts through certain discourses of power in certain contexts that determine the relationship between power and resilience (ibid). Resilient subjects are not universal, they are changeable, dynamic and context dependent. The absence of a single, resilient subjectivity in practice opens up opportunities for resilience and encourages political and collective

participation (Lilja and Vinthagen, 2009, 278). Thus, although resilience, as a political discourse or management technique, emerges as a set of programs that develop resilience of a resilient subject as a generalized subject ready to adapt to an unpredictable and undesirable scenario, the plurality and diversity of resilience offers diversity and opens space for resilience to power. Post-neoliberal resilience is generated in neoliberal practice itself: "interactive complexity of life may lead to 'potentially counterproductive' policies (Chandler 2014a, 50). "In this framework, governance is no longer conceived as a liberal 'top-down' or neoliberal 'bottom-up' set of interventions, but as an open-ended and potentially transformative process that sees the active participation of resilient subjects. Their 'adaptation' to the 'event', which cannot be known in advance, is no longer the mere acceptance of externally imposed regimes of power, but an expression of self-reflexive agency negotiated in a mutable and unpredictable environment. Resilience becomes a potentially empowering post-neoliberal subjectivity based on adaptive forms of local knowledge of immanent processes". Giving people the freedom to survive the neoliberal calidoscope does not create capacity to establish comprehensive soft power regimes, just as it does not have comprehensive discursive power. Empowering and liberating effect of resilience as "taking one's own destiny into one's own hands" is in constant conflict with the fact that freedom is alleged as that subjective actions are limited by "controlled autonomy" (Jakola, 2015). The question arises as to whether life itself provides opportunities that elude new technologies of the self that is now understood through the concepts of self-organization, morphogenesis and recombination. Additionally, resilience can be identified as innovative, creative and alternative empowerment and connection that eludes the discipline of biopower, especially given the embodiment of discipline in the sphere of feelings and emotions. In this sense, life force is invoked as a way of resilience and determines alternative production of subjectivity (Hardt and Negri, 2009).

2.Alternative forms of resislience

Resilience as an umbrella concept can be effective if it returns to its original principle of being resistant through resilience, adaptability, self-improvement, creativity, solidarity and cooperation, through respect for the balance between internal change (adaptation, self-organization, self-improvement) and external change (uncertainty, risks, shocks) (Pavićević, Ilijić, and Batrićević 2019, 41). Choice between transformations and adaptations as a matter of free autonomous action implies that the subject is not reduced to the level of mere adaptation to changes that he cannot influence and that he cannot consider, and possibly, change, survival prospects (Pavićević, Bulatović, Ilijić, 2019). Consequently,

resilience does not have to be a place of projecting, judging, and classifying life into valuable life (life worth living) and non-living life (life as a sustained phenomenon), but a concept that will empower people to act in different circumstances by raising personal standards. They are realized despite the inadequate state of the environment or the changes that are taking place (Pavićević, Ilijić and Batrićević 2019).

Pessimism rooted in the neoliberal discourse of resilience does not allow for a change in the distribution of power, discourages resistance, or reinforces conditions of vulnerability that discourage human action (Kelly and Kelly, 2017). Developed context of impotence opposes resilience to the notion of human action. However, the idea of resilience as an idea of recovery and support to working capacity has the potential to inspire hope, draw attention to the possibilities of connecting people with each other (and people around the world), as well as to establish connection with natural systems. An issue in debate around resilience is constructed over dilemma if this kind of hope is a self-satisfied short-range response that avoids more challenging questions that the focus on resilience refuses to acknowledge (Klein, 2014, according to, Kelly, Kelly 2014). If we accept the complexity and severity that circumstances stand for, hope, empowerment and renewal of positive possibilities remain necessary and irreplaceable of various forms of human action that refuse to retreat into uncritical adaptation, but represent an attempt to return feelings of individual and collective through proactive approach in difficult circumstances (Kelly, Kelly 2017).

Human activities are guided by values and sense of purpose that stand also not only as guidelines but the core elements for evaluation of these activities. Well–being is at the core of human motivation as quality of life and it is influenced by a myriad of factors spanning from natural circumstances to socially constructed norms (Bulatović and Pavićević 2018, 532-544). The transition from the individual level to the collective resilience, which aims to address failed social policies and social rights, foster participatory democracy and cooperation, and strengthen common purpose and collective wisdom.

The purpose that the state as a political community should fulfill is to provide decentralized methods through which the distribution of resources takes place. In relation to the different dimensions of this process, states can be assessed as successful or unsuccessful (Rotberg 2003: 2). The quality of institutions is an indicator of the solidity and continuity of society in its totality (North 1990). Changes within the system of state institutions are, potentially, consequence of their impaired authority, legitimacy and capacity. Social pathology represents a significant deviation from socially acceptable forms of behavior as important deviations that violate the mutual legitimate expectations of community mem-

bers, as a result of which both the community and the system of social relations as a whole are endangered. Investment in human capital and services enable community members to participate in economic and social life, and thus reach their full potential.

3.A framework for paradigm shift

Thinking about resilience in this regard requires the adoption of a more comprehensive concept of well-being, which encourages the discourse of sustainability and improvement of individual and collective forces, to the very ability to recover to initial levels of adjustment (Murray and Zautra 2012). The shift of resilience from the individual level of the resilient subject to the public sphere and relations that imply interdependence and trust, solidarity and openness, is especially important for the application of the concept of resilience in poor, vulnerable and neglected communities (Hancock, Mooney and Neal, 2012). In the domain of social change as a discipline, the concept of "critical resilience" emerged from a feminist critical perspective that views resilience through the racial, class, gender, and age positions of those not given priority in the existing structure (Anzaldúa, 1999; Collins 2000; Villenas et al. 2006; Campa 2010, cited after Kousis and Maria Paschou, 2017, 139). It is being argued that although rare, resilience studies dealing with solidarity groups, especially those gathered around immediate actions in times of crisis, inherit the experience of southern Europe. Such initiatives include urban squats as a form of resistance and resilience to capitalist relations in Barcelona and Rome (Cattaneo and Engel-Di Mauro 2015); resilient urban gardening movements in Barcelona (Camps-Calvet, Langemeyer, Calvet-Mir, Gómez-Baggethun 2015); and resilient Italian Solidarity Purchase Groups under crisis and austerity (Giudi and Andretta 2015). These initiatives view at "social resilience" as "a dynamic process which describes the ability of embedded social actors to foster collective transformation through a process of social learning and participative decision-making"; underlining the capacity to build "socially resilient systems" to confront the threats of neo-liberal policies at the grassroots level, in Southern European regions (Kousis, Maria Paschou 2017, 140; Keck and Sakdapolrak 2013; D'Alisa, Forno and Maurano 2015, 334-338).

In the spirit of these actions, the concept of alternative forms of resilience would imply a perspective in which the social sciences study and use "resilience" to a greater extent as a multitude of direct actions of citizen empowerment, collectivity, solidarity and resistance in difficult economic times; such concept should include not only the experience of previous social and solidarity economy initiatives, but also a multitude of alternative images of citizens facing the

challenges of a new millennium in which the rule of law collapses and increases and complicates multiple inequalities within and outside the nation state; this concept simultaneously encompasses a whole range of conceptual and theoretical perspectives and civic practices.

Conclusion

Alternative forms of resilience contain various repertoire of actions and goals of direct solidarity of citizens, with economic and socio-political transformative capacities that are alternative to the main, dominant capitalist economy and that aim towards achieving autonomous communities. Contemporary academic discourse is clearly visibly framed in two attitudes towards resilience, if speaking about this phenomenon in the most general terms. One attitude sees resilience as a radically new approach that opens up new ways of thinking, and while not entirely positive about what development might represent, this view stems from "defiant positivism" that sees resilience as opportunity and possibility (Joseph 2016). In contrast with this, the alternative perspective to resilience emphasizes the combination of neoliberal economics, neoliberal governance, and resilience that produces and demands neoliberal subjects — those who are capable of survival. For the former, resilience becomes an operationalization of the idea that "darkness is an unnecessary emotion" (Russell, 2009, 45 according to Alloun, Alexander, 2014). However, for the latter, it is an unjust calculation of different interests, and sometimes an intervention leading to even greater vulnerability and socioeconomic impoverishment. (Ziervogel et al., 2017). Some authors, acknowledging the limitations of resilience though, believe that this is the best we can do at present times (Alexander 2012). Resilience emerges as a reality because people must be resilient out of necessity looking for answers in the daily confrontation of threats and constant challenges.

In this sense, one can single out social movements that have tried to move resilience out of the biopolitical framework of neoliberal governance and view it as a capacity arising from local and specific micro-practices and processes. This stance is rooted in belief that sustainable resilience provides an opportunity to critically engage and radically redefine facilities, processes, and pathways, including reviewing inclusive management processes and focusing on potentially vulnerable sites and populations (Biermann et al., 2015 according to Ziervogel et al., 2017). Resilience as a bottom-up management principle should include resistance, transformation, critical-deliberate adaptation, inclusion and autonomy. Sources of resilience of people in the face of disturbing change include both the ability to adapt and the ability to transform, what is crucial for the long-term well-being of people and their communities. Resilience is not an evolutionary

biological capacity that excludes a critical awareness of whether people want to be actors of adaptation or transformation, the character, direction and goal of these processes. Consequently, by linking capacity of strength, capacity to support and human capacity for critical and reflexive engagement, that encourages empowerment as opposed to empowerment resilience (Pavićević, Ilijić and Batrićević 2019).

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