

## References

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## Resilience

Resilience is one of those ubiquitous concepts that permeate the spectrum of social sciences, global governance, and public policy. The conceptual trajectory of resilience is transdisciplinary, and so are its applications. In the field of humanitarianism, resilience has been discussed as a managerial technique, a paradigm for the study of governmentality, a theory describing interdependencies between humans and ecosystems, or an individual's or group's capacity to overcome shocks. For each of these dimensions, resilience has adopted complementary tropes that stress the anticipatory nature, adaptability, and robustness of a given system.

Resilience comes from the Latin word *resilio*, meaning to jump back or rebound. Some scholars trace the origins of the concept to the physical sciences, where it characterizes the quality of materials to return to their former shape after an exterior stressor. Thus, in engineering, resilience is a design objective for buildings and infrastructure. Other scholars consider that resilience developed out of environmental economics and ecology (Holling 1973) to describe the flexibility and adaptability of ecosystems. Resilience also entered the field of psychology in the 1970s, when it was used to explain an individual's capacity to overcome trauma. The more recent iteration of socio-ecological resilience

(Folke 2006) emphasizes the interplay between social and ecological systems, especially their adaptive capacity to overcome hazards and other shocks, rather than the idea of returning to a previous equilibrium. These views consider resilience as a positive property of a system, whether it be a forest, a community, or a city. However, debates have taken place about whether this capacity means a return to the status quo ante after an efficient recovery, such as after a disaster, or a deeper process of reconfiguration wherein a system uses adversity to proactively adjust and renew itself. In fact, recent proposals underscore transformability as a cornerstone of resilience thinking, and resilience has become a bridging concept in the fields of disaster risk reduction, climate change, sustainable development, and humanitarian assistance.

Analyzing the mainstreaming of resilience in these arenas, critics have underscored how resilience research tended to sideline concerns of political economy, political ecology, culture, affect, and memory, ultimately further marginalizing vulnerable populations. Others have argued instead that resilience provides a solution to questions of vulnerability via increased agency, while others contend for the co-constitutive mutuality of resilience and vulnerability. The operationalization of resilience has also led to divergent views between quantitative and qualitative approaches, on whether it is an objective or subjective state, or process, and whether it is context dependent or not. The link between risk and resilience is also significant: when the latter exacerbates the former, many undesirable properties can be quite persistent (e.g. poverty), and the ability to address their root causes and break them down is as important as the ability to bounce back after a disturbance, as the common view of resilience suggests. Moreover, resilience can have pernicious outcomes, as when disaster victims are deemed resilient—thereby justifying insufficient aid.

A different line of inquiry stems from the vantage point of security and humanitarian studies. Scholars inspired by the work of Michel Foucault have analyzed resilience as a neoliberal form of governmentality that internalizes emergency and normalizes danger by producing a “risk-accepting” biopolitics, supplanting the “safety first” approaches of the past (Duffield 2012; Hall and Lamont 2013). Here, resilience is akin to a regime of thought, a plastic word, when not an ontological category, that instructs to accept, and live with, unknowable global risks, shifting the responsibility onto individuals.

Within the international humanitarian regime, the vocabulary of resilience has been used for some time as a means to promote the mental health of aid workers, foster aid effectiveness, and further beneficiary self-reliance, notably through a re-envisioning of the space and temporality of refugee camps. The notion of “resiliency humanitarianism” captures this rationale of care and

camp management, which aims to responsabilize refugees in their efforts to adapt to, and survive, crisis (Ilcan and Rygiel 2015).

There is no doubt that challenges abound when the vocabulary of resilience is adopted by such different epistemic communities, but nonetheless, it signals a desire to make sense of complexity that yields generative tensions and debates.

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## Responsibility to Protect

Responsibility to Protect is a policy doctrine that was endorsed by the United Nations (UN) Summit Meeting in 2005. It affirms the primary obligation of states to protect its population against harm and, failing that, a secondary responsibility by the international community to take collective action, and, in accordance with the UN Charter, to “help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity” (UN 2005, para. 139). While frequently cited in UN Security Council resolutions, the doctrine has only been invoked once to justify military intervention—in Libya in March 2011. In the academic literature, it is controversial.