**The Rise of Resilience after the Financial Crises:**

**A case of neo-liberalism rebooted?**

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**Abstract**

This article critically examines recent works on resilience. In so doing, it argues that rather than representing some radical rupture with current practices heralding the dawn of a new era, as David Chandler claims, the emphasis on individuals as resilient subjects simply represents a new phase in the neoliberal shift from the state as provider to state as enabler and promoter of self-reliance. Indeed, our present preoccupation with complexity, uncertainty, and resilience can best be understood as reflecting the consequences of neoliberal policies Moreover, the article further argues that there is an attendant danger that resilience thinking may further promote neoliberal forms of governmentality and encourage a degree of political passivity. The emphasis on resilience is in danger of depoliticising highly political choices, shifting attention toward ex-post policies of survival and recovery rather than challenging the current economic order and resisting the further imposition of neoliberal policies on already beleaguered populations. This article therefore argues for shifting our emphasis towards a Foucauldian analysis of power and resistance.

**Introduction[[1]](#endnote-1)**

Resilience has become the watchword for the start of the new century. Although resilience discourse was very much apparent before the financial crisis, much of the emphasis was on large systems and ecology.[[2]](#endnote-2) However, since the crisis it has since been transposed across to political, economic and other fields. Such is its popularity in academia that in just a decade (2003-2013) there has been ‘an almost fivefold increase from approximately 500 to over 3,000 publications’.[[3]](#endnote-3) This trend has not been limited to academic circles with the likes of Jean-Claude Juncker telling Greece that, ‘Throughout all these years I have been feeling your pain. I know well how much many Greeks have been suffering. But I also know well the resilience of the Greek people in the face of adversity’.[[4]](#endnote-4) Around the same time, George Osborne, the UK Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced a ‘Budget for building a resilient economy’.[[5]](#endnote-5)

Several of these writings have highlighted the importance of the individual as resilient subject, strengthening the individual characteristics that will enable ‘each and all to live freely and with confidence in a world of potential risks’.[[6]](#endnote-6) For some, this entails nothing less than the ‘constitution of new subjectivities’ inculcating individuals with ‘the positive attitude that regards high uncertainty as opportunity and challenge’.[[7]](#endnote-7) For others, it is more of a question of tapping into the ‘existing embedded and relational capacities of ordinary people’, using ‘our natural abilities to cooperate with each other, to innovate and to construct communities of shared interest’.[[8]](#endnote-8) We argue that two strands of thought are apparent in these recent writings on resilience: the first views resilience as an extension of neo-liberal *governmentality*; the second approach associates resilience with the emergence of a post-modern episteme.[[9]](#endnote-9)

This paper is divided into four parts. The first section takes issue with the post-modernist version of resilience thinking which is elaborated (although not necessarily endorsed) by David Chandler.[[10]](#endnote-10) According to Chandler, resilience thinking, ‘can be understood as the first post-liberal or post-modern episteme’.[[11]](#endnote-11) Moreover, resilience discourse is said to provide a solution to the radical uncertainty and unknowability of our social and natural worlds – one that relies on local communities and local knowledges. Indeed, it asserts that ‘all knowledge can only be local, contextual and time and place specific’.[[12]](#endnote-12) Chandler argues that current resilience thinking, interprets the contemporary period as marking a shift towards a post risk society where we fully acknowledge our own self-entanglement within the world and government is through society rather than over society. However, two major issues arise concerning resilience thinking. First, there is no in-depth analysis of power arising from the stratification of society. Indeed, and as Chandler points out, post-modern resilience discourse argues that rather than ‘understanding capitalism as a social system that can be opposed or struggled against, resilience ethics suggest that we see ourselves as in part responsible for the market and its outcomes’.[[13]](#endnote-13) This levelling of responsibility paradoxically supports the neo-liberal project of responsibilisation rather than challenges it, since it systematically fails to accord blame for capitalism’s negative consequences. Second, post-modern resilience discourse provides no method by which to differentiate between local knowledges (is all local knowledge to be supported regardless of its political content simply because it is local?) nor how to identify whether such knowledge is really local or influenced by/constituted within a wider dominant discourse.

The second section of the paper argues that, rather than representing some radical rupture with current practices heralding the dawn of a new era, the manner in which resilience has been practically interpreted has effectively led to its incorporation into a larger neo-liberal framework. Following Joseph, we argue that the ‘recent enthusiasm for the concept of resilience across a range of policy literature is the consequence of its fit with neoliberal discourse’, rather than signalling a radical divergence from it.[[14]](#endnote-14) By emphasising our supposed inability to intervene effectively in a complex, economic system, resilience thinking represents an ideological behavioural prescription promoting political passivity. As such, it helps mask the failure of political elites to put forward radical policy prescriptions in the face of neoliberal crises.

We follow Chandler in developing a Foucauldian analysis of resilience thinking, but one that goes beyond a description of resilience thinking as a ‘regime of truth’ and one that views it as supplementing rather than supplanting neoliberal governmentalities.[[15]](#endnote-15) One that emphasises the importance of comparing knowledges through the archaeological and genealogical methods enabling us to go beyond the ‘theoretical and political singularity’ of post-modernism.[[16]](#endnote-16) We can do so, Foucault avers, because critical investigation exhibits a certain structure via its homogeneity, generality and systematicity, arising from the questions motivating such critical investigations.[[17]](#endnote-17) Using such methods, we argue that resilience thinking represents an expansion of neo-liberal governmentality, rather than the emergence of a new episteme. In addition, although often overlooked in the literature, Foucault recognised the importance of understanding social structures, but, clearly, he did not view these in a deterministic manner.[[18]](#endnote-18) By understanding the power relations associated with these social differentiations, we can better grasp how some discourses become dominant whilst others are subjugated.

The third section of the paper examines Foucault’s emphasis on the intertwining of both power and resistance, reminding us of the importance of resisting such dominance. One particular concern is that resilience thinking can promote the de-politicization of highly political choices and shift attention toward *ex-post* policies of survival and recovery rather than challenging the current economic order and resisting the further imposition of neo-liberal policies on already beleaguered populations.[[19]](#endnote-19) There is therefore an attendant danger that resilience thinking may further promote neoliberal forms of governmentality and, in addition, encourage political passivity.[[20]](#endnote-20) We therefore argue for shifting emphasis away from resilience and towards resistance. Indeed, the concept of resistant subjects is notable by its absence in the literature that has emerged since the financial crisis.

In the final section of the paper we situate the emergence of resilience discourse in the context of neoliberalism-in-crisis. This crisis has multiple dimensions,[[21]](#endnote-21) but since 2007/08 two are key: first, there is, for capital, a ‘realisation problem’, that is, a problem of generating profitable investment opportunities; and, second, a governance crisis over the legitimacy of neoliberalism per se. As a result, and as William Davies argues, neoliberal political-economic arrangements are increasingly defended ‘with no appeal to common humanity, but purely via contingent acts of preservation of the status quo’.[[22]](#endnote-22) We argue that resilience, from a Foucauldian perspective, serves to assimilate opposition to this state of affairs. Indeed, the emphasis on individuals as resilient subjects represents a new phase in the neoliberal shift from the state as provider to state as enabler and promoter of self-reliance. Resilience has emerged in tandem with a further reduction in state welfare commitments, a further rolling back of employment rights and an intensification of privatisation of national assets. The paper therefore concludes by arguing for the replacement of the dominant discourse of resilience with the subaltern discourse of resistance.

**Resilience: A new mantle for Neo-Liberalism**

Several authors writing on risk have distinguished between policies centred on precaution, preparedness, pre-emption and resilience.[[23]](#endnote-23) These policies, it is argued, have emerged as a result of the sheer enormity of catastrophic events associated with late modernity, combined with a heightened sense of uncertainty in which direct causal relationships are harder to identify and may only become apparent after the event. This leads to situations where we must postulate relationships of ‘possibility, eventuality, plausibility or probability without being able to provide the proof of its validity’.[[24]](#endnote-24)

Such writings bring to our attention the greater emphasis on precaution and the need to ‘intervene in emergence precisely because of uncertainty linked to massive consequences’.[[25]](#endnote-25) Preparedness, on the other hand, shifts the emphasis from abstaining to reacting – to forward planning in order to respond appropriately to the consequences of catastrophes. It involves the ‘creation of routines and resources for coping with emergencies that are imaginable rather than precisely calculable’.[[26]](#endnote-26) Whereas pre-emption operates in a highly uncertain environment in which emergent threats are identified and counteracted before they have become actual and realizable, preparedness focuses on the rapid deployment of resources after a catastrophic event.[[27]](#endnote-27) It is therefore ‘passive’ and ‘defensive’; it does not seek to ‘prevent these events from happening, but rather to manage their consequences’.[[28]](#endnote-28)

As Lentzos and Rose point out, resilience, in contradistinction to these policies, emphasises the quality of adaptability that enables rapid recovery after catastrophes. They identify two aspects that have been historically associated with the term: ‘the mental state of being able to withstand stress or adverse circumstances or to recover quickly from their effects’; and, ‘the capacity of systems, structures or organizations to resist being affected by shock or disaster, and to recover quickly from such events’.[[29]](#endnote-29) Resilience is thus said to involve, a ‘systematic, widespread, organizational, structural and personal strengthening of subjective and material arrangements so as to be better able to anticipate and tolerate disturbances in complex worlds without collapse, to withstand shocks, and to rebuild as necessary...a logic of resiliency would aspire to create a subjective and systematic state to enable each and all to live freely and with confidence in a world of potential risks’.[[30]](#endnote-30)

Risk analysis is premised on the calculability of events in probabilistic terms. Such calculations enable us to respond to the vicissitudes of life either through insurance - recompensing those affected through collective compensation schemes - or altering our behaviour to decrease the likelihood of such events. The promotion of resilience, on the other hand, has arisen in reaction to our uncertainty with regard to unexpected, often one-off catastrophic events, which do not necessarily exhibit probabilistic patterns. Given this uncertainty, the emphasis shifts to how well systems/communities/individuals respond to crises and the *post facto* environments that emerge. In an age of complexity and uncertainty, the ability to adapt and rebound to unexpected events is said to be of paramount importance – because ‘we can survive better through knowing how to adapt’.[[31]](#endnote-31)

David Chandler has presented one of the best accounts to date of those that view resilience as representing the emergence of a post-modern episteme, arguing that our growing appreciation of complexity is also leading to a post-modern framework of governance. In making the claim that resilience thinking is post-modern, resilience discourse, as Chandler argues, marks a sharp distinction with previous modes of thought that, whilst viewing the world as complex, still assume that ‘it is possible to intervene instrumentally to shape the outcome of these processes and to realign them to liberal rationalist understandings of progress and development’.[[32]](#endnote-32) For Chandler, resilience thinking accepts that ‘[c]alculation or control and direction become impossible in’ a world defined by complexity. The problematic of a complex emergent order, he argues, ‘is not that of knowing more, “filling in the gaps” of knowledge, but an ontological problem, i.e. the problem exists at the level of what is to be known (it is not linear and law-bound) rather than at the level of how we might know the underlying reality’.[[33]](#endnote-33)

Resilience thinking thus represents ‘a radically distinctive approach to governing complexity (bringing complexity into governmental reason) through reposing complexity as an ontological rather than an epistemological problem’.[[34]](#endnote-34) Complexity renders the world unknowable in terms of discernible patterns and predictability, for it is the ‘”unknown unknowns” that have the central role in emergent causation meaning that contingent outcomes only reveal concrete causality after the event and are impossible to know beforehand’.[[35]](#endnote-35)

However, complex emergent life is still governable but on a very different basis to liberal and neoliberal ‘life’.[[36]](#endnote-36) Governance based on resilience thinking must reject the subject/object divide of liberal thinking, and of ‘modernist’ thinking in general, and instead take full account of our ‘being in the world’ – that we are inseparably entangled in the complex world that we have previously treated as the object of our analysis. One consequence of this purported reality is that ‘governments cannot be expected to know what policies do or do not work and certainly cannot impose these policies on the world’.[[37]](#endnote-37) How, then, to govern in a post-modern world? The key, according to post-modern resilience theory, is self-reflexivity and an appreciation of our entanglement in the world around us.[[38]](#endnote-38) When engaged in policy-making we must always be cognisant of ‘the nature of the world as complex and the consequences for governance as a process of self-reflexive policy responses’.[[39]](#endnote-39) The latter involves ‘the consideration of the multiple consequences of our actions which guide and enable the process of revising our judgements in line with our self-reflection’.[[40]](#endnote-40)

Chandler interprets resilience thinking as implying that, such governance, should be based on, (drawing on Marc Stears),[[41]](#endnote-41) ‘everyday democracy’, which ‘is not about governing from the top-down or the bottom-up but about social resilience, understood as the existing embedded and relational capacities of ordinary people. It is these capacities that are perceived to be bypassed or muted by instrumentalised neoliberal interventions in the social sphere’.[[42]](#endnote-42) This ‘everyday democracy’ by ‘focusing on recognising the role of the existing practices and understandings of the public themselves, can constitute a productive way forward’ beyond modernist/liberal forms of governance.[[43]](#endnote-43)

Moreover, as Chandler points out, resilience discourse does not treat ‘resilience-framings, parochial or local knowledges’ as a limit to governance but as a ‘policy goal, once it is understood that all knowledge can only be local, contextual and time and place specific’.[[44]](#endnote-44) In many ways, then, we can understand post-modern resilience discourse as part of a shift towards a post-risk society where we fully acknowledge our own self-entanglement within the world and where government is *through* society rather than *over* society, premised on recognising ‘the capacities and capabilities that already exist’ in individuals, communities and systems alike.[[45]](#endnote-45) Post-liberal resilience discourse thus encourages us to draw upon the inherent resilient characteristics of communities, or, to put it differently, to rely on our ‘natural abilities to cooperate with each other, to innovate and to construct communities of interest’ in the midst of generalised complexity.[[46]](#endnote-46)

**Governmentality and the Rise of the Resilient Subject**

Foucauldian analysis, like Chandler’s post-modern understanding of resilience, also emphasises the importance of local knowledges, by focusing on the way in which such knowledges are subjugated by dominant discourses and, specifically for this paper, governmental enframings. Moreover, in contrast to post-modern resilience thinking, Foucault established a method to uncover such dominance. Through the archaeological method and genealogical design, he sought to uncover the various power mechanisms that worked to support the emergence of dominant discourses. The archaeological method seeks to discover the rules governing the enframement of knowledge in different periods. As such, it examines those governing statements ‘that concern the definition of observable structures and the field of possible objects, those that prescribe the forms of description and the perceptual codes that it can use, those that reveal the most general possibilities of characterization, and thus open up a whole domain of concepts to be constructed’.[[47]](#endnote-47) Genealogy complements this by tracing ‘the struggles, displacements and processes of repurposing out of which contemporary practices emerged, and to show the historical conditions of existence upon which present-day practices depend’.[[48]](#endnote-48) By letting ‘knowledge of the past work on the experience of the present’, we can then establish ‘a historical knowledge of struggles and…make use of this knowledge tactically today’.[[49]](#endnote-49) By tracing the subjugation of alternative knowledges, genealogical analysis thus provides us with a ‘history of the present’ because ‘its intent is to problematize the present by revealing the power relations upon which it depends and the contingent processes that have brought it into being’.[[50]](#endnote-50)

The combination of the two methods not only reveals the subjugation of other knowledges, but it also exposes our conditioning and limitations as a result of past and present systems of knowledge and alerts us to the potential power relations associated with these knowledges. This critical attitude applies to both dominant and local knowledges and entails a historical investigation into ‘the events that have led us to constitute ourselves and to recognize ourselves as subjects of what we are doing, thinking, saying’.[[51]](#endnote-51) In order to transgress the limits of the current and past epistemes, we need to interrogate ‘what is given to us as universal, necessary, obligatory’ to understand what in fact is ‘singular, contingent, and the product of arbitrary constraints’.[[52]](#endnote-52) This will enable us to determine what is ‘no longer indispensable for the constitution of ourselves as autonomous subjects’.[[53]](#endnote-53)

In addition, Foucault warns against concluding that the impossibility of attaining complete and definitive knowledge means ‘that no work can be done except in disorder and contingency’.[[54]](#endnote-54) Rather, critical investigation exhibits a certain structure via its homogeneity, generality and systematicity,[[55]](#endnote-55) arising from the questions motivating such critical investigations. The latter emerges along the three axes of power, knowledge and ethics - ‘How are we constituted as subjects of our own knowledge? How are we constituted as subjects who exercise or submit to power relations? How are we constituted as moral subjects of our own actions?’.[[56]](#endnote-56) Homogeneity refers to the way in which the discursive and non-discursive elements of practices are ‘articulated by forms of rationality … that cohere in particular social orders and historical epochs’.[[57]](#endnote-57) Generality, in this context, does not refer to some ‘metahistorical continuity’, but to the fact that the ‘problematics of these practices continue to recur in our own time’ (for example, ‘the problem of the relationship between sanity and insanity, or sickness and health, or crime and the law’).[[58]](#endnote-58)

Using a Foucauldian perspective, we question the argument that the uncertainty surrounding cataclysmic events leads to a process of self-confrontation through which the foundations of modernity are questioned and a post-modern episteme emerges. When confronted by cataclysmic events, this paper argues that policy has followed a far more pragmatic path such that reflexivity takes the form of ‘governmentalization of government’ or ‘reflexive government’ whereby ‘the mechanisms of government themselves are subject to problematization, scrutiny and reformation’.[[59]](#endnote-59) As Foucault’s earlier work suggests, epistemic ruptures do occur and new systems of knowledge may emerge, but the evidence thus far suggests that resilience thinking does not represent the emergence of such a new (post-modern) episteme.[[60]](#endnote-60)

Instead, resilience thinking exhibits a certain homogeneity with neo-liberalism in that it is constituted from the familiar forms of rationality that articulate the discursive and non-discursive practices of neo-liberalism. Moreover, it is clear that the crisis did not unsettle pre-crisis social differentiations, rather the lack of serious reform points towards the sedimentation of these differentiations in institutional forms and that the enframing of resilience thinking did not emerge in a power vacuum. In terms of systematicity, resilience subjectivities represent both a continuation and extension to those of neoliberalism – the subject *qua* responsible self and a corresponding silence surrounding those who have the greatest influence on society and how they benefit most from the social differentiations that are maintained within it. Moreover, in terms of generality, we can see that there is a continuation of focus on familiar binary tropes: strivers versus skivers; profligacy versus thrift; responsibility versus irresponsibility. Resilience thinking is thus ‘an interpretation of social behaviour determined by, and supportive of, neoliberalism’.[[61]](#endnote-61)

Uncertainty has as its referent object infrequently occurring and often unique events that can ‘only be “likened” to other cases’.[[62]](#endnote-62) As such, one can only ‘formulate, between a cause and its effect, a relationship of possibility, eventuality, plausibility or probability without being able to provide the proof of its validity’.[[63]](#endnote-63) There is thus an ‘absence of certainties, having taken into account the scientific and technical knowledge of the time’.[[64]](#endnote-64) However, this does not mean that uncertainty should be elided with incalculability.[[65]](#endnote-65) Rather, new forms of governmentality emerge using new technologies of control, ‘taming the infinities of risk and integrating it within a *dispositif* of governance’.[[66]](#endnote-66) Enframing new challenges within a given form of governmentality using our new or existing knowledges and technologies of control inevitably involves impacting upon our physical and social worlds so that the subject can never be treated as separated from its object. Of course, this knowledge is limited and fallible, but its effects are reflexively monitored and changed prompting new frameworks of knowledge and new governmental rationalities.

Indeed, resilience thinking ‘is not simply a call to ignite some base-level human instinct for survival. It is an ideological project that is informed by political and economic rationalities which offer very particular accounts of life as an ontological problem, i.e. a problem which emanates from the potentiality of life as ontologically conceived, along with the types of epistemic communities which now scientifically verify the need to become resilient as a *fait accompli*. Resilience, in other words, is a key strategy in the creation of contemporary regimes of power which hallmark vast inequalities in all human classifications’.[[67]](#endnote-67) For the subject to increase its resilience, argue Brad Evans and Julian Reid, it

must disavow any belief in the possibility to secure itself and accept, instead, an understanding of life as a permanent process of continual adaptation to threats and dangers which are said to be outside its control. As such, the resilient subject is a subject which must permanently struggle to accommodate itself to the world, and not a subject, which can conceive of changing the world, its structure and conditions of possibility. However, it is a subject which accepts the dangerousness of the world it lives in as a condition for partaking of that world and which accepts the necessity of the injunction to change itself in correspondence with threats now presupposed as endemic.[[68]](#endnote-68)

As Joseph points out, neo-liberal governmentality ‘works by telling us to be enterprising, active and responsible citizens…Resilience contributes to this through its stress on heightened self-awareness, reflexivity and responsibility’.[[69]](#endnote-69) However, this emphasis on self-organization and responsibilisation also usually promotes non-intervention by the state.[[70]](#endnote-70) With resilience thinking, responsibilisation still operates by shifting the onus away from the state providing a social safety net and intervening in the economy towards individual and community self-help, but the emphasis is on *post-facto* adaptation – there is therefore a shift towards promoting adaptive capacities in order that subjects can meet their responsibilities after crises. Whether individuals/communities simply survive or thrive will depend upon their degree of self-reliance, flexibility and adaptability.

**The Importance of Resistance**

In the previous section, we argued that resilience thinking should be seen as part of a wider practice of neo-liberal enframing, one that typically involves a process of responsibilisation through ‘enhancement’ (building the capacities to self-govern). In the particular case of catastrophes, the emphasis is on the *post hoc* adaptability of individuals/communities and the various capacities they possess to enable them to bounce back from such shocks.[[71]](#endnote-71)

Several issues arise with regard to the economy from such enframing. First, there is an implicit levelling of responsibility, where individuals and communities are expected to mine their own resources and capacities in order to survive shocks understood as ‘inevitable’. It also transforms our understandings of resistance, promoting a high degree of political passivity by emphasising adaptability over opposition and transformation. Under the umbrella of resilience discourse, argue Evans and Reid,

Resistance … is transformed from being a political capacity aimed at the achievement of freedom from that which threatens and endangers to a purely reactionary impulse aimed at increasing the capacities of the subject to adapt to its dangers and simply reduce the degree to which it suffers. This conflation of resistance with resilience is not incidental but indicative of the nihilism of the underlying ontology of vulnerability at work in contemporary policies concerned with climate change and other supposedly catastrophic processes.[[72]](#endnote-72)

In addition, resilience thinking has little to say with regard to social structures/agency concerning positions of power and the benefits that accrue from such positions as well as responsibility for the policies that greatly exacerbate the contradictions inherent within the capitalist system. In practice, this is clearly seen in the current austerity policies implemented across Europe. Those least responsible for the crisis have felt the greatest economic deprivation, with downturns in GDP, trade and investment precipitating a profits first ethos amongst governing elites that has visited upon vulnerable populations the social costs of the crisis.[[73]](#endnote-73) These costs are not the product of ontological complexity but are instead the consequence of ‘all those harmful consequences and damages which third persons or the community sustain as a result of the productive process, and for which private entrepreneurs are not easily held accountable’.[[74]](#endnote-74) Resilience discourse, as we see it, serves to hide these connections under the umbrella of ontological vulnerability.

Although in resilience thinking, people are viewed as ‘always and already … relationally entangled’ with one another, this entanglement is purely on a contingent basis.[[75]](#endnote-75) It emphasises the emergent nature of the social world but in so doing it presents society as pluralist yet unstructured in nature where, with regard to agents, ‘there are no internal relations, only relations of exteriority’.[[76]](#endnote-76) It is argued that it is ‘relations, associations and assemblages of the unknown and the unseen that are held to have real agency, rather than knowledgeable human subjects’.[[77]](#endnote-77) The post-modern resilience ontology means that agents are placed in a position of exteriority to one another and are contingently rather than internally and necessarily interconnected.[[78]](#endnote-78) As Chandler points out, many of those that find inspiration in Foucault, should remind themselves that his oft quoted sentence ‘[w]here there is power, there is resistance’ actually continues with ‘this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power’.[[79]](#endnote-79) Such an approach has far-reaching implications. For example, and as Chandler notes, capitalism under this description becomes a

complex system of associative relations which we are all to different extents responsible for because we are all unequally embedded in the global market system which forms a network of interconnectivity stretching from our smallest private choices to the largest global political problems. Instead of understanding capitalism as a social system that can be opposed or struggled against, resilience ethics suggest that we see ourselves as in part responsible for the market and its outcomes’.[[80]](#endnote-80)

Rather than emphasising that the social world is both infused with different agents that are internally related (and, as a result, embedded in a network of power relations) *as well as* agents that are in a position of exteriority to one another, post-modern resilience theory contends we live in a world of becoming that ‘is an ontologically flat world without the traditional hierarchies of existence and a more shared conception of agency’.[[81]](#endnote-81) In such an approach, Chandler notes, ‘[w]hile there may not be agential hierarchies, there is no assumption of equality either, merely interactions and associations of humans and non-humans within the complex assemblages of the world of becoming’.[[82]](#endnote-82) As a result, we can ‘no longer operate on the basis of revealing ‘unifying principles’ such as the inner-workings of power or the supposed structures of domination’.[[83]](#endnote-83) Analysis should no longer concern itself with ‘unearthing ‘essences’ or structures but about tracing surface connections…Empiricism is the new method of critique because the reality of the world is seen to have been obscured by social science’.[[84]](#endnote-84) Moreover, through the lens of post-modern resilience the ‘world which cannot be comprehended meaningfully by us; the world of complex life and emergent causality’ (where such emergence is seen to arise from interaction only, with structural configurations being unreal abstractions) ‘offers the promise of post-human “freedom”, constitutes the end of our world, precisely because it is not amenable to our appropriation as a meaningful structure within which we can consciously engage’.[[85]](#endnote-85)

By failing to acknowledge, let alone examine, the internal relations of social structures, post-modern resilience theorising occludes any analysis that provides insights into the way in which power operates – through forms of domination, exploitation and subjection,[[86]](#endnote-86) For example, by treating social relations as external and contingent it forgoes an analysis of capitalist relations of production and the complex networks of production, consumption and exploitation associated with them. It also occludes, through ontological fiat, our understanding of neo-liberalism’s rise as a result of the contradictions and crises associated with such relations, and nor does it explain our present preoccupation with uncertainty and resilience. Yet uncertainty in the present epoch can only be understood in the general context of ‘neoliberal insurgency’ that has successfully ‘critiqued and dismantled earlier modernist technologies of protection and social insurance’. [[87]](#endnote-87) As a result, resilience thinking fails to see ‘in vulnerability a critique of capitalist exploitation and dispossession’, instead its ‘parasitic upon their existence’.[[88]](#endnote-88)

Second, and with regard to the wider literature, resilience thinking tends to be reactive in nature. Rather than reform oriented, the emphasis is upon survival and the capacities required to endure. In short, resilience discourse supplements neoliberalism by emphasising survivability in times of crises,[[89]](#endnote-89) with the injunction being for people to learn how to cope ‘with situations of extremely high uncertainty’[[90]](#endnote-90) by ‘shap[ing] the conduct, aspirations, needs, desires, and capacities of’ the most vulnerable,[[91]](#endnote-91) but in ways which do not threaten the status quo. This uncertainty, as David Harvey argues, may be unintended but is nonetheless traceable to the explosive increase in financial and economic complexity, which ‘facilitate the reproduction of capital under conditions of perpetual risk if not outright crises’.[[92]](#endnote-92) For their part, vulnerable populations are encouraged to ‘embrace[s] … the restructuring of daily life’ in accordance with what is a reflexively reorganised capitalist class project[[93]](#endnote-93) and ‘to get on with the business of adapting’ to it.[[94]](#endnote-94)

This section therefore argues that a more fruitful avenue is to examine the emergence of resilience thinking through a Foucauldian lens that emphasises the exclusionary procedures of discourses; the selectivity of institutions; and the constant interplay of power and resistance. The advantage of using a Foucauldian perspective is that it emphasises the ways in which power relations are often linked to social differentiations and how dominant discourses hold sway over societies, as well as facilitating an examination of the ways in which these relations and dominant discourses are sedimented through institutionalization.[[95]](#endnote-95) Foucault’s 1970 inaugural lecture at the *College de France,* where he lectured until his death, is a typical example of this. In *L’Ordre du Discours*, Foucault sets out various procedures of exclusion that help maintain established discourses. Such discourses exhibit a high degree of stability through prohibition – ‘the taboo on the object of speech…the ritual of the circumstances of speech, and the privileged or exclusive right of the speaking subject’.[[96]](#endnote-96) They are also maintained through divisive practices, establishing exclusion through discourses founded on binary opposites, such as, true and false or reason and madness.[[97]](#endnote-97) Exclusion is also associated with the internal procedures of discourses themselves and the hierarchical division between ‘sacred’ texts and those texts that are relegated to the status of mere commentary – supported by identifying such texts with a particular author and their revered system of thought.[[98]](#endnote-98) In addition, the establishment of specific disciplines with their particular internal rules for establishing what is to be regarded as true or false, act as ‘a principle of control over the production of discourse’.[[99]](#endnote-99) Again, such exclusion is supported through the appropriation of subjects through ‘societies of discourse’ establishing ‘the expert’ - who is qualified to speak on a subject and who is not.[[100]](#endnote-100)

These procedures of exclusion cannot be treated in isolation – societies are saturated by relations of power and resistance and such procedures of exclusion will be predominantly exercised by those in dominant positions of power. Foucault thus provides a useful counter to post-modern resilience discourse because of his emphasis on the relationality of power, on the ‘manifold relationships of force that take shape and come into play’ between the multitude of actors within society.[[101]](#endnote-101) Thus, when he speaks of the ‘structures or the mechanisms of power, it is only insofar as we suppose that certain persons exercise power over others. The term "power" designates relationships between partners’.[[102]](#endnote-102) In contradistinction to the post-modern approach which, as aforementioned, places actors in a position of exteriority to one another, Foucault explicitly states that, ‘relations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relationships (economic processes, knowledge relationships, sexual relations), but are immanent in the latter; they are the immediate effects of the divisions, inequalities, and disequilibriums which occur in the latter, and conversely they are the internal conditions of these differentiations’. [[103]](#endnote-103) These relations, in other words, constitute agents by situating them in webs of internally related elements. In the economic sphere, for example, individuals, communities and systems alike are all intimately ‘connected with the abstract universal flows of money in the world market’,[[104]](#endnote-104) regardless of whether the agents involved are aware of it.

Moreover, with regard to our ability to resist, Foucault presupposes a certain ‘minimalist’ conception of human beings, as subjects endowed with ‘particular forms of self-interpretation and the existence of something like the feeling of powerlessness … [he supposes] a fuller conception of human subjectivity which takes into account both the interpretative and the self-reflective dimensions of human agency’.[[105]](#endnote-105) As a result, where there is power, one will also find resistance. As he argued in *The History of Sexuality*, ‘power must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them; as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another’.[[106]](#endnote-106)

Just as there is a plurality of power relations, then, there is a ‘plurality of resistances, each of them a special case: resistances that are possible, necessary, improbable; others that are spontaneous, savage, solitary, concerted, rampant, or violent; still others that are quick to compromise, interested, or sacrificial; by definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations.[[107]](#endnote-107) Indeed, one can addend to Foucault’s original idea of capillary power - that ‘point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals’ - the idea of capillary resistance that always accompanies power relations and is as varied in terms of its character, duration and sites.[[108]](#endnote-108) For Foucault, power emanates from the ‘system of differentiations which permits one to act upon the actions of others: differentiations determined by the law or by traditions of status and privilege; economic differences in the appropriation of riches and goods; shifts in the process of production; linguistic or cultural differences; differences in know-how and competence; and so forth’.[[109]](#endnote-109) Moreover, the ensemble of institutions within society exhibit certain inscribed biases, ‘organizations are created to freeze the relations of power, hold those relations in a state of asymmetry, so that a certain number of persons get an advantage, socially, economically, politically, institutionally, etc. And this totally freezes the situation. That’s what one calls power in the strict sense of the term: it’s a specific type of power relation that has been institutionalized, frozen, immobilized, to the profit of some and to the detriment of others.[[110]](#endnote-110)

Foucault’s view of society is thus one in which a network of power issues forth from this multitude of social structures or ‘mechanisms of power’ - but equally so does resistance. Yet, while Foucault always asserted that he was not a structuralist, he nonetheless viewed the existing, complex stratification of society as key to understanding power relations. Within the social milieu, a variety of potential policies are intentionally pursued with regard to a given issue area by a plethora of individuals and groups. They do so in ‘determinate political contexts’, but such contexts do not determine the final outcome because of the complex policy articulation that occurs and the unintended consequences surrounding actual implementation.[[111]](#endnote-111)

**Beyond Neoliberal Resilience**

As Foucault stressed, those who ‘resist or rebel against a form of power cannot merely be content to denounce violence or criticise an institution. Nor is it enough to cast the blame on reason in general. What has to be questioned is the form of rationality at stake’.[[112]](#endnote-112) The concluding part of the paper uses a Foucauldian framework to demonstrate how understandings of, and solutions to, the financial crises have been enframed in such a manner that they fit within a wider neoliberal discourse. In addition, Foucault’s acknowledgement of social differentiations and the way in which these are often sedimented in institutional forms serves to remind us that the discourses associated with these enframings do not emerge in a power vacuum. We can therefore understand the emergence of resilience in part, as a result of the conditioning effect of an abiding neoliberal imaginary and as a result of the entrenched interests of political and economic elites. The result is that, far from representing a radical departure, resilience serves to support the continuation of a highly volatile financial system, the further reduction of welfare commitments and employment rights and further privatisation of national assets.

At first glance, the financial reforms, promulgated by institutions such as the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS) and the Financial Stability Board (FSB) appear to resonate with Chandler’s argument that ontological complexity is leading to new forms of resilience governance. Following the financial crisis, attention did shift towards complex systems analysis, the sources of instability within them and how to make them more resilient. Indeed, as Melinda Cooper highlights, such work tentatively began in 2006 but came to the fore after the crisis with several papers analysing the banking system as analogous to natural ecosystems.[[113]](#endnote-113) Although this work fully recognises the Knightian uncertainty and unpredictability of complex financial systems, rather than abandon modernist notions of intervention such reforms have focussed on instilling ‘order in far from equilibrium conditions’.[[114]](#endnote-114)

Accordingly, the focus of post-financial crisis reforms has been on resilience and the ‘performative adaptability’ of the financial system to ‘withstand, re-route and recombine in the wake of a potentially catastrophic event to maintain systemic operability’ so that it can ‘withstand, recover and bounce back from crisis’.[[115]](#endnote-115) Systems with high degrees of connectivity are said to be highly vulnerable to network spill over effects and therefore less systemically resilient i.e. where the failure of one financial institution or nodal point has negative knock-on effects throughout the system. In order to increase the resilience of the financial system overall, those financial institutions that have the potential for being ‘superspreaders’ (Global Systemically Important Banks) of instability in times of stress have been identified.[[116]](#endnote-116) The emphasis is on increasing the ‘absorptive capacity of each of the nodes in the financial network in response to external shocks’ in order to reduce systemic risk.[[117]](#endnote-117) One consequence of this systemic concern is that the capital adequacy requirements for banks have been significantly increased. The GSIBs as critical nodes within a complex banking system have far more stringent requirements, with the FSB requesting a total loss absorbing capacity of 16-20 per cent of risk weighted assets for the thirty banks so identified.

The state continues to take a back seat role; it conducts the conduct of financial institutions through the setting of acceptable risk levels (through adherence to the Basle Accords for example), the monitoring of risk exposure by auditors and the rating of their activities by the credit rating agencies. Key to maintaining the free circulation of capital is the way in which the market ensures that financial activity is delimited – financial institutions must limit their risk exposure to within what are deemed acceptable levels lest they be punished by capital flight in reaction to credit rating downgrades. States establish maximum risk levels through the setting of capital adequacy ratios (increasingly through international agreements such as the Basle Accords). But the actual judgement of the day-to-day health of a financial institution is conducted through the process of auditing, risk assessments and credit ratings.[[118]](#endnote-118)

In part, as a result of regulatory capture by those with most to lose from more radical reforms but also, in part, as a result of the conditioning effect of an abiding neoliberal imaginary, the enframing of finance is still conditioned by the modern episteme, with its emphasis on organic structures that develop in ‘accordance with autochthonous laws’.[[119]](#endnote-119) Rather than the introduction of radical reform, we have witnessed the re-balancing of what is regarded as a homeostatic system that establishes ‘an average considered as optimal on the one hand, and, on the other, a bandwidth of the acceptable that must not be exceeded’.[[120]](#endnote-120) Such enframing involves the implementation of a biopolitical strategy establishing new parameters of risk that are thought to be ‘within socially and economically acceptable limits and around an average that will be considered as optimal for a given social functioning’.[[121]](#endnote-121) So called ‘Minsky moments’ are to be prevented by reducing risk through increasing banks’ capital buffers during economic booms thus pre-empting heightened speculation in various asset classes.[[122]](#endnote-122) Finance is still presented as analogous to an organic homeostatic system, rather than a system permeated by power relations with agents who have an interest in maintaining the extant economic order. In this way, the economy continues to be framed as self-regulating and self-perpetuating. The reforms thus continue to embrace risk taking as a foundation stone of economic behaviour that O’ Malley refers to below, while at the same time trying to delimit its extent. In the felicitous phrase of Martijn Konings, the reforms should thus be understood ‘not as involving a transcendence of risk, but precisely in terms of the principles endogenous to it’.[[123]](#endnote-123)

Equally, the emphasis on resilient subjects is best understood as the expansion and reconfiguration of extant neo-liberal subjectivities. The various neo-liberal regimes that emerged in the aftermath of the seventies crisis promoted a particular set of economic norms with the purpose of reconstituting the subjectivities of the population.[[124]](#endnote-124) In relation to welfare retrenchment, states sought to ‘modify the relation of individuals to political power by seeking, in part, to get them to economize on their expectations of or demands on government’.[[125]](#endnote-125) More generally, this involved a move away from the notion of citizenship ‘construed in terms of solidarity, contentment, welfare and a sense of security established through the bonds of organizational and social life’.[[126]](#endnote-126) Enterprise and entrepreneurship became the new watchwords with the worker ‘no longer construed as a social creature seeking satisfaction of his or her need for security, solidarity and welfare, but as an individual actively seeking to shape and manage his or her own life in order to maximize its returns in terms of success and achievement’.[[127]](#endnote-127)

At the same time, neo-liberal governmentalities involved the constitution of neo-liberal financial subjects who were to be both entrepreneurial and responsible subjects rationally calculating the risks and benefits of the various financial positions they ventured into. The escape from the ‘tyranny of earned income’ was thus associated with the emergence of the entrepreneurial self and a shift in individual financial behaviour from thrift to investment so that the latter became seen as ‘the socially desirable form of saving’.[[128]](#endnote-128) This form of saving is completely different to that of thrift which entails the setting aside of resources in relatively safe forms like bank deposits ‘in order to provide for the effects of future harms’.[[129]](#endnote-129) Whereas thrift views risk negatively and, indeed, its emphasis on prudence derives from its concern to counter future uncertainties – investment treats risk and reward as inseparable.[[130]](#endnote-130) Associated with the shift away from socialized forms of risk towards self management and the subject as entrepreneur was a positive re-evaluation of risk which was seen as a way to enhance an individual’s security and freedom via ‘calculative investments’.[[131]](#endnote-131) As Paul Langley points out, this was not a shift from thrift to spendthrift, rather ‘prudence and thrift are displaced by new moral and calculative self-disciplines of responsibly and entrepreneurially meeting, managing, and manipulating the outstanding obligations that arise from extended borrowing’.[[132]](#endnote-132)

As O’Malley argues resilience resonates with earlier neo-liberal discourses because it continues to emphasise the importance of embracing risk and adopting a ‘*risk-taking* attitude that regards uncertainty as opportunity’.[[133]](#endnote-133) Hence, resilience creates subjects that ‘”thrive” on chaos and make every threat a challenge and opportunity’. [[134]](#endnote-134) Yet, just like previous neo-liberal discourses, resilience emphasises the importance of the responsibilisation of the self. This is most clearly seen in the European Union’s increasing emphasis on ‘bail-ins’ (in contrast to bail-outs) ensuring that shareholders and creditors of the failing institution suffer appropriate losses and bear an appropriate part of the costs capsulated in its Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRRD) which ensures, ‘that shareholders and creditors of the failing institution suffer appropriate losses and bear an appropriate part of the costs’ of a failed bank – this will include citizens with deposits of €100,000 or over.[[135]](#endnote-135)

Resilience is therefore best understood as part of a larger neo-liberal mentality that ‘valorizes self-reliance and responsibility in an uncertain world’.[[136]](#endnote-136) As Ronen Shamir points out, for instance, the neoliberal project:

operates at the level of individual actors, reconfiguring roles and identities (employees, welfare recipients, managers, civil servants, citizens, consumers and so on) so as to mobilize designated actors actively to undertake and perform self-governing tasks. Accordingly, multiple sources of authority, including governmental units, non-governmental organizations and commercial enterprises are responsibilizing their relevant clients to adjust to the harsh realities of the free market by adopting ‘a certain entrepreneurial form of practical relationship to themselves as a condition of their effectiveness’.[[137]](#endnote-137)

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), for example, encourages firms to adopt an entrepreneurial form which enables them to enhance ‘productive efficiency’ in an unpropitious global environment, whereas resilience for workers is understood to be about weathering ‘economic downturns with limited social costs’.[[138]](#endnote-138) The partisan character of these reforms, however, is demonstrated by the creation of new opportunities for investment capital, provided through the further commodification of the social sphere in the form of privatization of utility and other nationalised companies. Such privatizations may promote the further valorization of capital, but this deepening of marketization and the emphasis on profit making, more often than not, leads to the eradication of subsidies for necessities such as warmth and water. Resilience thinking, then, is not only indicative of just how deeply embedded neo-liberal thinking has become, but also of the inability of mainstream politicians to embrace other political alternatives.

As William Davies suggests, the global financial crisis of 2007/08 is best understood as a ‘historical punctuation of normality’ – a period in which the tried-and-tested tools of neoliberal governance and ‘principles of judgement’ have been thrown into doubt. However, this period of ‘meta-evaluation’ has not, unlike the crisis of Fordism in the 1970s, for example, given rise to a political-economic programme able ‘to resolve doubt and restore certainty’.[[139]](#endnote-139) Unable to restore profitability through the expanded reproduction of capital, mechanisms of exploitation and domination have been intensified at every level of society. Under these conditions, as Maurizio Lazarrato argues, there is no distinction between working people and the unemployed, between consumers and producers, between working and non-working populations, between retirees and welfare recipients. All are cast as ‘debtors’, ‘accountable to and guilty before capital’.[[140]](#endnote-140) This, we submit, is a key driving force of austerity and its conjunctural discursive counterpart, resilience.

Under such austerity, we have seen the usual pattern of policy proposals surrounding fiscal balance, financial stability and structural reforms to restore competitiveness. However, loan conditionality now goes much further in terms of broadening and deepening market relations within a state. The policies foisted upon loan recipients through economic adjustment programmes by the Troika, for example, are part of a wider supranational disciplinary mechanism that seeks to instil neo-liberal patterns of behaviour at the state level, entailing a ‘policy of coercions that act upon’ the state that enters a ‘machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it’.[[141]](#endnote-141) Fiscal balances are produced through the shrinking of state commitments, leading to reductions in pensions, social welfare provision, public sector employment, public sector wages, education and health etc.. As part of this process, worker protections are understood by the OECD to be ‘particularly damaging’ to firms’ profitability because they ‘undermine long-run labour supply, leading to lower potential growth’.[[142]](#endnote-142)

More generally, macroeconomic reforms have as their objective the broadening and deepening of market relations with the privatisation of state enterprises, attacks on collective bargaining rights and the opening up of hitherto closed professions and protected industries to market forces. Loan recipients must discipline themselves and adhere to these severe structural adjustments and fiscal targets if they are to continue to receive loan disbursements. Indeed, in the Greek case, the potential for almost immediate punishment is inscribed in the loan conditionalities in the form of *ex-ante* prior actions that the state must enact. In its most recent Third Economic Adjustment Programme, the Memoranda of Understanding stipulates 35 prior actions for the Greek state to take before loans are disbursed.[[143]](#endnote-143)

Yet, we can see that resistance to both the activities of financiers by the occupy movement and the resistance to various austerity policies resembles the articulation of a plethora of tactics from which a complex of strategies emerge that Foucault points to.[[144]](#endnote-144) Namely, resistance to the conservatism of neo-liberal governmentality that has continued to enframe finance in a naturalistic manner (with its extension and deepening of risk rationalities) and its deepening of neo-liberal austerity, thus further exacerbating the contradictions of capitalism. As Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe argue, ‘[a]ll struggles, whether those of workers or other political subjects, left to themselves, have a partial character, and can be articulated to very different discourses. It is this articulation which gives them their character, not the place from which they come’.[[145]](#endnote-145) From such articulation, we can see potential transversal struggles and solidarities emerging from the financial crisis. These struggles are likely to combine recognition and redistribution, producing a wider, more generalized struggle and strategy against ‘sexism, racism, sexual discrimination, and in the defence of the environment’…’articulated with those of the workers in a new left-wing hegemonic project’.[[146]](#endnote-146) It is these ‘pervasive axes of stratification’, to borrow a phrase from Fraser and Nicholson ,[[147]](#endnote-147) that are entirely absent from the purview of resilience discourse.

Although there is evidence of such a counter-hegemonic movement (Greek resistance to austerity and the occupy movements, for example), we are as yet unable to divine the overall strategy that will emerge because this will depend on how such struggles become articulated with other resistances. But the use of archaeological and genealogical techniques will at least help us in our ‘investigation into the events that have led us to constitute ourselves’ and will help us understand that radical economic alternatives may also be conditioned by previous epistemes.[[148]](#endnote-148) For example, worker self-management and local trade exchanges are to be lauded as alternatives, yet still often have at their heart labour theories of value (equality based on wages or exchange tokens solely with regards to hours worked) that hark as far back as the Physiocrats (and such a perspective may well remain until artificial intelligence and automation become the predominant mode of production). Neither do these approaches overcome the problem of non-equivalence between utility value, exchange value and labour value that has occupied economists for centuries.[[149]](#endnote-149)

**Conclusion**

This paper identified two main strands of resilience thinking in the literature. The post-modernist strand elaborated by Chandler argues that we are now confronted with such a degree of radical uncertainty that it is prompting a philosophical reorientation that eschews the subject/object distinction characteristic of liberal thinking, and of ‘modernist’ thinking in general, in favour of viewing the human species as inextricably entangled in a web of complexity. Moreover, it is argued that because complexity gives rise to a multitude of ‘unknown unknowns’ we must accept the highly contingent nature of final outcomes and can therefore never know the aetiology of events before they occur. This is said to lead to a truly post-modern form of politics where, in a complex world, we self-reflexively govern through society rather than over society.

We have argued that a Foucauldian analysis renders a different understanding of resilience thinking, one that interprets it as an extension of neo-liberal governmentality rather than the emergence of a post-modern episteme. The reason resilience became sedimented so rapidly into dominant discourses is because many of its assumptions and arguments cohered rather than challenged the tenets of neo-liberalism. This is not to say that there is nothing new about resilience thinking. The emphasis on building human capacities that promote the ability to withstand shocks through *post-hoc* adaptability and the even greater emphasis on self-reliance even in times of crisis are of interest precisely because they are new.[[150]](#endnote-150)

One has to ask why resilience thinking has become so popular in academic and policy circles rather than, say, resistance thinking. The answer, to our minds, is that resilience thinking fails to challenge neo-liberalism on any front and, indeed, has been absorbed into this dominant discourse in such a manner that it reinforces neo-liberal policies, such as, the further flexibilization of the work force and the passing off of the social costs of the 2007/08 crisis onto those least able to shoulder the burden. Moreover, resilience thinking tends to promote a high degree of political passivity through its emphasis on uncertainty, rather than viewing capitalism and its inherent tendencies that lead to such crises as transformable. Its emphasis on *post-hoc* adaptation, rather than proactive change of the structural configurations which give rise to the necessity to adapt, fits with the general lack of radical reform since the crises began in 2008. Its popularity and incorporation into the wider neo-liberal discourse can therefore be partly understood as resulting from the structural biases within society itself – the dominant social forces favouring resilience thinking because it does not entail radical reform and chimes with their wider interests.

The paper concludes by shifting the focus from resilience to resistance. Clearly, although the crises since 2008 have had devastating economic consequences throughout the world, this has not translated into the degree of political upheaval required to break the grip that the dominant social forces have over the stewardship of the economy and society itself. At the same time, neo-liberal discourse still maintains a dominating influence in policy-making and political discourse in general. It is therefore equally clear that we may have to experience other economic crises of even greater magnitude before a cohesive and effective resistance evolves, but evolve it will.

**Notes**

1. The authors would like to thank the reviewers for their very insightful comments which have helped to further develop this paper. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. C. S. Holling, ‘Resilience and stability of ecological systems’, *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics*, 4:1 (1973), pp. 1-23; L. Gunderson, and L. Pritchard Jr. (eds), *Resilience and the Behavior of Large-scale Systems (Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment)* (London: Island Press, 2002); Brian Walker and David Salt, *Resilience Thinking: Sustaining Ecosystems and People in a Changing World* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2006). [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. M. Cavelty, M. Kaufmann, and K. Kristensen, ‘Resilience and (in)security: Practices, subjects, temporalities’, *Security Dialogue*, 46:1, (2015), pp. 3-14. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. J. Juncker, ‘Main messages of Jean-Claude Juncker during his campaign visit to Athens, Greece’, (2013), available at <http://juncker.epp.eu/press-releases/main-messages-jean-claude-juncker-during-his-campaign-visit-athens-greece> [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. UK Government, ‘Chancellor George Osborne's Budget 2014 speech’, (19 March 2014), available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/chancellor-george-osbornes-budget-2014-speech> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. F. Lenztos, & N. Rose ‘Governing insecurity: Contingency planning, protection, resistance’, *Economy and Society,* 38:2 (2009), p. 243. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. P. O’ Malley, ‘Uncertain Governance and Resilient Subjects in the Risk Society’, *Oñati Socio-legal Series,* 3:2 (2013), p. 190. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. D. Chandler, ‘Beyond neoliberalism: resilience, the new art of governing complexity’, *Resilience,* 2:1 (2014), pp. 60-61. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Postmodernism is most often associated with deconstructivism, intertextuality and ontological complexity and the challenges to knowledge of the world that these present. Chandler essentially argues that a post-modernist episteme is emerging as a result of our evolving recognition that the world is so complex that it renders it impossible to predict and control. As a result, top-down "modernist" conceptions of social dynamics no longer work and that governance should shift to the grassroots level relying on situated ‘local’ knowledge. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. It should be noted that Chandler may not necessarily be advocating resilience thinking himself. See for example, David Chandler and Julian Reid, *The Neoliberal Subject: Resilience, Adaptation and Vulnerability* (London: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2016). [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. D. Chandler, *Resilience: The Governance of Complexity* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 47. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. D. Chandler, *Resilience,* p. 42. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Ibid., pp. 139-40. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. As Jonathan Joseph contends, ‘resilience is best understood in the context of rolling-out neoliberal governmentality. Its meaning varies depending on the place and the level where this occurs and the aims and objects of governance’. In other words, the exact form neoliberalism takes will be context and time dependent – yet there are certain commonalities. J. Joseph, ‘Resilience as embedded neoliberalism: a governmentality approach’, *Resilience,* 1:1 (2013), pp. 38 and 51-2. H. Macartney, ‘Variegated Neoliberalism: EU varieties of capitalism and international political economy’ (London: Routledge, 2010); J. Peck and N. Theodore, ‘Variegated capitalism’, *Progress in Human Geography* 31:6 (2007), pp. 731-772; N. Brenner, J. Peck and N. Theodore, ‘Variegated neo-liberalization: geographies, modalities, pathways’, *Global Networks* 10:2 (2010), pp. 182-222; B. Jessop, ‘The world market, variegated capitalism, and the crisis of European integration’, in P. Nousios, H. Overbeek, and A. Tsolakis (eds.) *Globalisation and European Integration: Critical Approaches to Regional Order and International Relations*, (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 91-111.

    For example, writers have traditionally distinguished German ordo liberalism, with its emphasis on the importance of the state in establishing the ‘institutional parameters for economic competition in order to serve the larger interests of society’, from the Anglo-American version of neoliberalism that emphasises the rolling back of the state, self-regulation of the market and the marketization of hitherto de-commodified spheres of activity. B. Young, ‘Introduction: The Hijacking of German Ordoliberalism’, *European Review of International Studies*, 2:3 (2015), p. 11. But, in practice, these dominant forms were never as neatly divided as their approaches would suggest and may even be co-evolving towards what one author has called post-ordo liberalism. P. Cerny, ‘In The Shadow Of Ordoliberalism: The Paradox Of Neoliberalism In The 21st Century’, *European Review of International Studies*, 2:3 (2016), pp. 78-91. Neoliberalism has always required regulatory reform that strengthens the state in some areas (trade union laws for example) and rolls it back in other areas (e.g. business deregulation). P. Cerny, ‘Paradoxes of the Competition State: The Dynamics of Political Globalization’, *Government and Opposition*, 32:2 (1997), pp.251-74. Equally, in practice, Germany has engaged in Keynesian economics, monetarism and, very recently, agreed to the direct intervention in markets through the European Stability Mechanism. Both tendencies have always sought to promote efficient market competition and recently, at the European level, there has been little to distinguish the two in terms of pursuing the re-regulation of the financial spheres; reductions in welfare provision; the further marketization of hitherto de-commodified spheres; labour market deregulation and attendant wage reductions; and wholesale privatizations. B. Young, ‘Introduction’, pp. 7-15. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. D. Chandler, *Resilience,* p. 48. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. C. Hay, *Political Analysis: A Critical Introductio*n. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 250. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. M. Foucault, ‘What is Enlightenment’ in P. Rabinow, *The Foucault Reader*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), p. 47. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Hence his comment that ‘certain halfwitted “commentators” persist in labelling me a “structuralist”’. M. Foucault, *The Order Of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), P. Xiii. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. M. Cavelty, M. Kaufmann, and K. Kristensen, ‘Resilience and (in)security’, p. 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
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134. P. O’ Malley, ‘Uncertain Governance’, p. 192. [↑](#endnote-ref-134)
135. Directive 2014/59/Eu Of The European Parliament And Of The Council, 15 May 2014, Point 67 of the Preamble. [↑](#endnote-ref-135)
136. Ibid., p. 505. [↑](#endnote-ref-136)
137. R. Shamir, ‘The age of responsibilisation: on market embedded morality’, *Economy and Society* 37:1 (2008), p. 8. [↑](#endnote-ref-137)
138. OECD, ‘What makes labour markets resilient during recessions’, online at <http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/employment/oecd-employment-outlook-2012/what-makes-labour-markets-resilient-during-recessions_empl_outlook-2012-3-en>, p. 57. [↑](#endnote-ref-138)
139. W. Davies, ‘The limits of neoliberalism’, p. 154. [↑](#endnote-ref-139)
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143. This is very clear from the various memoranda of understanding that the Troika have signed with various national governments setting out bail-out conditions. For example refer to, the Greek MOU - *Greece: Memorandum of Understanding for a three-year ESM Programme,* <http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/> greecedoc.pdf, (August 11, 2015); the Portugese MOU - ‘Memorandum of Understanding on Specific Economic Policy Conditionality’, [http://ec.europa.eu/economy\_finance/eu\_borrower/mou/2011-05-18-mou-portugal \_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu_borrower/mou/2011-05-18-mou-portugal%20_en.pdf), (17 May, 2011). For an overview of the various policies, refer to J. Pisani-Ferry, A. Sapir and G. Wolff, *EU-IMF Assistance to Euro-Area Countries: an early assessment.* (Belgium: Bruegel Blueprint Series, 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-143)
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148. M. Foucault, ‘What is Enlightenment’, p. 46. [↑](#endnote-ref-148)
149. M. Foucault, *The Order of Things: An archaeology of the human sciences*, Chapter Six and Chapter Seven. [↑](#endnote-ref-149)
150. It should be noted that Chandler suggests that the post-modern form of resilience thinking involves relational adaptability which differs from post hoc adaptability – ‘the subject survives and thrives on the basis of its ability to adapt or dynamically relate to its socioecological environment…Both subject and object are immersed in and are products of complex adaptive processes’. Refer to Chandler, *Resilience: the Governance of Complexity*, p. 8. [↑](#endnote-ref-150)