

ТЕОРИЯ И МЕТОДОЛОГИЯ МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫХ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЙ

UDC 327

David Chandler's analysis of resilience-thinking and political realism in international relations^{1,2}

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Resilience is an increasingly popular concept used to explore how systems respond to various challenges. It has been actively used in International Relations. Here, resilience has been analyzed in predominantly postmodernist terms. Yet, I take resilience-thinking, as explored by one of its leading scholars, David Chandler, and show that it has some affinities with political realism, understood, contra stereotypes, as a complex tradition of political reflection. I also apply the insights gained to the recent overarching turn to resilience in the EU's external action. The article demonstrates that the novel stress of resilience-thinking on the complexity of the contemporary world is very important, but that it is useful to contextualize it and relate it, if in part, to the age-old concerns of the realist tradition, and to identify similar strengths and problems in both approaches. Both resilience-thinking and realism have drawn our attention to the plural aspect of politics. However, they may face problems concerning elements of relativism, a claim to know the 'reality' best, the use of fixed categories, irresponsibility, and the reification of an understanding of reality as a permanent crisis. All these strengths and problems will likely play out in the EU's external action and even its internal development.

Keywords: resilience, political realism, International Relations theory, European Union.

'Resilience' is a concept quickly getting traction in International Relations (IR). It is common to trace its path into IR from ecology, especially following the influential interpretation of Jeremy Walker and Melinda Cooper [1]. As a distinctive term in ecology, re-

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silience was introduced by Crawford Holling in 1973. Holling distinguished between, and even opposed, 'stability' and 'resilience' of ecological systems: the former meant simply 'the ability of a system to return to an equilibrium state' following a shock, and 'resilience' was understood as 'a measure of the persistence of systems and of their ability to absorb change and disturbance' while keeping its key features [2, p. 14]. According to Holling, a system may be very unstable, but it is its very instability that may uphold its resilience [2, p. 14–15]. Some authors note that 'resilience' has been widely used in various other disciplines, all of which have influenced the ways 'resilience' has been understood in IR. For instance, Philippe Bourbeau mentions psychological understandings of resilience, resilience as applied to materials, and resilience in the field of social work, besides ecology [3, p. 24–31].

While there is no consensus in IR on resilience's sources and definition, resilience's general idea relates to how systems of different kinds react to shocks and, while sometimes changing to certain degrees, uphold their character. To give but a few examples, scholars may speak of resilience as a feature of cities or critical infrastructures, or the resilience of a political regime, or resilience as a neoliberal discourse (for recent overviews of the state of the application of 'resilience' within IR, see, e. g., [3; 4]).

Resilience is also an important concept in the policy discourses of numerous international actors. Notably, it has been declared one of the main goals of the European Union's external action (see above all [5; 6]). Resilience has thus become a pervasive category of theory and practice.

Yet, for all of resilience's popularity, there remains an unexplored but important avenue for research. To my knowledge, no analysis of resilience in connection with political realism has been undertaken. Discussions of resilience within IR are now a preserve of approaches that analyze it in postmodernist terms. All of these approaches together, while certainly varied, are perceived to be opposed to or simply disconnected from political realism. These approaches are deemed to belong to a different, or even incommensurable, disciplinary 'compartment'. Nevertheless, in this article, my aim is to uncover some existing parallels between 'resilience-thinking', at least as analyzed by David Chandler [7], and realism (without equating them, to be sure). My theoretical arguments are above all intended as general, but I also illustrate them by analyzing how the linkages between realism and resilience-thinking may advance the current debates on the European Union's external action.

Theories of resilience are no doubt varied. In this article, I focus on resilience-thinking as explored by David Chandler. Chandler's account was selected for the following reasons. In general, Chandler sees resilience as a multifaceted notion that cannot be simply considered as an ideological tool of a supposedly univocal 'neoliberalism'. Given the often expressed criticisms of resilience as purely neoliberal, Chandler's take on it seems more nuanced. Resilience as the broad idea of the survival of various systems is not one-sided *per se*, and it can and should be studied from different perspectives. Moreover, to our knowledge, Chandler has been the first to offer a coherent and philosophically sophisticated book-length analysis of resilience in IR [7]. He has also been the editor of the single academic journal specifically dealing with resilience in IR [8]. Chandler sees in resilience-thinking a whole new overarching theoretical vision. Chandler's account of resilience is an especially fruitful subject to analysis and critique: while it would have been easier to criticize one-sided accusations against resilience as necessarily a 'bad neoliberal idea', it

is more promising to engage with Chandler's more complex arguments. It should also be kept in mind that Chandler himself is critical towards some of resilience-thinking's aspects, and it is also clear that his analysis cannot be 'the last word' on resilience-thinking. Below, I will show that resilience-thinking, as analyzed by Chandler, has both strengths and weaknesses. And even his rich and multifaceted account does not connect resilience to realism. Thus, Chandler's approach has been selected here not because I completely agree with either his analysis of resilience-thinking or with this kind of resilience-thinking itself, but because his approach has been anyway influential in IR, and a multifaceted one, providing a good avenue for interpreting the resilience concept.

In its turn, by realism I mean a broad and long-standing tradition of philosophical and political reflection. I will argue that this tradition is much richer than stereotypical descriptions that have come to associate realism with simplistic materialism, positivism, cynicism, an apologia of stasis, or a simplistic state-centric approach (for criticisms of these stereotypes, see, e. g., [9]). Indeed, this is a tradition whose distinguishing focus may be defined as follows: realism has been critical of simplistic rationalism and understood politics as a domain which cannot be fully subject to substantively rational unity, comprehension or improvement. This seems to be the broadest common denominator under which most realists may be subsumed, despite the well-known differences between various realist approaches.

This article is intended to make two main contributions. First, it will show that resilience-thinking should not be studied from a single perspective. The novelty of other authors' works has been to point to the need to explore resilience's connections to disciplines beyond ecology and to intellectual positions beyond neoliberalism [3; 10]. Accordingly, this article's novelty in connecting resilience to realism is intended to be at least not inferior to theirs'. Second, this is not just another direction to broaden the debate for the sake of broadening. I will claim that relating resilience-thinking to realism helps to better understand both. The objection that any two intellectual viewpoints may be related would miss the point that resilience-thinking and realism are kindred in truly important respects. Resilience may indeed be studied better if presented not as a totally 'new' approach unrelated to previous ones, but as one that has some features that have been explored for centuries of discussions within and around realism. The richness of these discussions should not be ignored in analyses of resilience. At the same time, the article contributes to the increasingly popular rereading of realism, which aims at recovering it from its stereotypical depictions. The article's contributions may advance IR theory and European studies.

The article is structured as follows. I begin by briefly introducing the relevant literatures, unpacking Chandler's definition of resilience, and outlining some preliminaries regarding why realism may be compared with it. Next, I continue the comparison in more detail by showing some ontological and epistemological affinities between resilience-thinking and realism. Next, I take stock of some strengths and problems of resilience-thinking and realism. Finally, I offer an illustration related to the EU's external action, followed by a conclusion.

Relating resilience-thinking and realism: setting the stage

An analysis of the literature on resilience reveals two basic strands, none of which has engaged with realism. On the one hand, perhaps the widest strand in the literature

simply criticizes resilience for being little more than a neoliberal ideological device. These works mostly follow Walker and Cooper's idea that resilience has become so pervasive in political discourse because, ideologically, it chimes well 'with a neoliberal philosophy of complex adaptive systems' found in some works of Friedrich Hayek [1, p. 144]. Authors within this strand offer Foucault-inspired (yet quite simplistic) critiques of resilience, denouncing it as a neoliberal governmentality that preaches the virtues of self-reliance and the market economy (for a recent example, see [11]).

On the other hand, authors in the second strand have seen these repeated one-sided 'Foucauldian' criticisms of resilience as 'monotone' and 'unsatisfying' [10, p. 419; see also 3]. Ironically, while genealogical and Foucauldian readings of resilience should have been by their very nature flexible, multifaceted and open, many of them have become largely dogmatic. They postulate the single 'correct' source and meaning of resilience and condemn it as a certain neoliberal bogeyman (for criticisms, see [3, p. 20–24; 10]). But, certainly, Foucauldian approaches may be more nuanced, and the various meanings and cases of neoliberalism also require more nuanced understandings. Moreover, scholars in the second strand of the literature have offered alternative conceptualizations of resilience. For example, Jessica Schmidt argues that resilience is best understood as dovetailing with Deweyan pragmatism. Therefore, Schmidt believes resilience is not a continuation of neoliberalism, but rather a way *out* of what she thinks are neoliberalism's internal contradictions (see [10]). Relating resilience to pragmatism is indeed but a step from relating it to realism. Still, neither Schmidt nor other scholars have made such a step. Both strands in the literature on resilience, by and large, treat it in postmodernist terms. But at least, scholars in the second strand, compared to the first one, point to the possibility of resilience's various interpretations. It is to the second strand that David Chandler also belongs. Moreover, within this strand, his analysis of resilience-thinking is one of the most extensive and interesting, and it seems therefore especially fruitful to relate it to realism.

Regarding realism, I join those authors who increasingly see it as a tradition that is, contra stereotypes, strongly aware of the importance of ideas, ethics and change (see, e.g., [9; 12–19]). Certainly, it would be impossible to analyze in a single article all of realism, whose broad and varied nature I readily acknowledge. My aim here is only to stress some fundamental themes that have run through much of realism. I have to select those authors who seem the most philosophically rich and representative of the respective stages of the realist tradition, with a focus on academic IR realism. To repeat, I suggest that realism's defining features refer to its critiques of simplistic rationalism and to its understanding of politics as a domain which cannot be fully subject to substantively rational unity, comprehension or improvement. Beside its fundamental philosophical features, realism has of course long stressed such more concrete themes as balance of power or survival. These features were quite evident in thinkers whom we can understand as realist since ancient Greece and up to the classical realists of the 20th century. The themes have also resurfaced in those current works that revive the legacy of some of the classical realists. Moreover, and contrary to established views about the neorealist varieties of realism, some authors argue that even neorealism cannot be unambiguously equated with positivism or with rationality (see, e.g., [20]). Regarding neoclassical realism, I do not think that it has introduced in the realist tradition any fundamental philosophical changes that go beyond the defining features of realism. When defining realism, I am not trying to arbitrarily pick up those themes that will confirm my arguments. Neither am I picking up themes that would

be peripheral to realists, given that many of them have espoused varied ideas. The themes that are analyzed are fundamental to and constantly reemerge in realism, as I show with references to numerous students of realism. And it is these themes that converge with resilience-thinking. Certainly, suggesting some 'transhistorical' traits of realism (and of any other tradition) is an idealizing exercise. I do not deny differences within realism. But if we can meaningfully speak about any long-standing tradition in the history of ideas at all, it would be necessary to identify its recurrent themes. Relating academic realists since 1919 to their early modern forerunners such as Hobbes or even to the distant ancients such as Thucydides has been standard for realism's own self-presentation. And the same has been done by such penetrating students of realism as Michael Williams [13] or Richard Ned Lebow [12].

Let us now outline some preliminaries regarding why realism and resilience-thinking may be compared. David Chandler does not provide a single literal definition of resilience. Rather, he tries to unpack the notion throughout his book. As we will see, his vision of resilience largely emerges as a combination of the main themes of postmodernism applied to the general idea of resilience as systemic survival. The main elements of Chandler's understanding of resilience are as follows. Resilience refers to rejecting modernity's 'linear modes of governing and understanding' [7, p. 13]. It recognizes the 'complexity' of the contemporary world where some 'failures' are inevitable, but governance should learn from them [7, p. 13]. Chandler clearly lends resilience a practical, pragmatic aspect: it is not only a theory, but also 'a mode of... acting in the world' [7, p. 13]. Resilience is not about 'liberal modernist politics of representation' or mastery over politics; it is instead about 'governing through the 'reality' of processes and relations' [7, p. 13].

Resilience is given a very high theoretical status. In Chandler's terms, it is 'an emerging conceptual *paradigm*' [7, p. 47, italics added]. Moreover, resilience is said to be nothing less than 'the first post-liberal or post-modern episteme' [7, p. 47].

But it is doubtful that resilience-thinking can claim such a high status. Already the few elements cited above sound as quite familiar realist themes. Even Chandler himself has some reservations about their novelty. Thus, he grants that the thesis 'that today we live in a globalised and complex world' is considered 'a truism' [21, p. 175]. I cannot help but agree: this is a truism. And as such, it has been given much attention in a number of approaches other than resilience-thinking. But the truism of the complexity of the social world may also be misleading if it is read as though only the current world were somehow complex, while previously society had been 'simple'. It seems more fruitful to recognize that human society has always been complex, in any case much more complex than unconscious physical systems. And this complexity has precisely been an important preoccupation of penetrating realists. Certainly, almost any other theory also recognizes that the social world is complex, in a sense. But resilience-thinking and realism converge in their explicit discussion of and emphasis on complexity and limits to control in politics. And much as resilience-thinking, realists do not simply treat 'complexity' as a broad metaphor, but base their views of complexity on the ideas of modern science, including systems theory (see below).

Chandler acknowledges that resilience is not the first approach to oppose 'the reality of complex life against the artifice of human social construction' [7, p. 204]. The novelty, for Chandler, lies in that complexity is not simply 'the limit to' governance — it is taken

to be the foundation of governance [7, p.204]. Yet, the similar theme of having to govern within the reality of complexity is also quite familiar for realism.

Chandler also recognizes, in a note, that some philosophers of science have for more than a century challenged ‘the hubris of reason’ and “‘mechanical’ materialism” [7, p.199, note 15]. In its critique of rationalism, resilience-thinking is thus also not very novel. Chandler grants that well before Bruno Latour and William Connolly, critiques of simplistic materialism and mechanicalism were presented by, for example, Edmund Husserl or Martin Heidegger [7, p.199, note 15]. This is true; but Chandler quite predictably limits himself to such fashionable lines of thought as those running through Husserl, Heidegger, Latour, or Connolly. No mention is made of the realist tradition. But in fact, the realist tradition from Thucydides to Reinhold Niebuhr and Hans Morgenthau may very well be compared to, say, some aspects in Heidegger or other similar thinkers who have been critical of rationalism and stressed ‘the ineliminability of tragedy’ in politics (see, e.g., [15, p.136]). Contrary to stereotypes, neither Hobbes, nor Morgenthau [13, p.19–51, 82–127], nor even Waltz [20, p.14–15] were positivists. Chandler also refers to Robert Jervis’s well-known work on complexity (see [7, p.92, note 1, p.237; 22]). But Jervis is again typical of neorealism, which certainly insisted on its own scientific status, but which, as the previous realists, still considered both scientific and political rationality as quite circumscribed and relative to subjective perspectives (see [20, p.8, 18, footnote 81, p.20–22]).

Chandler acknowledges as well that resilience-thinking is connected to pragmatist philosophy, e.g., to that of John Dewey (see [7, p.53; 23; 24, p.86–87, 89, note 1]). Other scholars have also increasingly stressed the links between resilience-thinking and pragmatism [10; 25]. Again, no reference to realism is made. To turn to pragmatism has in general become ‘trendy’ in IR. But the evident links between pragmatism and realism have been as if hidden in plain sight for those concerned with resilience. For example, both ‘the Realist ethics of responsibility’ and ‘a Pragmatist ethics of *phronesis*’ revolve around ‘context, practicality and consequentiality’ [16, p.785]. Examining all other connections between realism and pragmatism would be much beyond the article’s scope: I presume that they are quite evident (some of them are indicated below; for details on the topic, see, e.g. [16]). Suffice it to stress that the connections between resilience-thinking and pragmatism recently identified by some authors only add evidence of the connections of the former to realism.

Thus, Chandler himself grants that some aspects of resilience are not novel or gives hints that help us to adumbrate the connections between resilience-thinking and realism.

Again, the realism that I refer to is not a stereotypical realism developed by some self-described realists in IR and used as a foil by their critics. Even a cursory rereading of the classics will show that, for example, Thucydides offered us a “‘tragic narrative’”, that Machiavelli stressed ‘the fickleness of *Fortuna*’, or that Augustine depicted ‘the mad-dash strivings of peoples... to achieve a happiness that always eludes them’ [17, p.417]. Largely the same themes resurfaced in Morgenthau, sometimes very explicitly (see especially [26]). It would be mistaken to equate the whole of realism with rationalism or materialism (see, e.g., [18]). True, especially in the works of many neorealists, the scepticism of their classical predecessors was muted. But as I will show, it was not absent, and it also resonated with resilience-thinking.

Writing in 2014, Chandler largely presented resilience as the response to the end of the Cold War, of the Left-Right divide, and of liberal approaches (see [7, p.23, 184]).

Basically, resilience is presented as the dominant reaction to the crumbling of the old certainties and old debates. But a similar role has traditionally been claimed by realism. It seems possible to read, for instance, Thucydides as a reaction to the crisis of the Peloponnesian War that swept the whole of the Greek world, or Machiavelli as a reaction to the end of medieval Europe, or Morgenthau as a reaction to the catastrophes of the mid-20th century. Today, a number of scholars take inspiration in some classical realists to grapple with 'the political and economic hegemony of liberalism' [9, p. 443]. In all of these cases, realism has presented itself as a sober reminder of the 'realities' of politics and an antidote to approaches (liberal/'utopian') that 'neglect' those 'realities'. Writing in the wake of the end of the Cold War, and well before Chandler, Michael Loriaux gives us an example of how sceptical themes within realism can be taken into account. Loriaux explored St. Augustine's influence on realism and its relevance for analyzing the complexities of politics after the Cold War. Loriaux's message is that realist scepticism should be analyzed much more thoroughly at a time when the left ideas of revolution have been severely thwarted, but also when 'the bourgeois's faith in the goodness of markets is anything but triumphant' [17, p. 418]. Basically, this is a very similar call to that of resilience-thinking, that is, a call to go beyond both the old Left ideas and neoliberalism.

Ontology

Resilience-thinking, we are told by Chandler, grapples with 'ontological complexity' [7, p. 63]. Throughout Chandler's book, 'Complex Life' is opposed to 'Liberal' conceptions: 'complex life' is 'non-linear', not 'linear', 'concrete', not 'abstract', and 'real', not 'artificial', among other things [7, p. 64]. 'Complex Life' also implies 'plurality', not 'singularity' [7, p. 64]. Such dichotomies, however, sound very much like the familiar terms in which realists have traditionally criticized 'liberals'/'utopians'. The pathos of realism has consisted precisely in its longing for grasping the real, the complex, the concrete of political life. Realists have criticized liberals precisely for being simplistic and abstract about politics, of trying to regulate politics through 'artificial' institutions. They have accused liberalism of attempting to bring the plurality of politics, especially international politics, under a single political principle. This kind of discussion is, indeed, a reedition of the first Great Debate in IR theory.

This is connected to further interesting philosophical parallels in how both resilience-thinking and realism conceive of politics and power. Largely, both approaches are *ontologically immanent*, i. e. they stress processes and self-organization *within* society in general (resilience) and within politics (realism), whereby there is no *external* point to which society and politics can be subjected. Society and politics consist in interactions and self-organization of a *plurality of powers*.

For Chandler, 'there is no outside to an interactive... world' [7, p. 65]; not only society, but 'the world itself operates on the basis of autonomous self-activity and self-reproduction' [7, p. 63]. Hierarchies of governance are flattened [7, p. 64–65]. Governance is possible only 'through' the activities of 'agency' and 'life', not 'over or against' these activities [7, p. 41, 65]. Genuine governance is connected to 'constituent multiplicity' of concrete people, not to artificial 'constituted structures' above the people [7, p. 64–65]. In good postmodernist fashion, resilience-thinking privileges 'the political' over 'politics': the former is the more 'real', foundational and changing power of the subjects, whereas the latter

is the more 'formal', 'fixed', 'artificial' 'power over' them (see [7, p.59–60]). The former refers to 'the power which really exist[s] in life itself', the latter to 'liberal' politics of formal institutions [7, p. 60]. Quite logically, the fundamental plurality of the political should not and cannot be depoliticized, reduced to a single, universal principle (see, e. g., [24]). To be sure, in describing these views of the political, Chandler refers to such postmodernist authorities as Heidegger, Gilles Deleuze, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, or Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (see [7, p. 59–61]). No mention of realism is made, as elsewhere.

What are, then, the parallels with realism? At first sight, since realism focuses on the (formal) institution of the state, it would be opposed to resilience-thinking. Yet, at least classical realists did not consider the state as the only possible political entity (see [9, p.447–448]). More importantly, there are some philosophical parallels of *principle*. For realists, as is well-known, politics is a distinctive sphere of human life. And international politics, besides being a distinctive sphere, is also the one whose defining feature is the plurality of sovereign powers. It is constituted by this plurality. As a rule, no single power or unproblematic principle exists over and above these competing powers, their interests and visions. Even if a hegemon arises due to its overwhelming power, it weakens sooner or later. Again, there is no 'outside' or 'above' to this picture of international politics; there are only powers and their relations. This is, for the realist, the political reality. Accordingly, this reality should be governed keeping its nature in mind. This is a reality that can be governed only from within and through its potentialities. It cannot be governed, again, with the help of 'formal', 'artificial' liberal institutions and principles built above the real political plurality of the powers. If some aspects of this reality are to be changed, they can only be changed taking into account the existing power relations. To repeat, what matters most here is the realist philosophical stress on the plurality of powers, not their more concrete historical recognition that states have been the main powers. The logic of realism may well accommodate pluralism of different kinds of powers, be they states or other entities, even competing interests within a state, as I note below. It is pluralism *per se* that matters, not its interstate historical manifestation. And this makes realism logically similar to resilience-thinking, which clearly has a broad vision of social pluralism.

Power in realism is not seen in a negative light only. If pursued appropriately, power produces balance and moderation (for classical realists) or even more substantive ethical virtues (e. g., for Thucydides). In this view of power, realism is strikingly similar to postmodernism. For the latter, particularly for Foucault, power, which is an integral constituent of social life, may be positive in creating subjectivities and guaranteeing their pluralism (see [27, p.31–32]). And according to a leading student of realism, for example, 'Morgenthau's realism attempts to recognize the centrality of power in politics without reducing politics to violence' [14, p.633]. Just as postmodernists see in the plurality of powers a potential for pluralism and an antidote against depoliticisation, some classical realists (at least) championed 'a politics of plurality and critical judgment' [9, p.446] and 'an open and critical sphere of public political debate' [14, p.633]. Recall that, for Morgenthau, balance of power was applicable to both international politics and domestic politics, including the logic of checks and balances. The thrust of balance of power was precisely to uphold political pluralism [28, p. 125–129; see also 9, p. 446–447]. Much like resilience-thinking, which is connected to philosophical pragmatism, classical realism was also linked to pragmatism in that both largely focused on 'the question of how to save the creative potential of democracy from the stifling homogeneity of modernity'

[16, p. 784]. Indeed, Morgenthau may be read through much the same oppositions of the political and politics mentioned above in connection to resilience. And it can be shown that Morgenthau developed, even if partly, a sensitivity to the political and was critical of depoliticisation [19]. When relating a postmodern resilience-thinking to realism, it is telling to note that we can find, at least, in some of the classical realists ideas closer to the political left rather than to conservatism (see this feature noted by William Scheuerman in [9, p. 451, note 4]).

At the centre of resilience-thinking is complexity. It implies unpredictability and unintended consequences that cannot be comprehended through the old rationalism. Chandler uses some developments in the sciences to uphold his view. We find predictable references to quantum physics, especially Heisenberg's uncertainty principle [7, p. 24]. He also refers to the work of biologist Stuart Kauffman to justify the idea that 'the "real" of complex emergent life' defies attempts to grasp its complexity with the help of human reason [7, p. 33].

However, such an approach is neither new nor alien for realism. In a book by Morgenthau written over seventy years ago, we find passages typical of classical realists which oppose the old hubris of reason and the reality of society. The former is 'always simple, consistent, and abstract', whereas the latter 'is always complicated, incongruous, and concrete' [26, p. 16]. There is no 'simple, rational, mechanical' 'magic formula' to comprehend the 'complicated, irrational, incalculable' politics [26, p. 86]. What is even more interesting is that, while this book by Morgenthau is rightly seen as sceptical, he also used the *natural sciences* to criticize the old certainties of rationalism. Thus, Morgenthau was quick to refer to the discoveries of relativity and of quantum indeterminacy for much the same purposes as Chandler does: for justifying his understanding of politics as complex and limited in its knowability [26, p. 116]. Using some scientific advances is thus not an exclusive province of resilience-thinking or other 'trendy' approaches. This was done even by the philosophically-minded classical realists. The same trend was explicitly and widely developed in neorealist works. Robert Jervis's book on complexity has already been mentioned [22]; in the same vein, Thomas Czerwinski stressed nonlinearity [29]. Randall Schweller used the notion of entropy to back up his realist account of politics [30]. In Jervis, for example, we find much the same language as in resilience-thinking: an emphasis on 'nonlinear relationships', emergent qualities of systems, and 'unintended' outcomes [22, p. 6].

If we turn to realist views of history, as well as those in resilience-thinking, it is clear that both approaches are far from what they take as linear liberal philosophies of history. Resilience-thinking privileges 'becoming' over 'being', and 'contingency' over 'certainty' [7, p. 64]. Realists' theories of history are varied, to be sure. Sometimes, they have leaned to stating 'laws' of history. But on the other hand, some classical realists were deeply sceptical about the possibility of formulating any logic of the unfolding of history. They emphasized contingency and thoroughgoing change (see [31]). In any case, the common denominator for most realists is that history has largely consisted in essentially unchanging competition for survival and/or power among the plurality of changing powers. So, at any rate, the realist 'skepticism regarding the prospects for durable political improvement' [17, p. 418] is opposed to what it takes to be linear — logical and progressive — views of history.

There is also an element of order to complexity in both resilience-thinking and realism. Chandler writes that 'complex life is neither ordered nor chaotic': it 'is... generative of self-governing order' [7, p. 20]. Complexity is characterized by 'autopoiesis' [7, p. 64]. Yet,

realists may reply that balance of power provides quite an analogous mechanism for order under the condition of anarchy, and that sometimes a hegemon may also order an international system. In any case, whatever the factors of order in the realist picture, they are immanent to the international politics: order is produced from within the system by the dynamics of power relations, and can be changed only using the existing potentialities of the system. Jervis states similar things about order, only in the language of systems theory: 'individual actors following simple and uncoordinated strategies can produce aggregate behavior that is complex and ordered' [22, p. 7].

Epistemology

Both resilience-thinking and much of realism are opposed to universalist, abstract formulations of knowledge. For both, the subject and object of knowledge are largely inseparable. Knowledge is understood in line with pragmatic philosophy. It can only be limited and contextual. At the same time, such view of knowledge does not prevent both resilience-thinking and realism from offering their own, quite general theories of politics.

This kind of epistemology is readily apparent in resilience-thinking, but its identification with realism may be counterintuitive. Realism is often associated with precisely opposite features, i. e. positivist statements of universal laws. However, this picture of realism is one-sided; it rather applies to the more simplistic writings of some realists and to their explicit appearance of positivism. But in many prominent realist works, one finds an epistemology that is more similar to resilience-thinking.

Chandler's understanding of resilience opposes the modernist separation between subject and object in general [7, p. 6–9]. This has evident consequences for epistemology, i. e. that the knower and the known cannot be clearly separated. This is, of course, a received wisdom among postmodernists. But it was present in realism, especially of some classical realists. For example, Morgenthau did not at all see the social scientist as detached from the social context. In some places, he put a very strong emphasis on how far social conditions influence the scholar, including the substantive aspects of his or her studies [26, p. 136–144]. And while the entanglements of the knower and the known were especially strong in the social world, Morgenthau probably saw them in the natural sciences, too. This is suggested by at least his reference to quantum physics, where there is a fundamental interdependence of the subject and the object of knowledge.

Morgenthau, along with other scholars who migrated from Europe to the US (such as Hannah Arendt or Herbert Marcuse), was largely sceptical toward positivism. If he acknowledged the connectedness of the subject and the object of knowledge, then, logically, he also acknowledged the ethical responsibilities of the scholar, especially in the social sciences. Following Max Weber, Morgenthau certainly argued for an autonomy of scholar from politics, but, as we have seen, such autonomy was possible to a quite *limited* extent given the social influences on the scholar, as the anti-positivist fragments from Morgenthau referred to above make clear. Moreover, that relative autonomy of the scholar from politics did not at all mean indifference toward values in politics and the actions of the powerful. Quite the opposite: for Morgenthau, active political and social engagement of the scholar was vital (see [32, p. 267–268]). The scholar should try to be autonomous from power precisely to be in a position to act as a '*judge of power*' [32, p. 267, italics in the original].

I have already mentioned the connections of both resilience-thinking and realism with philosophical pragmatism. This also has an evident bearing on their epistemologies. Within the resilience perspective, knowledge can only be 'concrete rather than abstract', 'resilience-thinking lends itself to action-research methods engaging with actors in the situation, rather than to expert knowledge' of liberalism or neoliberalism [7, p. 41–42]. Now compare this with Morgenthau's following statement, which is, by the way, not from his early, most anti-positivist writings, but from a much later period. Morgenthau wrote: 'all great political theory... has been practical political theory... that intervenes actively in a concrete political situation with the purpose of change through action' (cited in [33, p. 439]). Realism has traditionally stressed pragmatic aspects and has been implicated in practical policy-making. One may of course like or dislike some of realism's connections to political practice, but one cannot ignore them.

Chandler also teaches us 'that all knowledge can only be local, contextual and time and place specific' [7, p. 42]. Chandler presents this as 'the reality of the world' [7, p. 42]. But many of the classical realists were also characterized by their 'rejection of absolute truths in politics' [9, p. 446]. Such picture of knowledge, especially social, was drawn by Morgenthau in some of his writings (see in particular [26]). There, knowledge is always circumscribed. Recall, once again, that Morgenthau characterized politics as 'concrete', 'incongruous', 'incalculable'. Morgenthau did not, of course, develop this contextual view of knowledge to its extreme, largely because he sometimes wanted to make of realism itself a theory capable of comprehending politics at all times and in all places. But still, we do find in him at least a potentially contextual epistemology. It was not 'a rigid epistemology, a suprahistorical structure of explanation', not a kind of essentialism, but 'an appreciation of the spatio-temporal contingencies' and 'the historically determined, and thus contingent, nature of all social and political thought' [19, p. 368, note 68, p. 369, 372]. It is these contextual aspects of epistemology in Morgenthau that it would be more interesting to take into account, if only because they have been for too long overshadowed by the more 'objective' and universalist aspects of his works.

What is especially worth noting is that the classical realist emphasis on the limits to knowledge was also kept in *neorealism*. Neorealists' reliance on mathematics and the sciences should not lead us to assume that they tried to theorize 'the objective reality'. Contrary to their image, many of them did not. For instance, Kenneth Waltz continued the traditional 'tension between realism and science' in the sense that he rejected positivism as a scientific method [20, p. 14–15]. Instead, Waltz's understanding of science implied 'the interdependence of theory and fact' (cited in [20, p. 15]). Or take Jervis's work on complexity. He believes that there are limits that theorizing about politics cannot overcome. For one thing, these limits relate to the specificities of society as consisting of human beings. People have 'beliefs', 'guile and idiosyncracies' [22, p. 4]. But Jervis also justifies the limits to knowledge by an argument from systems theory. He notes that, in general, the predictability of systems is often circumscribed; '[m]any systems, including inanimate ones, are highly complex and contingent' [22, p. 4]. What we have in Jervis is an interesting combination typical of neorealists. That is, there is still the traditional realist stress on the complexity of human beliefs, of individual particularities and of human shrewdness that admit of no fully rational comprehension. Such a view has been present in realism probably from its very beginnings in the antiquity. But now, this traditional view is backed up by the scientific language, in this case by systems theory.

Yet, Jervis makes another typical realist move. He claims that despite the above-mentioned complexity and contingency, he is able to identify some patterns in the systems. In good realist fashion, he claims that 'the Cold War resembled the rivalry between Athens and Sparta', and he even writes about 'parallel processes in realms as diverse as international politics and ecology' [22, p. 5] (this parallelism between society and ecology is, of course, widespread in resilience-thinking). Realism has traditionally claimed to comprehend a few essential patterns that cut across all politics and history, however complex and contingent politics and history might be declared by realists themselves. In this, realism is again similar to resilience-thinking. Both approaches offer quite general theories of how the world 'really' works. The irony is that both realism and resilience-thinking pretend to be the best approaches available to get to a complex 'reality', although both have *themselves* described this reality as to a large extent unknowable.

Resilience-thinking and realism: some common strengths and problems

We have thus identified some philosophical affinities between the two seemingly very different theories, resilience-thinking and realism. Both approaches may be related to a broad tradition of thought that has for centuries stressed the complexity, plurality and unpredictability of human affairs, and the challenges this poses to understanding and controlling them. These questions have always been relevant. More specifically, both resilience-thinking and realism (since long before) have presented themselves as alternatives to modernity's 'liberal', 'idealist', 'formalist', 'abstract', 'optimistic' ideas.

It is probable that, currently, world politics has indeed reached a degree of complexity unseen before, and scholars have developed tools for analysing it that are also unprecedented. In this light, taking into account the novel resilience-thinking (as analyzed by Chandler and others) seems highly topical. But remembering some traditional aspects of realism also appears relevant. In many respects, both realism and resilience-thinking have offered penetrating critiques of simplistic, optimistic approaches that are inapplicable to today's world, and perhaps have never been justified.

An important advantage of both realism and resilience-thinking has been the recognition of the *plural* aspect of politics and of political knowledge. Accordingly, both theories have opposed any attempts to simplify them, to impose a depoliticising closure on discussion in politics or in political science.

Nevertheless, this should not mean that any discussion is desirable. Not all viewpoints are equally reasonable, and pluralism in the absence of some reasonable criteria for their comparison may lead to destructive conflict and arbitrariness. Therefore, coming to the problems of resilience-thinking (at least as analyzed by Chandler) and realism, the first one is related to the elements of relativism in both. Both have a largely subjective understanding of rationality. Certainly, rationality cannot be understood in a dogmatic fashion either. Yet, there is no need to choose between the two equally vulnerable alternatives of relativism and dogmatism. There are many more refined understandings of rationality, and the growing complexity of the world is no obstacle to applying them. Quite the opposite, today's complexity calls not for surrendering at the discretion of full arbitrariness and unknowability, but for finessing our rationality further and applying it to resilience-thinking. Chandler himself alerts us to the fact that resilience-thinking should not lead to giving up the idea that there are at least some knowable regularities in the world. If there

were complete arbitrariness and unknowability, then there would be no genuine freedom or meaning in the world for human beings (see [7, p. 185–186, 197–198, 224] see also [10, p. 420–421]). This is an old, mostly Kantian theme in philosophy: if there were no at least some common criteria of truth (which are of course developing), there would be a risk that they would be replaced by ‘natural necessity’ or arbitrary political coercion. To be sure, many advocates of realism and of resilience-thinking are opposed to such kind of arbitrariness and unknowability. But the problem is that some of their approaches might be used to give arbitrariness and unknowability an appearance of reality.

Secondly, there is a tension in resilience-thinking and realism, which is that both theories stress complexity and contingency, but then set out to offer some broad and largely unhistorical categories to grasp those complexity and contingency. This contradiction is characteristic of subjectivist approaches. On the one hand, they emphasize plurality and limits to knowledge, but on the other, they claim that it is they that ‘know better’ than others what reality is. Certainly, most other theories also somehow conceive of ‘reality’. Yet, resilience-thinking and realism are distinctive in that they intentionally and repeatedly stress their own ‘realistic’ features and denounce other approaches as ‘unrealistic’, ‘artificial’, and the like. Resilience-thinking insists on complexity and the challenges it poses for coherent knowledge and policy, but still presents itself as the best way to know what ‘real life’ is and how governance is possible ‘through’ such life. Similarly, the tension in realism has been between highlighting complexity and contingency and at the same time searching for fixed categories that would explain the essential things about politics in all places and at all times (such as ‘power’ or ‘anarchy’)³. Related to this is that such broad categories as ‘complexity’ or ‘power’ become vague, and verge on truism/unfalsifiability.

Approaches that pretend to get to the core of ‘reality’ are easily used to silence alternative approaches as ‘unrealistic’, ‘artificial’ etc. There is, of course, a certain politics around who knows reality ‘better’ than others. This is a common criticism against realism, i. e. for pretending to be more ‘realistic’ than all other approaches. But to the extent that resilience-thinking also claims to know best what the very real life is, this criticism is also applicable to it. Both approaches should, then, be used with a kind of intellectual modesty, a modesty which can also be found in these very approaches because they themselves show how knowledge is difficult.

But possibly, both realism and resilience-thinking may be used as a political weapon even when they put a bigger emphasis on complexity and contingency. That is, they can be used as claiming that they are the best policy options under the conditions of complexity and unpredictability because they just somehow know their way about those complexity and unpredictability. The seasoned realist politician may typically pretend that he or she just feels better the practicalities of politics: while there can be no clear knowledge about the complex politics, he or she is the best person to cope with its vicissitudes. Here arise the issues of the politician’s accountability and mistakes. But the same may be true of a resilience-thinking discourse in politics when it is presented as the best approach which somehow knows better how to cope with the unpredictable aspects of politics — and which is not responsible for failures because some failures always happen under complexity (for close criticisms by Chandler himself, see [7, p. 225–226]).

³ Schmidt thinks a similar dilemma between the complexity of the world and the requirements of governance exists in neoliberalism (see [10, p. 412–415]), but discussing her approach to neoliberalism is beyond the scope of our work.

The third, related, range of problems is connected to the opposition between 'reality' and 'artifice'. As noted above, resilience-thinking opposes 'the reality of complex life against the artifice of human social construction' [7, p.204]. There is, thus, a dichotomy between 'reality/life' and an 'artificial' sphere of formal politics, taken to be 'liberal'. A similar dichotomy may be found in realism. This is, of course, connected to such old oppositions as nature/culture, reality/appearance and the like. While this is not a place to elaborate on them, it is evident that these oppositions are largely simplistic and obsolete. Nobody seems to have defined in strict terms what the 'natural' and 'the real' are in politics. There has of course been a traditional romantic theme which links the 'natural' with escaping from the 'artificial' civilization and living like 'noble savages'. There have also been traditional linkages, in some philosophers, between the real and the *present*, or the real and the *plural*. However, all such approaches ignore *other* important aspects of political reality itself. It may be claimed that it is quite 'natural' for the *zoon politikon* to create institutions, that ideals are part of political reality, as are cooperation and integration. Theories that pretend to have uncovered the 'reality' and the 'nature' of politics and call for a return to them from an 'artificial' sphere of institutions misunderstand the fact that those institutions are indeed an essential part of social reality in the first place. Much of realism (since long ago) and resilience-thinking have been blamed for accepting and reifying, even embracing a 'reality' of permanent danger, emergency and crisis, a 'reality' that they not only assume, but may help reinforce and perpetuate (see also [10, p. 406–408; 34, p. 419–421]).

It seems therefore that both realism and resilience-thinking may work in two different modes: (1) a politicizing/critical mode and (2) a depoliticizing/uncritical one. The first stresses plurality. The second, however, claims to have the best access to 'the reality', uses fixed categories, reinforces unaccountable power and reifies a 'reality' of permanent crisis.

The EU's turn to resilience-thinking and realism

The European Union has been the most influential international actor that has recently elevated resilience to the status of one of its overarching foreign policy goals. On the other hand, the EU's external action has rarely been considered using the potential of realism to its full; the EU has often seemed to be opposite to and inexplicable for realism (see also [9, p. 442, 444–445]). This makes it challenging — but promising — to apply the above comparison between resilience-thinking and realism to the EU's case. As I will try to show, it is possible to connect the EU's turn to resilience and realism. And this is fruitful, as this will contextualize the EU's policies on resilience and relate them to the age-old themes explored within and around realism. Such analysis will help to uncover potential problems of EU policies common to both realism and resilience-thinking.

Since the adoption of the EU's Global Strategy (EUGS), resilience has become one of the 'priorities' guiding all of its external action [5, p. 18, 23–28]. In the same context, the EU's discourse has increasingly invoked themes that are close to the realist thinking. It is clear that the EU's practice, as any other political practice, cannot be a simple continuation of theory, either that of resilience or realism. Still, these theories are reflected in large part in the EU's practice and are useful for understanding it.

The EU's optimism has subsided significantly. Among the EUGS's opening statements are: 'We live in times of existential crisis', 'Our Union is under threat'; the world is

said to be 'difficult, more connected, contested and complex' [5, p. 13]. According to the main architect of the EUGS, Nathalie Tocci, '[t]he term "resilience" was chosen as a priority for two reasons', one of which 'is that it reflected the notion of principled pragmatism' [35, p. 70]. 'Principled pragmatism' is connected to combining 'a realistic assessment of the strategic environment' and 'an idealistic aspiration to advance a better world', and to 'engag[ing] the world manifesting responsibility towards others and sensitivity to contingency' [5, p. 16]. Of course, the connections between resilience, on the one hand, and the EU's reduced 'optimism', the discourse of 'crisis, complexity and a sense of uncertainty', on the other hand, have been recognized in the literature [25, p. 7]. Also, resilience's relations with 'principled pragmatism' have been explored (besides Tocci above, see [25; 34, p. 415–416]).

Unfortunately, however, those who have examined these themes have engaged with realism in a rather fragmentary way, at best. Ana Juncos, for instance, simplistically opposes principles and pragmatism in an either/or fashion, and thus reproduces the dead-locked norms-interests dichotomy once again [25, p. 2, 14–15]. She also seems to reduce realism to a 'state-centric' approach concerned with 'stability' and 'security', and she insists 'that resilience is not a realist or neo-realist strategy as understood in International Relations theory' [25, p. 12]. Yet, as was argued below, realism need not be reduced to any of these features only. At its deepest, realism has been for ages concerned precisely with how to combine pragmatic considerations and principles, while recognizing that this combination is extremely complicated. Juncos's own discussion of the relations between pragmatism and principles might have gained, had she paid more attention to insights accumulated during the centuries of realist thought. Ironically, Juncos does 'rediscover' basically realist themes, yet they are never systematically related by her to realism. Thus, referring to Sven Biscop, she writes about 'a turn to "Realpolitik"' (in the original sense of the term coined by Ludwig von Rochau) [25, p. 11]. Juncos also notes the EU's stress on 'responsibility' and 'responsible engagement' (see [5, p. 17]) that cannot, of course, guarantee perfect results but that are still preferred to 'passivity' [25, p. 9–10]. Finally, Juncos agrees that principled pragmatism is associated with a stress on consequences and with what we can consider as a Weberian ethic of responsibility (see [25, p. 11]). It is clear that all these themes — i. e., how to engage actively and responsibly with the world, however imperfect it may be — have long been central to realism.

Other authors note that, in terms of discourse, 'the EU has increasingly started thinking about power and competition and in increasingly realist terms' and that it has emphasized the importance of 'geopolitical considerations' [36, p. 3]. Cristian Nitoiu and Monika Sus call the EUGS 'the most strategic document the EU has ever had' [36, p. 11]. However, their approach risks equating realism with 'material power capabilities and geopolitics' [36, p. 4], while realism is not only about material power, let alone geopolitics.

André Barrinha has so far been the only author who consistently applied the ideas of some classical realists to the EU's current external action. Namely, Barrinha used what William Scheuerman called '[p]rogressive realism', which is exemplified by Niebuhr, Morgenthau or John Herz, but also can include those contemporary scholars who revive 'the theoretical, political and philosophical sophistication of these classical authors' [9, p. 442–443]. Unfortunately, Barrinha did not analyze the final text of the EUGS and made no reference to resilience.

Now, relating resilience-thinking and realism seems to offer us some substantive insights for studying the EU. Analyses of the EU's turn to resilience need not necessarily be detached from realism. Instead of reinventing the wheel, we can gain from contextualizing the discussion and relating it to the age-old disputes within and around realism. It should be clear that I do not see either resilience-thinking or realism as the best approach in descriptive or normative terms. As we have seen, both have strengths and problems. My point is that reflecting on them allows us to better reflect on the prospective strengths and problems of the EU's external action itself.

The important insights of both resilience-thinking and realism identified above revolve around their critiques of simplistic, optimistic approaches and their stress on the plural aspect of politics. Clearly, the EU's discourse has been moving from its previous optimistic universalist conceptions to the recognition of more complex realities. This recognition is indeed important for the EU now, given the numerous external and internal challenges it is facing. But the successfulness of any actor always depends, almost by definition, on how 'realistic' it is. The problem, of course, consists in defining what it means to be 'realistic' in practice.

Resilience-thinking obviously privileges plurality in politics. And for realism, as Barriinha reminds us, 'the need for plurality' (of interests) is important at the international and domestic levels, reflecting both 'the diversity of national interests' and 'the internal plurality of a given political entity' [9, p. 446]. At the international level, this stress on pluralism may prompt the EU to take more into account the specificities of other players and the need for compromise with them (see also [9, p. 446–447]). According to Chandler and most other theorists, resilience refers to the *internal* development of every specific system; transformation 'needs to come from within; resilience cannot be "given" or "produced" by outside actors', whose leverage over other societies is limited [37, p. 277] (see also [34, p. 424; 25, p. 4]). The EU's discourse partly reflects this recognition; it states that '[r]esilience is context-specific, and requires tailor-made approaches' [6, p. 23], and that it 'will support different paths to resilience to its east and south' [5, p. 25].

But the theme of plurality is also important for the internal processes within the EU itself. The heterogeneity and contestation which are characteristic of the EU mean that different conceptualizations of resilience may be expected to evolve within it and influence its external action. From a realist perspective, a genuine 'grand strategy' could soften the EU's internal 'democratic deficit', because such a strategy would imply 'a process of permanent self-reflection and critique' on the EU's policies within it [9, p. 449].

On the other hand, the problems of both resilience-thinking and realism identified above also point to practical problems the EU may face. The first range of problems concerns the elements of relativism in both. In normative terms, the plurality that we have explored above contains little in terms of substantively rational criteria which could show which actors the EU should accommodate for the sake of compromises, and which it should not. There is a slippery slope from pragmatism and contextual morality to cynicism, which has long been clear to the critics of realism and which is relevant for the current discussion on resilience. The EU may indeed become subject to 'more criticisms of self-interest, selectivity and double standards', which will thwart its 'normative' image and thus also the effectiveness of its policies [25, p. 2].

The second range of problems revolves around the contradiction in realism and resilience-thinking between the modesty of assuming limitations to knowledge and their

claim to be 'more realistic' than other approaches. Both realism and resilience-thinking raise the problem of how governance is possible when the world has been declared to a large degree beyond understanding and control. This contradiction will likely play out between the EU's respect for pluralism and attempts to impose its own templates. Despite its discourse, the EU may still be tempted to promote its fixed understanding of resilience as a single 'correct' one. Or it may simply view resilience as a more 'realistic' (and cheaper) new instrument to promote its old universalist agenda. This agenda, as many authors show, has not been entirely abandoned (see, e.g., [25; 34]). Resilience thus may lose its critical potential and be used in a depoliticized/uncritical mode as a mere tool for an uncritical and unreflective promotion of the EU's norms. However, in either case, this will provoke concerns on the part of external actors. And this will hardly be realistic in the end, given that resilience cannot be brought ready-made to other societies. Moreover, the uncritical use of resilience will mean not only that the EU will not heed the critical voices of external actors, but also that its internal democratic deficit will exacerbate as it will not listen to domestic critiques of and be accountable for its policies on resilience.

Finally, both realism and resilience-thinking may be used to assume as self-evident and unchanging a reality of permanent crisis, thus foreclosing the possibilities for cooperation and change. This may serve as an excuse for the EU to give up attempts at compromises and at the resolution of the root causes of social problems. Blame for these problems will be laid on their victims themselves. This will be thus an excuse for the EU's lack of responsibility, both internationally and internally (see also [34, p. 419–421]).

Conclusion

We have identified some affinities between resilience-thinking, as analyzed by David Chandler, and political realism. The stress of resilience, as a novel conception, on the complexity of the contemporary world is very important, yet, it is possible and indeed useful to contextualize it and relate it, if in part, to the age-old concerns of the realist tradition.

Some of the strengths and problems that we identified in resilience-thinking and realism show that both may be used in two modes, a politicizing/critical and a depoliticizing/uncritical one. In the first mode, the theme of plurality and modesty will be foregrounded, as discussed when we noted the strengths of these approaches. In the second mode, resilience-thinking and realism will suffer from the weaknesses that we discussed as the second and the third range of problems, which deal with the claim to know the 'reality' best, the use of fixed categories, the irresponsibility, and the reification of an understanding of reality as a permanent crisis. The identification of these two modes is not surprising. They largely coincide with two broad strands that we find in both the literature on resilience and on realism. Resilience is understood either as an uncritical/depoliticizing ideology or as a notion that may be used in various ways, including critical/politicizing. Realism is also subject to either criticisms as an apologia of power and stasis, or to more nuanced approaches that find critical/politicizing elements in it. In this article, we have tried to approach both resilience-thinking and realism as rich theories that, at least potentially, have strengths. But, of course, the criticisms addressed to them cannot be ignored, as these theories risk being used in an uncritical/depoliticizing mode, including in political practice.

Moreover, we have identified another vulnerability in both theories. It concerns elements of relativism discussed as the first range of problems. Even if resilience-thinking (at

least as analyzed by Chandler) or realism are used in a critical/politicizing mode stressing pluralism, they offer few substantively rational criteria for deciding which actions it is normatively acceptable — and indeed realistic in the long run — to take, and which it is not. To be sure, many advocates of realism and resilience will sincerely choose the acceptable and effective course, but their approaches will still be subjective. Both approaches risk therefore being used in attempts to transform pluralism into destructive conflict and/or normative arbitrariness. And the subjective/relativist elements in both also make it very hard to predict how they will be used in political practice, as the EU's example will likely show in the future. We may only explore general problems and prospects that will likely emerge in different scenarios, such as those that we outlined regarding the EU.

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