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A R T I C L E I N F O	A B S T R A C T
	Medellin and New Orleans were regularly presented as resilience flagships of the Rockefeller's *100 Resilient Cities* (100RC) program. In this article, I will demonstrate how 100RC was embedded or abandoned in both cities' policies. The two case studies provide an opportunity to understand how the 100RC approach to resilience offered – or failed to offer – an appropriate space for the multiple deployments of resilience. 100RC initially promoted an integrative definition of resilience, aiming to address natural as well as social stresses and shocks. I argue that this holistic approach paradoxically contributed to limiting the multiplicity of resilience in both cities. In Medellin, the project came to a halt after political changes. New Orleans eventually developed a more reductionist and technical approach than that initially formulated, focusing on the effectiveness of infrastructures rather than social changes. Considering the importance of contextualizing resilience to local concerns, this analysis will thus demonstrate some of the challenges implied in the institutionalization of a global model of resilience. Moreover, it will also highlight the importance of contextualizing neoliberalism and question the widespread vision of resilient cities as being merely neoliberal.

1. Introduction

Disasters affecting urban centres throughout the world contributed to putting urban resilience centre-stage in city-discourses. Hurricane Katrina which devastated New Orleans in 2005 is certainly one of the most memorable events in this context. After this disastrous storm, scholars (Baker, 2020; Hernandez, 2012; Tierney, 2015) identified the saturation generated by the recurrent mobilization of resilience in New Orleans. Many residents and grassroots organizations, but also practitioners, increasingly called into question this vision of resilience as a tool to govern cities better. An emblematic illustration of these tensions is the call from the co-director of the Louisiana Justice Institute Tracie Washington: "Stop calling me resilient. Because every time you say, 'Oh, they're resilient,' that means you can do something else to me. I am not resilient" (Kaika, 2017). Posters throughout New Orleans featured this quote in 2015, questioning what some critics viewed as a neoliberal turn in recovery politics and disaster management in their city (Hernandez, 2012; Johnson et al., 2011; Tierney, 2015). The rise of New Orleans as a resilience flagship helped transform the city into a laboratory exploring public–private partnerships as a way to overcome the state's shortcomings. Its inclusion as one of the first members of Rockefeller's *100 Resilient Cities* (100RC) network in 2015 consolidated the vision of the

city as a place for experimentation. The Rockefeller Foundation's then president, Judith Rodin, stated that the storm Katrina "forced" the city into resilience building: "New Orleans in some ways was the hot bed, the testbed, for all of these ideas. And it was a springboard for us for more than half a billion dollars we've invested in resilience building in cities of all sizes around the world in the last 10 years" (Kang, 2018, para.8).

Medellin represents another exemplary case of urban resilience, particularly in relation to endemic violence. Considered for decades as the murder capital of the world, the city developed from 2004 onwards an ambitious program labelled as "social urbanism", based on public space regeneration and community participation in its poorer neighbourhoods. This initiative was hailed internationally and Medellin progressively became a global model in terms of security, urban design and sustainable mobility. Medellin also joined 100RC as one of its first members. In its application, the city focused on the social dimension of resilience, after the decades of violence its population had endured.

Hence, 100RC viewed New Orleans and Medellin as "pioneer cities", the first presented as a resilience flagship in terms of water management, while the second acquired a similar status in relation to urban violence. Judith Rodin significantly oriented Rockefeller's agenda toward resilience when she was president (2005–2017), a concept that inspired her book *The Resilience Dividend* (2014). The idea of "dividend" implies that

preventative investment in resilience can be profitable and strengthen socio-ecological wellbeing. It not only reduces vulnerability or mitigates a threat but also benefits multiple groups in the form of economic, social, and infrastructure gains (Rodin, 2014). In her work, Rodin introduced New Orleans and Medellin as vivid illustrations of the resilience dividend. Taking mobility as an example, she demonstrated for instance how Medellin's Metro system and its world-famous outdoor electric stairs enhanced its role as a model of resilience building for Latin America and beyond (Rodin, 2014).

In this analysis, I will demonstrate how 100RC was embedded or abandoned in Medellin's and New Orleans' city policies. By describing the roles of the two cities as global resilience flagships, I will look at whether certain components of 100RC's definition of resilience did, or did not, stabilize in their planning and policymaking. Through an analysis of the discourses of resilience officers and program partners, I will examine some resistances observed on the ground, related to the development of the 100RC program, but also to the designation of cities and their citizens as "resilient". I suggest first that the diverse understandings of the concept of resilience can sometimes produce clashes between resilience practitioners, municipality representatives, private/ public partners and residents. Secondly, I maintain that the overuse of this disputed concept in municipality discourses, policy-building, and city-branding leads to saturation among certain residents, but also among urban practitioners themselves. Finally, considering the importance of contextualizing both resilience and neoliberalism, I will question the widespread vision of resilient cities as being merely neoliberal.

1.1. The multiplicity of resilience and the neoliberal subject

Resilience has given rise to a large corpus of critical scholarship in the fields of international relations, geography, philosophy and political ecology. While many consider it as a buzzword in development discourses or a smokescreen to sustain neoliberal ideologies, Kevin Grove (2018) insists on the importance of taking seriously the challenge inherent in resilience thinking. Grove considers resilience as an "essentially contested concept", implying that any effort to define it is political and ethical. Studying this contestation, shedding light on competing definitions, allows resilience to become a site for possibilities. To achieve this goal, Rogers (2018) highlights the importance of contextualizing this increasingly polysemic concept; the kind of resilience built, its purpose, its benefits, all of these features varying according to the different situations. In keeping with this vision, Simon and Randalls (2016) view resilience as ambiguous, multiple and contextual. Using this concept in various disciplines, spanning psychology, ecology, economy and security, implies for them an "explosion of resilience deployments". They suggest that there is not one singular resilience argument and offer an analysis of "multiple resiliences" inspired by different geographies, temporalities, and political implications.

These scholars thus call into question a widespread assumption in critical studies that resilience merely maintained a status quo in development policies by producing a depoliticized language that would fail to take into account distributive and power relations (Matin et al., 2018; Fainstein, 2015). In contrast, Simon and Randalls highlight the potential to politicize resilience by imposing specifications of ontology, site, intervention and responsibility (2016, p. 4). For them, contextualizing resilience and examining its diverse deployments participate to produce political "projects" and divergent understandings of responsibility (Ibid, p.14). Similarly, Grove, Cox, and Barnett (2020), emphasize that resilience cannot be perceived simply as a depoliticizing imposition of external governmental rationalities onto a vulnerable public. Some scholars viewing resilience as a neoliberal concept have indeed criticized what they saw as an ideology imposed by elites on those designated as "vulnerable" (Baker, 2020), and a neoliberal philosophy of adaptation that would shift government responsibilities onto citizens and create "resilient subjects" (Reid, 2012). The rise of foundations and private bodies in resilience planning helped fuel this critical body of research; 100RC was often used as a case study in this corpus, associating resilience with neoliberal policies. Most scholars criticized the over-representation of wealthy and Northern cities in the program, some of them considering it as coming close to an "elite club approach" (Nielsen & Papin, 2020). They also questioned the preponderance of private consultancies (Leitner et al., 2018; Webber et al., 2020) and pointed out the lack of focus on inequity (Fastiggi et al., 2020; Fitzgibbons & Mitchell, 2019; Roberts et al., 2020).

However, in the last decade, several authors (Chandler, 2014; Rogers, 2018; Wakefield, 2020, Simon & Randalls, 2016; Anderson, 2015; Grove, 2014, 2018) have also questioned the reduction of resilience to the application of neoliberal policies, as well as the vision of citizens as mere neoliberal subjects. While Simon and Randalls (2016) do not contest an "ideological fit" between resilience and neoliberal philosophies, they call for caution in universalizing resilience as fundamentally neoliberal. As they suggest, one-size-fits-all understandings of the concept as a neoliberal phenomenon hinder its potentiality as a site for conceptual and theoretical innovations (Grove, 2018); they obscure what resilience can do, and "sometimes, how it is neoliberal in particular situations" (Simon & Randalls, 2016, p. 6).

In sum, as Anderson (2015) states, connections between resilience and neoliberalism, as well as other economic-political apparatuses, need to be explored in their specificities and not as a presumption from which analysis begins. For him, the "resilient subject", detached from any particular contexts, is presented as a single object-target that is the same within different apparatuses: "But if we look at any apparatus in and through which resilience is articulated we find heterogeneous subjects" (2016, p. 61). Accordingly, Grove argues (2014) that the resilient subject is not merely a neoliberal subject; his resilient condition allows him to digress and transgress previous norms. Moreover, for Rogers (2019, p. 127), the subject is not just a citizen, but rather a stakeholder "leveling the playing field between expert and lay person". Studying resilient cities therefore provides opportunities to counter the neoliberal attribute seen by some as inherent in resilient subjects. Indeed, neoliberal values are not simply imposed on plastic citizens; resilient subjects can adopt or resist them. As Hall and Lamont (2013) suggest, people can adapt neoliberal ideas for their own purposes. Hence, resilient subjects are inspired by their own agency, able to use their social and cultural capital to develop strategies, partnerships, political projects, and when needed, resistances. They make preparations, they are part of different kinds of communities and they can also accept the protection of the state (Anderson, 2015). Chandler (2014, p.63) conceives this as "everyday democracy" and "social resilience", a society not only organized by top-down or bottom-up governance, but also guided by the relational capacities of ordinary people, and sometimes bypassed or muted by neoliberal interventions.

1.1.1. 100RC holistic approach to resilience

Analyzing a program like 100RC brings insights on the importance of contextualizing resilience, and of considering its multiplicity. Indeed, one of the main objectives of the Rockefeller Foundation was the institutionalization of a global model of urban resilience. 100RC was based on a broad and inclusive definition of resilience, including natural disasters as well as social challenges: *shocks* (e.g. a floods or heat waves) and *stresses* (e.g. endemic violence or unemployment). In what follows, I will examine whether the holistic approach to resilience promoted by 100RC helped create a space for what Simon and Randalls referred to as "resilience multiple", the deployment of multiple political projects facilitated by the elasticity of the concept.

By proposing such an inclusive approach to resilience – addressing issues like poverty, violence or inequity, in addition to more conventional problematics like climate change - the Rockefeller Foundation offered a promise of transformative possibilities. Yet some scholars, looking at 100RC in other member-cities, have argued that this global conceptualization of resilience has led to a technical-driven

implementation of the program, eventually bypassing some of the social issues initially included in the definition. Webber et al. (2020) for instance maintained that the implementation of the program in Jakarta was subject to many criticisms, due to a significant lack of inclusion of marginal communities. Similarly, the city of Durban separated from the network, considering the 100RC definition as a reductionist application of the concept from the natural sciences to the social world that failed to address questions of politics and power central to this South African city. Durban's resilient team considered the methodology imposed by 100RC was too rigid and contained no concern for inequities (Roberts et al., 2020).

In what follows, I will explore the rollout of 100RC in Medellin and New Orleans, both important flagships of the program, and both sharing concerns about violence, poverty and inequities. The two case studies provide an opportunity to understand how the 100RC approach to resilience offered – or failed to offer – an appropriate space for the deployment of the multiplicity of resilience. Considering the importance of contextualizing resilience to local concerns, this analysis will demonstrate some of the challenges implied in the institutionalization of a global model of urban resilience.

2. Methods and context

The Rockefeller Foundation funded the 100RC program from 2013 to 2019. During this period one hundred cities were selected (from more than a thousand applications) to form a network aimed at institutionalizing a global model of urban resilience. The centerpiece of the project was the two-year seed funding of the position of *Chief Resilience Officer* (CRO) in each member municipality. Their task was to create and implement a *Resilience Strategy*, based on a methodology provided by 100RC and the urban design firm *Arup* (for more details on this process, see Webber et al., 2020). These city strategies included dozens of initiatives in areas such as climate change, water management and mobility. They aimed to integrate resilience in cross-sectoral governance not limited to disaster, but rather encompassing economy and society, health and wellbeing, environment and infrastructures (Rogers, 2018). 100RC also put in place a platform of partners to advise CROs, comprising private corporations, public bodies, NGOs, and international and intergovernmental organizations. In 2019, after Rockefeller announced the end of its funding, several of the main stakeholders created a new project, the *Resilient Cities Network* (R-Cities). Based on a similar definition of resilience, the structure shifted from a philanthropy-funded program to a city-led non-profit organization.

This study is part of a larger research on resilience and urban violence in five cities, all former members of 100RC: Medellin, Cali, New Orleans, Chicago and Belfast (Naef, 2020, forthcoming). As explained, the present analysis focuses on Medellin and New Orleans because of their status in the program as pioneer resilient cities. The methods are qualitative and based mainly on *semi-directive interviews*. More than eighty interviews were conducted from 2019 to 2020, covering resilience practitioners (in 100RC, C40, UNDRR and IUC), 100RC partners (public and private actors) municipality officials (elected representatives and staff), civil society in general (NGO collaborators, urban practitioners, community leaders) and residents of violent neighborhoods. Interviews generally focused on respondents' definitions of resilience, and how the concept was used in contexts of urban violence. They also dealt with the descriptions of practitioners and their partners' resilience-oriented activities in international city networks. Some questions centered on the strategies, resources and projects of city-dwellers living in marginal and violent neighborhoods. The present study specifically addresses discourses and representations of resilient practitioners, program partners and city officials, presenting their multiple (and sometimes conflicting) perceptions of the concept of resilience. Looking at two pioneer cities of 100RC, with the objective of stressing the challenges of contextualizing resilience, it also examines the different ways the concept is defined in both case studies. Others

methods involved *semi-participant observation* (in conferences, field-visits and workshops organized by 100RC, UNDRR and R-Cities) and *content analysis* (general media and key reports published by 100RC).

The social and political dimensions that resilience initiatives entail remain largely unexamined (Wakefield, 2020). This article aims to respond to the call for geographers to present more empirical evidence and to "[go] beyond the comfortable assumption that it is better to be resilient" (Weichselgartner & Kelman, 2015, p. 259). An empirical and qualitative approach is thus offered, to better understand who and what is included and excluded in the construction of an international municipal network based on urban resilience. As Grove suggests, while social sciences participate to "muddy the waters" in resilience thinking, critical scholars have nonetheless an important role to play in exposing the under-acknowledged social, cultural and political effects of resilience (Grove, 2018, p. 30).

2.1. Laboratory cities and the resilience experience

After a major crisis, some urban centres (e.g. New Orleans after hurricane Katrina, New York after hurricane Sandy, Detroit after the 2013 bankruptcy) have been considered as "laboratory cities", promising experiments and innovations in areas such as environmental protection, social cohesion, capital expansion, policy improvement or creative development. 100RC also frequently adopted this vision, as demonstrated by Stephanie Wakefield (2020) in Miami and New York. In her work entitled *Anthropocene Back Loop,* the author describes how both cities became "first responder laboratories for resiliency infrastructures and strategies for climate change, rising seas and natural disasters" (2020, p.84). Judith Rodin (2014) for instance considered hurricane Sandy as the perfect opportunity to transform city governance through resilience planning: New York was branded as a post-Sandy laboratory where new techniques of governance could be tested, mostly to address climate change (Wakefield, 2020).

The "laboratory" designation significantly resonated in the New Orleans resilience strategy. In August 2015, ten years after Katrina, the city became one of the first member cities to unveil such a strategic document. Grouping private and public partners like *Swiss Re, Walmart, Veolia, Deutsche Bank* or *Tulane University*, it centered on the principle of "living with water". Based on a Dutch model of storm water management, it advocated using water as an asset instead of working against it. The representation of New Orleans as a laboratory, however, did not emerge with its integration into 100RC. Some observers had already commented on the experimental feature of the city after Katrina, often with a critical perspective (Hernandez, 2012; Sakakeeny, 2012; Klein, 2008). Naomi Klein (2008), for instance, has strongly criticised the vision of disaster as an occasion for opportunities and market prospects, considering it as a breeding ground for "disaster capitalism". She took as an example the role of a laboratory that the city assumed in the development of the controversial charter schools.[1] She went further, adding that post-Katrina New Orleans and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) itself could be viewed as disaster capitalism laboratories. The label of laboratory was less used in 100RC rhetoric when addressing Medellin. Nevertheless, the city was also considered a pioneer in the program and very often portrayed as a model in terms of resilience and violence prevention for other cities in the network. Medellin was featured in the strategy of New Orleans itself, being described as an inspiration and a global model for confronting city violence, polarization and social inequity (100RC, 2015, p. 61). Hence, while New Orleans became the 100RC flagship in terms of "living with water", Medellin acquired a similar status regarding "living with violence". Both were pioneer resilient cities in the 100RC program; they served as experimental sites for what Rockefeller viewed as the

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[1] Charter schools are publicly funded but run by private entities.

institutionalization of a global model of urban resilience.

CROs were often presented as "resilience champions", and 100RC aimed to institutionalize them within local authorities. It was expected that cities would take over the funding of the position after the end of Rockefeller's two-year seed money. 100RC stakeholders considered this process a success. In 2020, when they built the new R-Cities on the legacy of 100RC, they stated that 97 CROs were active in their member-cities and that several other cities had pledged to recruit one (Urban-institute, 2019). In 2017, 100RC president Michael Berkowitz claimed: "you wouldn't run a city without a CRO any more than you would [without] a chief of police" (Clancy, 2017). Yet, in contrast, several CROs and partners pointed out that if resilience planning was well integrated into city planning you should not need a CRO.

During their initial mandate under the auspices of 100RC, the main tasks of CROs were to forge partnerships (with platforms or external partners); develop and implement the resilience strategy; and facilitate coordination among city departments ("break the silos" in 100RC jargon). 100RC two-year seed funding was based on local costs in the city concerned: on average, it amounted to US$1 million per member-city (Nielsen & Papin, 2020). It covered the salary of the CRO and other costs (often related to the organization of events). Other salaries could be provided depending on additional budgets proposed by the city or external grants. In some cases, a sizeable team might support a CRO and form a *Resilience Office*. While the 100RC final assessment report described these resilience champions as the key innovation of 100RC, it nonetheless underlined that they needed support: "An ecosystem of champions from both within and outside municipal government must be cultivated and leveraged" (Urban Institute, 2019, p. 23).

Rogers (2018) pointed out that the professionalization of the practice contributed to contextualizing resilience, by enabling challenges specific to the locales where CROs worked to be identified. My own research (2021) confirmed that CROs often had important expertise concerning the place they were working in, being either natives or having held other positions within their city. Yet, while both Medellin and New Orleans had a Resilience Office within their municipality, these offices met contrasting fates. In New Orleans, Mayor Mitchell Landrieu promoted the CRO to First Deputy Mayor after Rockefeller's seed funding ended, while his successor Mayor LaToya Cantrell continued the process afterwards with the nomination of other CROs. In Medellin, in contrast, Mayor Federico Gutiérrez did not continue the public mandate of the Resilience Office, forcing it to spin off as a non-profit body. In terms of resources, New Orleans's CRO was supported by a team comprising several collaborators, while Medellin's CRO worked mainly with the help of a single assistant. The historical context of these cities shaped the content of their strategies, but the profile of their CRO was also of paramount importance. Medellin's CRO was a trained anthropologist who had worked in South Africa's peace process before he started his resilience work. His past activities in peacebuilding strengthened the orientation of Medellin's strategy towards resilience to endemic violence. In New Orleans, the first CRO was an urban planner who was the Executive Director of the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA), a quasi-governmental agency involved in housing development. Because the role of NORA in post-Katrina reconstruction had been severely criticized, particularly in what were deemed "vulnerable communities", his status sparked controversy. An interviewee for instance harshly questioned NORA's role in the reconstruction of the Lower ninth Ward, one of the areas most impacted by Katrina. The CRO involvement in both NORA and the resilience office was considered as an ambiguous double-hatted position detrimental for the reconstruction of the city. Nevertheless, six months after the release of the strategy, the CRO was promoted Chief Administrative Officer and the resilience office became part of the city government. As one collaborator commented: "We were not just a quasi-governmental organisation anymore, but the city Office of Resilience and Sustainability. I think at its peak there were ten people in that office. It ebbed and flowed based on grants and such" (Interview with resilience officer, July 2019).

2.1.1. Living with water

Aligned with the objective of living with water, New Orleans's flagship project was the development of resilient infrastructures, principally a storm water retention district in the Gentilly neighbourhood. In its strategy, the New Orleans resilience team nevertheless proposed a broad definition of resilience, ranging beyond water management: "Being resilient means more than levees holding back water and wetlands protecting us from storms. It means striking a balance between human needs and the environment that surrounds us while also combating the chronic stresses of violence, poverty, and inequality" (100RC, 2015). 100RC and New Orleans resilience practitioners underlined that chronic stresses had exacerbated the storm's impact, especially aging infrastructure, but also institutional racism and violence (Urban Institute, 2019). They insisted on the importance of a holistic and integrative approach to resilience: "Cities are systems – not silos. […] Solutions developed through resilience thinking will allow cities to enjoy multiple benefits, or resilience dividends – maximizing the value of every dollar spent" (100RC, 2016a, p. 7).

The resilience team therefore concentrated on expanding the idea of resilience beyond the problem of infrastructures that was at the heart of the strategy. In 2015, the city of New Orleans was awarded a federal grant of $141.3 million from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as part of the National Disaster Resilience Competition. The CRO played a major role in this context and the city application was mainly based on the construction of innovative infrastructures in the Gentilly "resilient district". One of the team-members saw this grant as detrimental for the holistic approach to resilience promoted at the time:

"One of the things that ultimately has hurt the effort to keep [this approach to resilience] going was paradoxically enough the award of all this money. So, the city got all this money to do infrastructure, called it resilience and then people start to associate like: 'oh, resilience projects must just mean that kind of infrastructure, it must just mean green infrastructure.'" (Interview with resilience officer, July 2019)

In January 2016, a partnership between the city, *Swiss Re* and *Veolia,* established under the auspices of 100RC, reinforced this emphasis on resilient infrastructures. Based on more than twenty years of collaboration with the city, *Veolia,* a French multinational acting as a world leader in collective services (water, energy and waste), described the laboratory status that New Orleans represented on its website: "It is part of these cities that experiment this system of resilient infrastructures. [this partnership] will allow New Orleans to become one of the most resilient and attractive cities in the world" (Veolia, 2016). Two years later, the arrival of mayor LaToya Cantrell also significantly refocused the resilience agenda on infrastructures, as the new administration placed this issue high in the municipality's priorities. As the same resilience team-member commented, the new mayor made it very clear from the beginning that she was against 100RC and its approach to resilience:

"I don't know but honestly, it was reminiscent of their interactions that I think very much could have been tied to the trauma of post-Katrina. The idea of seeing a whiteboard with ideas on it and a logo of something could be traumatic because there was a lot of pain that came out of those kinds of meetings post-Katrina." (Interview with resilience officer, July 2019)

Mayor LaToya Cantrell enforced even further this engineering approach to resilience by nominating new CROs, who were also Infrastructure Program Managers. One of them emphasized his role in boosting the delivery of infrastructure projects, referring to hundreds of millions of dollars from FEMA and HUD destined for green infrastructure that had not been used: "When the resilience function of our government was started, it was very much a policy ideas shop. Vision is important in

city government, especially in a place like New Orleans, but delivery is more important" (Wray, 2020). Following the HUD grant, 100RC president Michael Berkowitz praised New Orleans as a global leader in resilience thinking: "[New Orleans] will start seeing major dividends. Over the last several years, New Orleans has been a leader – worldwide – in the practice of resilience, and the city is now seeing the market start to respond" (Government of New Orleans, 2016).

The case of New Orleans illustrates the polysemy of resilience. Different representations among political actors and practitioners limited the rollout of the holistic approach initially promoted. While the definition of New Orleans resilience strategy encompassed the need to build adequate infrastructures, it also included tackling issues related to violence, inequity and racism. As the strategy was being implemented, these disputed topics were progressively side-lined and the focus on infrastructure was strengthened. The performance of the district was measured essentially in terms of planning factors: "the acres of green space constructed, numbers of households within 0.5 miles of improved public spaces, number of jobs created, number of people trained, and number of permits for new construction" (Government of New Orleans, 2019, slide 13). Inequity was addressed in Gentilly but tied to other infrastructure projects, for instance by supporting low-income homeowners in the transformation of their home into water storage areas. Some practitioners and partners commented that the inclusion of communities was limited by the pressure to improve the aging infrastructures of the city; it hindered the transformative potential of many projects by restricting their focus to engineering processes: "Urban environments are infrastructure systems but they're also human systems. And if you're not tackling infrastructure with the complexity of the human factor then I think it's being done wrongly" (Interview with partner non-profit collaborator, July 2019). In the New Orleans resilience agenda, funding and political turnover refocused the holistic and integrative definition of resilience promoted by 100RC on an engineering approach centered mainly on infrastructures. While issues related to historical segregation or chronic violence were included in the description of the Gentilly project, they were eventually considered secondary in terms of co-benefits to flood reduction infrastructures.

Several collaborators working in non-profit partner organizations in New Orleans also emphasized that they did not use the term of resilience in their own practice. This was particularly the case in some NGOs supporting marginalized communities:

> "Among younger generations of Afro-American people and black people in general, whether they're from the diaspora or born and raised in the US, I often hear a push-back to this notion of resilience. Because there is an exhaustion that people have with the idea that a person, individually, needs to be resilient to structural oppression." (Interview with partner non-profit collaborator, August 2019)

This statement illustrates a resistance to the representation of resilience as an individual quality to face crisis and oppression. It can without doubt resonate with some critics addressed to what some conceive as "resilient subjects". Nevertheless, it also demonstrates than when resilience is used in settings of violence, it is often based on an individual conception rooted mainly in psychology. In New Orleans, resilience is commonly raised to coop with individual trauma, it provides tool to develop independent living skills, it serves conflict resolution and anger management, it helps to overcome substance abuse. As Grove (2018) emphasized, for psychologists, disruptions are unavoidable and being resilient demands permanent adaptation. Hence, when resilience is associated with violence, inequity or oppression, conflicting representations emerge. As the NGO collaborator quoted above implied, collective and transformative conceptions of resilience find themselves at odds with personal and adaptive ways of managing crisis and trauma: "I can have deep admiration for a person's individual resilience and how they created this beautiful life out of terrible trauma. [But] I don't think that's actually something to be proud of. We do it because we have to …

[…] Because of the shortcomings of our systems" (Interview with partner non-profit collaborator, August 2019). Criticisms of resilience as self-reliance were present in the words of other interviewees such as this non-profit executive working in the Lower ninth Ward:

> "Instead of asking the question [of] why are we demanding that people be resilient and what are the circumstances in which they have to be resilient … Why don't we just fix that shit so that nobody has to be resilient? Congratulating people for their resilience, there's something so patronising about it." (Interview with non-profit director, July 2019)

Resilience practitioners themselves questioned this individual conception of resilience. A resilience team collaborator for instance recalled the signs that popped up in 2015 during the tenth anniversary of Katrina, displaying the message "don't call me resilient": "I really appreciated that, I thought this was great, largely because what we were trying to do was not that. We were actually trying to say no, no, no, resilience isn't individual grit. It's not you managing to handle the worst" (Interview with resilience officer, July 2019).

As Vale (2014, p. 196) maintains, resilience is simultaneously embedded in at least three domains: "the physical restoration of the built environment, the pecuniary restoration of the economy, and the emotional resuscitation of individuals and families." The case of New Orleans illustrates these different definitions and understandings of resilience. It confirms the need expressed by Simon and Randalls (2016) to contextualize the concept and address the multiplicity of its deployments. Discourses and representations tied to resilience in New Orleans range from systemic and engineering logics linked to infrastructures; psychological and individual understandings enabling to cope with trauma; and societal and collective conceptions aimed to addressing issues of violence and inequity.

2.1.2. Living with violence

Like New Orleans, Medellin is characterized by a high level of inequities, generated by what some scholars consider as a neoliberal agenda (Hylton, 2015; Rojas-Páez, 2018). When the city released its resilience strategy in 2016, Rodin (2014, n.p.) herself described its application to 100RC as a bold and difficult move: "the city's leaders wrote that Medellin 'was a good candidate because in spite of its numerous and continued efforts it was still rated as the most inequitable city in Colombia, and Colombia, in turn, was one of the most inequitable countries in Latin America'". Nowadays, Medellin is a usual suspect in city-networks associated with resilience and sustainability. Besides 100RC, it is also a member of C40, ICLEI, IUC and at the centre of *the Medellin Collaboration for Urban Resilience (MCUR)*. The international resonance of Medellin in terms of resilience is largely based on the violence it has experienced for decades and the way it dealt with it through its program of "social urbanism". The media and academia also often presented the city as an urban laboratory, especially in terms of mobility and security (Caracol Radio Medellin, 2017; Erakit, 2014; Giraldo-Ramírez & Preciado-Restrepo, 2015).

As in New Orleans, Medellin's strategy aimed at integrating social concerns, especially that of violence, into its definition of resilience: "the capacity that the city (as an urban, social and political system) and its inhabitants have developed to resist, overcome and learn from the causes and effects of national violence" (100RC, 2016). Violence prevention and peacebuilding were central to the plan, an approach considered as a significant innovation when Medellin applied to the 100RC network. As the Planning Director at the time explained, her department received Rockefeller's call for membership from the City Cooperation Agency:

> "The notion of 'resilience' was not well-known then, as we were talking more about resistance. We built this application based on the idea of 'social resilience', and for Rockefeller it was very strange. Because they understood 'resilience' as a response to natural threats,

because this funding was born following Katrina flooding. So, they came here, and we explained to them why this type of resilience was more important for us." (Interview with city official, October 2019)

The novelty of resilience and the innovative dimension the team wanted to develop was clearly acknowledged in their strategy, where resilience was described at first as a "new and foreign word that was difficult to pronounce". However, with the inclusion of Medellin in 100RC, the strategy explained that the word resilience was frequently used when talking about the city's urban and social transformation (100RC, 2016). Likewise, Judith Rodin, who was at the time presiding Rockefeller, described Medellin as an unlikely place for resilience building, but a city that eventually became a "vivid illustration of the dynamic and constantly changing nature of resilience building, always involving structural, social, and natural factors" (2014, n.p.). The municipality adopted the concept and intensely promoted Medellin as a resilient city. Policy tourism blossomed around its most innovative developments: government representatives, architects, urban planners, journalists and students regularly visited them. In this context, municipal officials, community leaders, tour guides and local journalists, among others, promoted resilience and innovation as core values of the city and its residents (Naef, 2020).

Yet, despite the successful promotion of resilience in Medellin's branding, most of the stakeholders eventually took a sceptical view of the impact of 100RC. For the Planning Director who worked on Medellin's application, the municipality's lack of interest after 2016 prevented getting to the bottom of things: "We thought about going back to a more environmental dimension, but in the end neither one nor the other worked" (Interview with city official, October 2019). In 2018, when 100RC's two-year seed funding ended, the mayor at the time, Federico Gutiérrez, called for the private sector to support the resilience office instead of the municipality. One of the managing directors of 100RC commented: "It was publicly announced that the agency in Medellin was going to be tasked with implementation of a resilience agenda. This was wishful thinking, it did not happen in the end, because the NGO did not have a public mandate" (Interview with 100RC executive, January 2020).

In Medellin, which adopted the concept of resilience later than New Orleans, many interviewees also expressed reluctance in using the term. In contrast, the idea of "resistance" is very often used in Colombia, especially when referring to the violence the country has lived through and continues to endure. The notion of resistance was even associated with the definition of resilience proposed in Medellin's strategy. Nonetheless, the case of Medellin demonstrated that resistance was often considered in opposition to resilience, which was assimilated with negative representations like "resignation", a "hypocritical idea" or something purely "theoretical or academic". A social worker involved in a 100RC partner organization pointed out the volatility of the concept: "When you work you need something very concrete. You need to improve the quality of life of people. [...] I don't really like how the word 'resilience' sounds in Medellin" (Interview with social worker in partner organization, July 2019). In a similar vein, the director of a partner-NGO involved in peacebuilding commented that the strategy was eventually reduced to recommendations that the municipality never implemented. For her, resilience was no more than a city-brand: "It was a way to name it, something linked to the Medellin brand and all this boom of selling the city. [...] It is an image that is very attractive, but in the end it is only an image" (Interview with partner non-profit director, 2019).

Several interviewees stressed that for them resilience was tied to the elite, while resistance was part of the language of ordinary people. A community leader depicted resilience as something academic, designed for the rich and the powerful:

"I see resilience as part of an elite language [*lenguaje gomelo* in Spanish]: 'Look how you managed to survive this!' [...] It is now very

market driven. It's like: 'I destroy but I restore, I advise you, I destroy, and I restore.' Resilience is like this. After you gave me the stick, you play it very peacefully. [...] Resilience feels to me like very much from the City Hall ... very much financed by the City Hall to get away with this bloody discourse for the people: 'You are resilient, very good! You have survived very well.'" (Interview with community leader, October 2019)

The collaborator who submitted Medellin's application later echoed this viewpoint. She pointed out that resilience made sense when referring to natural events, since one cannot control nature, unlike the causes of violence: "Resilience is for after the damage. We would like instead to avoid any damage. As a society, we need to act on the factors that produce violence" (Interview with city official, October 2019). These comments illustrate the challenges of a social approach to resilience, especially when issues associated with chronic violence are involved. In New Orleans, "living with water" implies that water management should not try to control nature, but adapt to its ever-changing effects, such as floods and storms. In contrast, in Medellin, people find this adaptive vision of resilience questionable, as nobody wants to "live with violence". Instead of being resilient in the face of violence, many of the interviewees in Medellin insisted on the importance of resisting the culture of violence. Yet, resistance and resilience were not always considered in opposition to each other. Adopting a historical perspective, a local architect for instance linked the concept of resilience to a form of resistance conducted by the town's elite to counter Medellin's violence. He recalled the creation of a conglomerate at the end of the 1970s that regrouped several of the main enterprises of the region. Through a structure of cross-shareholdings, the aim of the *Grupo Empresarial Antioqueño* (GEA) was to protect Medellin's businesses from hostile takeovers by bigger foreign groups and powerful drug lords. He contrasted this type of "entrepreneurial resilience" with that of the barrios, "where residents pay the *vacuna* [the "vaccine", or extortion taxes] and can leave their houses without even closing their front door" (Interview with architect, January 2019).

Finally, several commentators, especially residents of Medellin's *barrios populares,* associated resilience with their right to the city. For them, resilience was rooted in their role as founders of their neighbourhoods. Indeed, most of the population living in the margins of Medellin were displaced by the war. They occupied the hills surrounding the city and informally built new neighbourhoods with the support of the community. The *convite* illustrates this process well. It describes the collective actions and the solidarity networks that enabled urban dwellers to build informally new urban infrastructures. To do this, they had to resist the violence and territorial control of street-gangs, but also the dislocation processes undertaken by public authorities when planning new urban projects. A social leader explained that in these informal territories almost 80% of the population were displaced from the countryside: "In this sense we are resilient, we understand the concept, but we don't really use it. [...] We are always resisting, as there is sometimes no recognition of what has been done [the work of the community] and few resources to do it" (Interview with community leader, January 2019). The right to the city of Medellin's self-settled communities can be seen in the appropriation of a plot of land to build a house or in the use of a street to meet a neighbour, but also in the recognition of how they contributed to the innovative development of their city. The former CRO of Medellin explained this very well when he described how the mayors of the city would appropriate grassroots innovations:

"I am going to tell you how projects are born in the comuna. When mothers from peripheral neighbourhoods wanted to go out to work, they invented a marvellous institution that they called "community mothers". [...] A network of neighbourly support for the mamas. They took care of the children in their own homes because they did not have infrastructures. All the mayors claim to have invented early

childhood politics, but it was the mothers." (Interview with CRO, January 2019)

As in New Orleans, the promotion of resilience in Medellin also illustrates the multiplicity and ambiguity of the concept. While resilience became centre-staged later in the Colombian city than in New Orleans, many interviewees similarly demonstrated some reluctance in using the term. Moreover, due to a particular historical context of violence, resilience and resistance were significantly interwoven in their discourses and representations. If many adopted a critical perspective and opposed both concepts, presenting resilience as an elitist or theoretical idea, others in contrast saw it as a space for possibilities. As the comments above illustrate, resilience was used to define the historical urban elite's defiance of the narcos, the capacity of self-settled communities to build their barrios in the midst of systemic violence, or the organizational strategies of mothers facing a lack of state support.

2.2. Resilience, resistance and the neoliberal agenda

Among other international city networks, 100RC had the most inclusive definition of resilience, as it was the only program to address specifically social concerns such as endemic violence, racism or unemployment. This holistic approach to resilience was considered innovative in Medellin and New Orleans, most particularly in the Colombian city, where resilience was initially viewed as a novelty. However, in both cities the rollout of the program eventually generated a certain amount of criticism. Beyond the specific context of 100RC, the recurrent use of resilience in both laboratory cities created resistance on the ground. Many interlocutors voiced their weariness with what they saw as an overuse of the concept; some severely criticized romanticized and heroic narratives on resilience. In 100RC, tensions also arose around the disputed interpretations this broad definition of resilience implied. Originally, an inclusive and holistic approach to resilience offered some space in which to integrate its multiple interpretations. However, when projects were implemented, social concerns initially featured prominently were often neglected.

In New Orleans, diverging approaches competed between a holistic conception of resilience and one limited to infrastructures. Eventually, social concerns were obscured by the importance of transforming and retrofitting infrastructures. By imposing a technical-reductionist framework, this systemic and engineering approach contributed to consolidating a socio-economic status quo. It drew partly on unchallenged assumptions about society (Weichselgartner & Kelman, 2015). Conflicting conversations on post-Katrina, such as the controversies linked to the charter schools program, the limits associated with the return of marginalized communities and the demolition of undamaged public housing, went unaddressed. The discourse naturalized Katrina, by focusing on the storm and the natural causes of the crisis, a vision severely criticized by many observers.

Interviews in Medellin also shed light on some of the competing meanings of resilience. There were interlocutors who criticized the concept for its elitist and over-theoretical dimension, residents of the barrios who associated it with their right to their city, and others who attributed it to the strength of the region's enterprises, while city-branding narratives linked it to the urban innovations that made the city famous. The change of politics that took place after the 2016 municipal elections, however, significantly affected the development of resilience-based projects. As all the stakeholders interviewed confirmed, the new administration side-lined many initiatives related to violence prevention and peacebuilding. As in New Orleans, controversial aspects associated to a social framing of resilience did not fit into the city's new political agenda. The interweaving existing between the state and

paramilitary forces, the scandal of *falsos positivos*[2] or the persistence of criminal governance in many of its barrios are inseparable from the violence that plagued and continues to traumatize Medellin. Yet, mobilizing resilience to address the roots of these problems no longer featured in the city's plans after 2016.

Critics of resilience (Fainstein, 2015; Davoudi, 2017; in the case of 100RC:; Leitner et al., 2018; Roberts et al., 2020) have already demonstrated how technocratic resilience approaches could constrain political contestation and public debate on urban issues. They suggested that these factors contributed to naturalizing a political economic status quo, and to inhibiting social and environmental justice. Fainstein (2015) and Davoudi (2017) specifically questioned definitions of resilience encompassing both social and natural challenges, arguing that the ecological foundation of resilience was insufficient to address social issues, and would instead perpetuate the status quo. Davoudi (2017) furthermore implied that while the eco-systemic application of resilience has revolutionized our understanding of ecological dynamics, its application to the social domain has reinforced the neoliberal values of competition and individualisation of responsibility. Empirically, the work of Grove, Cox, and Barnett (2020) on Greater Miami resilience initiatives also demonstrated that while equity was presented as a cross-cutting theme, the city's resilience planning eventually failed to effectively address concerns over racialized violence, neglect and deprivation. They suggest that such an approach did not generate clear policies, but a "site of fervent definitional struggle over whose visions of the city can be realized and whose remain subjugated" (2020, p.1627).

While resilience initiatives are increasingly presented as "people-oriented", they are nonetheless often framed to further the interests of some and to marginalize those of others (Grove, Barnett, & Cox, 2020; Fitzgibbons & Mitchell, 2019). Reflecting on "whose resilience" is at stake is thus central if policies and programs are to improve the condition of disadvantaged groups, a dimension that Vale (2014) considers as often overlooked in definitions of resilience drawn from engineering. As Grove, Cox, and Barnett (2020) emphasized in Miami, while resilience initiatives challenged the historical exclusion of marginalized communities from local governance, at the same time, they synthesized difference into pragmatic solutions to complex problems. In Miami's resilience programs, histories of injustice and violence provide above all instrumental utility to the design process (Grove, Barnett, & Cox, 2020, p. 138). Hence, resilience needs to operate through conjoined "designed-politics" (Vale, 2014), offering a space where the power dynamics and historical process which shape these strategies can be addressed. As in Miami, in both case studies, the framing of resilience as a social problem theoretically held the promise of a more equitable development, however, in practice the need for pragmatic solutions often produced governance strategies detached from justice concerns. It side-lined the history of segregation, deprivation and violence that characterized these cities. In New Orleans for instance, the first CRO explained that the HUD grant enabled the conversion of the Gentilly neighbourhood into a "national model for retrofitting post-war suburban neighbourhoods" (Government of New Orleans, 2016). His vision was resolutely turned toward the future when he told *Forbes Magazine* in 2016: "It is fundamental not to waste too much time pondering about what happened in the past" (Guerrini, 2016).

If events like Hurricane Katrina and Sandy, the financial crisis of 2008 or the *Deepwater Horizon* spill certainly prompted a broader discussion of social resilience (Smirnova et al., 2020), this study shows the complexity of addressing human issues in resilience planning. It emphasizes that being resilient to future flooding is quite different from building resilience towards violence. In flood-risk areas, people may need to be adaptive in order to be less vulnerable in the face of an unavoidable event, as the principle of "living with water" implies. In

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[2] *Falsos Positivos* refers to the killing of young, poor men who were then dressed as guerrilla soldiers to falsely represent them as rebels.

gang-ridden neighbourhoods, communities may refuse to accommodate and "live with violence", opting for a more transformative dimension of resilience. Depending on the particular contexts, various political projects tied to resilience have been formulated, spanning technical and engineering responses, psychological approaches or social and collective strategies. A one-size-fits-all definition might thus find itself at odds with these "multiple resiliences".

Taking both case studies into account, I have used the term of resistance to describe the limits and frictions tied to the rollout of programs such as 100RC. I have also showed that the term of resistance was often used in Medellin when interviewees were asked to define how they perceived resilience. Accordingly, scholars have been increasingly looking at the interweaving of the two concepts (Shamsuddin, 2020; Neocleous, 2013; Zebrowski & Sage, 2018; Cretney, 2018). In an edited volume entitled *The Resilience Machine*, some contributors demonstrated how the politics of resilience could open up space for resistance, ruptures, dissent and alternative ontologies, but how at the same time such projects could be transformed by the rigid metrics of deliveries and become co-opted into dominant neoliberal strategies (Lawrence, Davoudi, & Bohland, 2018). As Zebrowski & Sage (2018) have suggested, in post-Katrina New Orlean, discourses on resilience provided a counter-narrative to the images of violence and destitution featured by mainstream media. On another hand, the emphasis on the blurred notion of equity reframed communities as investment opportunities and (resilient) citizens as entrepreneurs (Tierney, 2015; Zebrowski & Sage, 2018). Nevertheless, for Zebrowski & Sage, some organizations eventually managed to reframe resilience as a form of resistance, by shedding light on the inequitable recovery support provided to communities in New Orleans. Following Christchurch's earthquake in 2011, Creatney (2018) similarly showed that resilience could reinforce the status quo, just as it could create space for contestation and resistance. For her, the New Zealand government rhetoric and actions tended to depoliticize resilience, by side-lining the position of residents in the debate. Yet, she also suggested that community organizations like neighbourhood residents groups and food-based projects used the resilience language as an entry point for more radical transformative actions.

The interweaving of resilience and resistance moreover confirms the importance of examining the multiplicity of resilience discourses. Some narratives, practices and representations can contribute to depoliticizing resilience by consolidating a status quo and solidifying uneven relations. They can also offer possibilities for alternative projects and contestation. Some scholars like Grove (2018) and Rogers (2018) have emphasized that to offer more space for "subversive forms of resilience", the "subject" had to be empowered, fully integrated into urban debates, and given more responsibilities. As stated by Rogers, citizens need to be considered as reflexive and engaged citizen-subjects: "It is not the role of experts/agencies to 'fix the problem', nor to 'fix citizens' at risk, but rather to enhance conditions within which all stakeholders are able to act in a resilient way" (2019, p. 138). The vision of an engaged and self-reflecting citizen was certainly present in some of the discourses on resilience collected in Medellin. Although it might originate in a right to the city or to some community innovations developed in the barrio, resilience was often associated with localized and grassroots strategies. Resilience discourses sometimes also evolved as a form of resistance to the ones promoted by the municipality, especially heroic narratives on resilience and social urbanism. In New Orleans, a technocratic and "hard" approach to resilience may have reduced the possibilities of acknowledging the voices and experiences of marginalized communities.

Finally, this research suggests deconstructing a common assumption that resilient cities are merely guided by neoliberal values and philanthropic capitalism. While not disputing the presence of hegemonic mechanisms in the construction of resilient cities, I join the call for more empirical studies to refine our understanding of the way urban resilience is imagined, planned and rolled out in our cities. In accordance with Anderson (2015) and other scholars quoted above, this research suggests

that the multiplicity of resilience gives the lie to any essential relation between resilience and neoliberalism. 100RC, like many resilience initiatives, had no doubt several aspects corresponding to a neoliberal agenda. They involved a large range of private partners and strongly advocated for private-public-partnerships. The promotional rhetoric praised champions, model-cities and dividends. Many cities were from North America and Europe, and English was hegemonic (since the word "resilience" had often no precise translation in other languages). Yet, Like Ward and McCann (2011), I argue that these territorial–relational complexes were about more than neoliberalism in its narrowly defined sense.

CROs were the main actors designing resilience responses, while the role of partners was often unclear. In New Orleans, the importance of *Veolia's* financial support and the significant role of NORA in the development of housing projects may have limited the holistic vision of resilience initially imagined in the strategy. In Medellin, the lack of private (and public) support, and the interruption of international funding significantly affected the implementation of the strategy. However, municipal bodies were not simply absent or weak in front of powerful corporations, but rather re-engineered (Pinson & Morel Journel, 2016) and placed at the centre of various types of partnerships and networks. CROs had a central position in determining the nature of these partnerships, whether with corporate actors or civil society representatives. Moreover, if many ideas and models came for the Global North (and New York offices), my fieldwork demonstrated that member cities were not passive receivers. 100RC practitioners developed their own approaches to using appropriate available resources and adapted resilience ideas to their specific context. City strategies provided CROs with a tool to territorialize and localize resilience planning; their role was to find a balance between the global (and Northern) context where strategies were imagined and the local setting of their implementation. Member-cities in Latin America or Asia also became models; ideas and projects from the South were reproduced in the North. The imposition of policy-agendas by international agencies and donors on weak local governments is thus a limited vision. Resilience networks can offer spaces for a multidirectional exchange of knowledge between all member cities, whether poor or wealthy.

3. Conclusion

This research reflects scholarship viewing resilience as more than a buzzword or a neoliberal device. Accordingly, I do not conceptualize resilience as an empty signifier. On the contrary, in this article, I have considered the multiplicity of its meanings and understandings. In New Orleans and Medellin, I explored the disputed representations the concept generated in the rollout of 100RC. After promoting a very holistic approach, both cities finally experienced a form of depoliticization of resilience. In Medellin, the whole program eventually came to a halt (as least in terms of its ties with 100RC). Resilience was then actively promoted as a city brand, but many interviewees criticized what they saw as a loss of meaning. New Orleans also promoted a more reductionist and technical approach to resilience than that initially presented, focusing on the effectiveness of the system rather than social changes. I do not claim that preventing violence or addressing racial issues is more important than building innovative infrastructures. I maintain, however, that the engineering approaches to resilience in New Orleans are also deeply entangled with histories of violence and segregation. As Vale (2014) highlighted, "natural" disasters are entwined in societal choices about infrastructures locations, housing development or recovery priorities; side-lining these processes contributes to diffusing a depoliticized narrative on resilience.

I agree nonetheless that resilience politics and planning do not simply lead to the depoliticization of city governance; the multiplicity of resilience offers space for debate, contestations, experiences and innovations. A program like 100RC was built on these potentialities to offer a holistic approach to resilience. However, when city strategies

were implemented, power dynamics tied to political agendas, funding mechanisms and partnerships limited this integrative conceptualization. Since 2020, the resilience discourses of R-Cities – 100RC's legacy – were increasingly focused on the notion of equity, designating for instance police violence and the uneven consequences of the Covid-19 as major *shocks* and *stresses*. The present research suggests that to maintain this holistic (and politicized) approach to resilience, the contested history associated with these cities must be brought back into the conversation on resilience.

This analysis finally demonstrated the importance of contextualizing resilience, but also neoliberalism. These concepts encompass different and sometimes conflicting meanings; they develop differently according to their location. Conceptualizing resilient cities as a mere outgrowth of neoliberalism is too limited. Caution is called for accepting easy assumptions about international foundations and other powerful global institutions forcing urban agendas on weak local actors. If the concept of resilience is partly supported by neoliberal ideas, it is not simply imposed from the global to the local. Foundations are not merely the imperial tools of the global rich, undermining the sovereignty of local governments (Ferguson, 2010). It is a combination of practices from international agencies, local elites and powerful states. Neoliberalism and resilience risk being reified if the contexts in which they occur are insufficiently defined. More empirical research in thus needed to understand the contextual mechanisms influencing discourses and representations tied to both concepts. To avoid reductionist conceptions of resilient cities, more qualitative work is also necessary to identify the actors and politics behind resilience strategies.

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