



« Resiliency vulnerability » notion : looking in another direction to study vulnerability and resilience of systems in face of risk or disaster.

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Risk and disaster have been evoked in a great deal of research into the conceptual –hazard vulnerability, resilience- and methodological frameworks. The literature review revealed that there exist many definitions and types of vulnerability and resilience. These definitions have in common to portray vulnerability in negative terms and resilience in positive terms. The definitions of concepts have important implications in the choice of frameworks, theories, methodologies and tools as well as in the results of vulnerability assessments and resilience of territories. The purpose of this paper is to provide a new conceptual framework in which the vulnerability and resilience of systems are understood as a continuum, as linked concepts. This is the “resiliency vulnerability” model. It relies on current knowledge in the field of risk and disaster. But while resilience is often presented as some kind of absolute goal to be attained, our position is different. The notion of “resiliency vulnerability” provides an escape from the conception whereby there are on one side vulnerable (and therefore weak) systems and on the other resilient systems (and therefore strong ones, capable of fighting back and recovering). The “resiliency vulnerability” conveys the idea that vulnerability can be pervaded and modified by resilience as part of an all-round approach; such resilience may be both directly related to the vulnerability to which it applies and produce a positive or negative effect depending on the scale at which the system is studied. In this paper we have sought to understand the relations woven between resilience and vulnerability and to eschew the idea that vulnerability is necessarily a concept with a negative connotation and resilience a concept with a positive connotation. There is no question of calling into question the strategies of resilience; we are interested rather in proposing a conceptual framework within which to take account of the diversity of the variables, of interactions among these variables and of the time divisions of an event. This notion does not deny that systems can be fragile. On the contrary, it allows us to shed light on the potentialities, the capacities and reactions that enable systems to protect themselves from risks or disasters and to confront them. Living systems, whichever ones they may be, do not remain passive in the face of events.