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Interactive comment on “Resilience and disaster risk reduction: an etymological journey” by D. E. Alexander

Anonymous Referee #2

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This paper presents a comprehensive overview of the historical development of the concept of resilience and its usage in contemporary DRR contexts. There are a couple of issues the author may wish to consider covering in more detail.

Given that the concept of resilience introduces the potential for enhanced coping or adapting, or at the very least, being able to “overcome dire calamity”. . .reference to historical interpretations of comparable constructs could include Milton (*Paradise Lost*) and perhaps Robert Browning’s *Prospice*?

The recognition of coping and adaptive outcomes that could be used to introduce a need to reconsider how other DRR terms have come to be interpreted. For example, Dake (1992) commented on how “risk” was derived from an Italian term that meant “to

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account for the gains and losses in games of chance.” Its current and more negative connotation does not sit well with the rise of a concept that at least offers the prospect of gains under the conditions of chance that are natural events.

Another issue the author may wish to consider relates to the references to sociology and psychology. While not in a position to discuss the sociological perspective, it appears that the discussion of psychological perspectives on resilience and related processes could be expanded. Firstly, it would be useful to identify which psychological sub-discipline is being referred to in the paper. Secondly, the paper does not consider the perspectives offered by sub-disciplines such as community psychology, social psychology, and industrial/organizational psychology. The work of Antonovsky, Fredrickson, Dalton and Wandersman, both directly and with regard to how their work has been used by others to theorize about adaptation and resilience, would provide a more balanced account of work that could be used to advance understanding. Similarly, psychological coverage, could include work of post context-minimization clinical psychology whose proponents increasingly adopt strength-based approaches to conceptualizing and enacting disaster recovery and rebuilding processes.

Interactive comment on Nat. Hazards Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., 1, 1257, 2013.

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