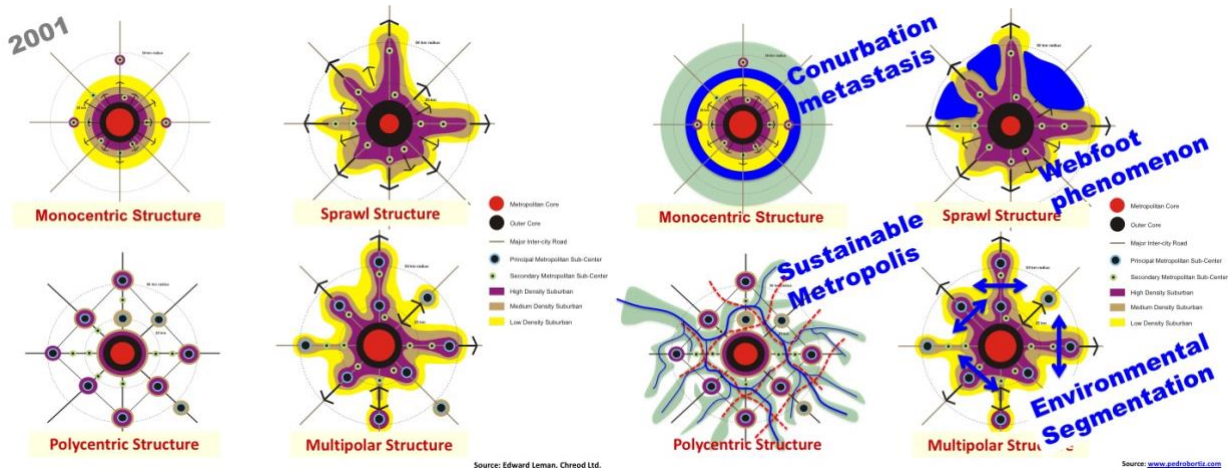


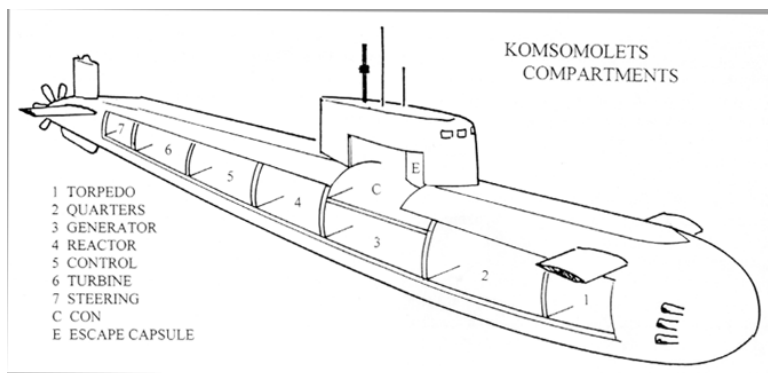
MetrUrban Planning in the Time of Coronavirus

200415 Pedro B. Ortiz points at the REAL CORP (online) Conference

- 1) There are 4 typologies of metropolises: Monocentric, Sprawl, Multipolar and Polycentric. **Only the Polycentric model is efficient and resilient.**



- 2) This is relevant to the issue we are going to discuss, as only the polycentric metropolis allows for an effective compartment segmentation, in case of a **subdivision** necessity. We can call that a 'cloisonnism' capacity (cloisonné art).



- 3) We understand that, in times of pandemic, we must be able to subdivide the physical structures into smaller units to contain the viral transfer. As in the submarines you have the capacity to isolate compartment to contain an impact water leak.
- 4) These units are to be scaled. From small to large: The patient (1/5 scale-Hospital Room), **Family** unit (1:50 Scale-Architecture), **Workplace** (1:50 scale-Architecture), **Neighborhood/Community** (1:500 scale-Urban Design), **City** (1:5.000 scale, Urban

Planning), **Metropolis** (1/50.000 scale-Metropolitan Planning), **Nation** (1/500.000 scale), Continent (1/5 million scale) and World (1/50 million scale)

Metropolitan Scale

Spatial Scales and Disciplinary approach

	Scale	Discipline	Knowledge areas
	1: 50.000.000	Geopolitics	UN. NATO. US. EU. IMF, OPEP,
	1: 5.000.000	'Regional' (Continental) Politics	UN. OAS. WB. BID. ADB. AFDB.
	1: 500.000	National Development	Politics, Economics, Sociology, Environment, Geography
	1: 50.000	Metropolitan Planning	Economics, Sociology, Infrastructure, Environment, Utilities
	1: 5.000	Urban Planning	Housing, Industrial, Services, Commerce, Transport, Environment
	1: 500	Urban design	Space, Volume, Semiotics, Engineering,
	1: 50	Architecture	Light, Space, Texture, Materials, Structure, Installations, Budget

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- 5) As a matter of fact, with the pandemic, we have actually resulted in only three levels of subdivision: **Nation, City and Family.**

- 6) We have to address the **Efficiency versus Efficacy Dilemma.**
 Efficacy is to have a goal achieved whatever the cost. Efficiency is to achieve it to the minimum cost. The Army, for instance, seeks efficacy. Private firms efficiency.
 For Capital Investment the 3 decision-making parameters are: **low risk, high return** and high liquidity. Risk and Return are antagonist. Low risk produces low returns, high returns are only achievable with high risk.
 A highly efficient city will have to accept risk. A secure city will have to accept low efficiency. We (the people) have to decide preferences.

- 7) We understand Resiliency not as toughness, but as capacity to recover.
 In Planning we have two possible resilient strategies: **Flexibility or Adaptability.**



We, planners, know the difference. It is a permanent professional discussion. Which one to apply when we draft Urban Plans. However, to make the difference more graphic, let me say that Flexibility strategy in fashion design will be an ample bag-dress. It will fit any type of body. Adaptability is when the dress can adapt to the body. An outfit with zips or Velcros that can be fitted to the different types of bodies.

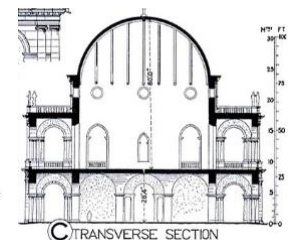
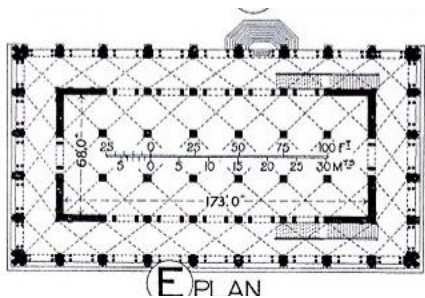
- 8) Economists prefer flexibility. I, as planner, prefer adaptability. Flexibility can produce unforeseen incompatibilities. Adaptability requires immediate response.

At a World Bank meeting in 2011 Edward Glasser did pontificate that good urban transport was as simple as 4 words: **“Buses good. Trains bad”**. The ideology behind that axiom is that buses are flexible. You can change routes anytime. Trains are inflexible. Tracks are laid out forever. I asked him, if that was so, following that principle, his approach to water provision should be: **“Buckets good. Pipes bad”**. Some people thought I had been impolite for cornering him.

- 9) How to make subdivisible metropolises?

Flexibility: The danger is the lack of specific program, and thus lack of response to specific needs. That will produce inefficiency.

Adaptability: In this case the basics have to be well defined. The specifics can, should, be changeable.



A good example is the **Vicenza’s Basilica** from Palladio. In history it has been many things, in spite of keeping its intrinsic morphology and iconic significance. It has been a

hospital, a market, an administrative office, a Court, a cultural center, a concert hall, an event place, etc. The Form is well defined and eternal. The installations ephemeral.

10) The competitiveness for efficiency globalization requires will probably overrun the security principle. The metropolises that will prioritize security will be less competitive and, subsequently, become subsidiaries of most competitive ones.

What most probably will happen is that metropolises will build is a specific 'terms of use' for the cities in the time of the pandemics. A '**Pandemic Protocol**', for pandemic risk situations.

11) The Protocol will probably consist of:

- How to close down the **compartments** depending of the degree, or risk, of contagion of each of them. Nation, metropolis, city, neighborhood, workplace or family dwelling.
- Establish, depending on that degree, a set of rules. That Protocol set will be organized as defense does for national security: **DEFCON 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5**.

12) **Concerns:**

- The **1918 pandemic** (50 million dead) did not transforms the world. It was soon forgotten. None of us was aware until the Coronavirus came around. 1st World War, with less dead, (40 million) did transform the world. The Pandemic had no effect.
- The **1854 London Soho cholera epidemic** did trigger the development of English (Culturally Anglo-Saxon) Planning Legislation to prevent health hazards. As result of the Empire, this Legal System is the one followed by all the Countries' Constitutions derived from the English Empire's independence.
- The transformations have to be implemented by the public sector, under control of politicians and civil servants. If there is no popular pressure for action the tendency is inertia and business as usual. The popular pressure depends on the Collective memory and will of the electorate to require for those changes. Collective Memory is short-lived. Once the apex surpassed the focus most probably will turn to rebuilding the economy. Let's not forget that collective intelligence is just one of the attributes of **Collective Intelligence**. We will depend on the quality of the latter.