Notes on Power and Authority in Architecture and Urbanism
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The subject matter of this colloquium unavoidably raises certain foundational questions about nature, and especially human nature, answers to which are contested. To better understand the most fundamental of these disagreements, I invite the reader to ponder them with me in light of the following proposition:

All architecture expresses power, and the aspiration of its makers to legitimate authority.

which I advance as a simple empirical and phenomenological observation. Whatever we may think about human beings and the significance of our individual and collective acts, many of our actions are willful, initiated with symbolic intent, and then ever again interpreted and reinterpreted symbolically. This is especially true of buildings, architecture, and human settlements. Whether temple, forum, cathedral, city hall, town square, primitive hut, urban town house, suburban ranch-burger, LEED-platinum office building, interstate highway interchange, or urban landscape installation, the existence of any of these both requires and represents the ability to bring them into and sustain their being; requires, that is, 'can-do' --- *power* in its most elemental sense. More than that however, human beings habitually (instinctively? naturally?) attach moral significance to our buildings and landscapes. *Legitimate authority* is that moral 'more than' --- related to power but more than power, more than the human capacity to will something and make it so. Legitimate authority is power wed to virtue, in service to a *telos* understood to be good, understood to be right. Legitimate authority implies and refers to some kind of shared ideal; and in the realms of architecture and urbanism, entails an aspiration to unite the aesthetic and the moral. Historically, ideal reference has been critical to popular understandings of democracy as a form of legitimate authority; to civil society and civic space; and to architecture. This is evidently true of pre-modern architecture and urbanism, aspirationally true of modernist architecture and urbanism, and (more controversially?) true but arguably unarticulated in hyper-modernist architecture and urbanism. But the substance of the ideal referent matters, and goes back to my initial observations about contending views of human nature, and the implications of that contentiousness for architecture, civic space and democracy.

Consider three different views of human nature: the pre-modern (which here I will call *tradition*); the modern; and the post-modern (which here I will call *hyper-modern*) and how these have arguably found expression in architectural and urban form.[1] Broadly speaking, traditional societies and their architecture were founded, implicitly or explicitly, upon certain metaphysical realist assumptions, the most basic of which are these:

- reality is real, is what it is, and is fundamentally sacred;
- human beings are able to know reality truly (*even if* all true human knowledge is necessarily partial, individually and collectively perspectival, and mediated to us through narrative traditions); and
- human beings can only flourish by conforming ourselves to reality, with this qualification: that as artisans human beings order found reality into a specific human reality that, so long as it accords with and participates in the larger reality of which human beings are part, enables us to flourish both individually and collectively.

These basic assumptions are essential to metaphysical realism; and arguably all or virtually all pre-modern cultures have operated, if sometimes only implicitly, with *at least* these three basic "common sense" metaphysical realist propositions: that reality is real, that we can know reality truly, and that we flourish by conforming ourselves to reality truly understood.

From these three assumptions a number of intellectual challenges follow, including:

- Discerning and articulating how the many different parts of reality relate to the whole of reality.
- Understanding the distinctive nature of things, both in terms of their *telos* and in terms of what both natural elements and artifacts are and are not capable of being and doing. Understanding specifically any relationship between human flourishing and places ordered toward that end requires understanding human beings as animals, as social beings, as artisans, as agents, and as thinkers who make, order, intend, and symbolize; understanding material things and their properties; and understanding architecture and cities as artifacts made by embodied social beings who endow their artifacts with symbolic meaning.
- Articulating the teleological implications that follow from thinking that human beings flourish by conforming ourselves to reality—viz., that human beings have a *telos*, which is to live well.[2]

One of the conclusions to be drawn about human nature from this metaphysical realist view is that human beings are simultaneously *constrained by reality* and also *rational agents*, for whom reason is the capacity that enables us to order our lives both materially as artisans and morally as citizens.

In the pre-modern west this metaphysical realist understanding of reality and its implications for human beings and for cities received foundational philosophical expression in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Politics* of Aristotle, and is implicit in the west's oldest architectural treatise, the *De Architectura* of Vitruvius (which authoritatively identified the primary virtues of the art of building as durability, comfort and beauty, and decorum as a virtue specific to architecture). Of the formal order of the traditional pre-modern western city ---the *telos* of which was the good life for human beings, the good life itself understood as a life of moral and intellectual virtue lived in community with others, and typically in a *polis*--- architectural historian Norris Kelly Smith writes that

> For millennia on end the buildings of our cities made manifest an institutional hierarchy: the size, cost, and complexity of an edifice were directly related to the power and public significance of the institution that it symbolized. The palace and cathedral were large, the mayor's mansion and the parish church were of medium size, and the shopkeeper's house was small.[3]

Smith's passage here focuses upon traditional urban formal order and how the precincts of the sacred, the civic, commerce, and private life simultaneously also denote the traditional city as a moral order. But there is an additional point to be made about traditional urban space. The traditional city is above all a realm of building and spatial reciprocity, a spatial environment where the idea and experience of urban space is not at all vague or ethereal, "spiritual," slippery or amorphous. In traditional urban settlements, space is not a void without form, rather exactly the opposite. Traditional urban space is a void with finite form –a *figural* void, a *place*-- something with breadth and depth, a void with limits. Moreover, space can be *con*figured. Space is an artifact, something that human beings can and do make. Shaped space is where much of what is most important in human social life takes place, whether in the intimate space of a private room or in the public space of a street or a plaza; and my point here is that in the traditional city space is a product of and container for human communal sociability, the medium of traditional face-to-face urban culture and civil society. In the traditional city, most urban space was *civic space,* and over time urban space came to refer to a class of things possessing specific names denoting a variety of spatial types: public urban spaces such as the *park*, the *plaza*, the *square*, the *boulevard*, the *avenue*, the *street*, and the *alley*; and private and semi-private urban spaces such as the *courtyard* and the *cloister garden*, as well as the transitional *forecourt*. And just as there was in the traditional city a hierarchy of building types, so too was there a hierarchy of spatial types; and it was a quotidian experience (in some places even now) to walk from a public square, down an avenue, onto a street, through a forecourt, into a lobby, up a stair, and into a room.

It took a while, but modernity has changed all that (though not necessarily for all time). Here is Smith, again:

> [With the industrial revolution], the hierarchy began to break down. Factory buildings were often much larger than churches and courthouses, but their size had little metaphorical value. The rise of the "factory system" more or less coincided with the [French] revolution of the late eighteenth century, which undermined the hierarchical scheme of things in another way. The factory began to afford a new kind of membership for its workers, just as factory production tended in the long run to promote a new definition of what constitutes "civilization"---a definition that has been increasingly bound up with the idea of standard of living and nonhierarchical equalitarianism.[4]

Smith's observations about traditional urbanism occur in the context of an essay lamenting both the rise of modernist architecture and its rapid transformation into post-modernism, and for what these tell us about the state of both western and human civilization. But here let me return to the topic of legitimate authority. The sacred and civic ideals the traditional city suggests and embodies, and which its members largely shared, are apparent enough (even if de-constructible and deconstructed from both modernist and hyper-modernist perspectives). But modernist architecture and urbanism also were born with ideals, and with implicit ideas about human nature. These subjects are summarized cogently but succinctly in the opening chapters of Colin Rowe's *Collage City* (co-authored with Fred Koetter, 1978). The success of modernism in the first half of the 20th century was the architectural and urban equivalent of the French Revolution, and succeeded in large part because ---like the French Revolution before it, and the Russian Revolution with which it was contemporary--- it was a secular gospel delivered in the context of both a long general crisis of modernity and a moment of acute crisis in the second decade of the 20th century during and

immediately after the First World War. Modernism's message was simultaneously one of progress, inevitability, scientific rationality, and the threshold of a secular utopia.

> [M]odern architecture, in its great phase, was the great idea [it was] precisely because it compounded and paraded to extravagance the two myths which it still most publicly advertises. For if the combination of fantasies about science ---with its objectivity--- and fantasies about freedom ---with its humanity--- comprised one of the most appealing and pathetic of late nineteenth century doctrines, then the twentieth century embodiment of these themes in the form of building could not fail to stimulate; and, the more it excited the imagination, the more the conception of a scientific, progressive and historically relevant architecture could only serve as a focus for a still further concentration of fantasy. The new architecture was rationally determinable; the new architecture was historically predestined; the new architecture represented the overcoming of history; the new architecture was responsive to the spirit of the age; the new architecture was socially therapeutic; the new architecture was young and self-renewing . . . never to be wearied by age; but ---perhaps above all--- the new architecture meant the end to deception, dissimulation, vanity, subterfuge, and imposition. Such were some of the subliminal messages which stimulated modern architecture and were, in turn, stimulated by it… [promoting] a city in which all authority was to be dissolved, all convention superseded; in which change was to be continuous and order, simultaneously, complete; in which the public realm, become superfluous, was to disappear and the private realm . . . was to emerge undisguised by the protection of façade.[5]

The import of modernism's aesthetic was similarly revolutionary and mythic in intent, a symbolic rejection of 19th century bourgeois European culture *tout court*. Gone were the church and the town hall as the monumental buildings of modern city plans, replaced by monumentalized electrical power plants, worker housing and office buildings. Where the tradition was hereditary and organic, modernism would be rational; where the tradition was ornate, modernism would be spare; where the tradition was corrupt, modernism would be pure; where the tradition was for princes and popes, modernism would be for the people. For all but the most innocent modernist fellow travelers, modernism was never so much about *function* as aesthetics, and about using the language of function as a club with which to batter the decadent culture of 19th and early 20th century Europe and the architecture that symbolized it.

As it was with modernist buildings, so it was with modernist space extended to the modernist city. Steven Peterson, a student of Rowe's in the 1970s, characterized modern space as *Anti-space*, less to suggest it is *bad* than to suggest it is the *opposite* of the spatial conditions that characterize traditional architecture and urbanism.[6] Where traditional architectural and urban space ("imitating nature" as if nature is an artisan) is ordered, particular, formed, discontinuous and man-made, modernist anti-space (preserving, simulating and "imitating nature" as *not Man*, for essentially therapeutic purposes) is correspondingly disordered, universal, unformed, continuous, and similar to *found* nature, a sensibility that still serves to differentiate Classical Italian and French garden design from the English Romantic Landscape tradition associated in America with Frederick Law Olmsted and latter-day Landscape Urbanists. What this has meant as an ideal is a turn from traditional space as a figure defined by buildings that are background, to an emphasis upon the modernist building as a free standing figural object against the background of an unformed anti-spatial natural landscape. The upshot of this is that, strictly speaking, in the ideal modernist city there is no 'civic space.' Nothing in the modernist city successfully corresponds to the Washington DC Mall or to *Piazza S. Pietro* at the large scale of traditional baroque urbanism ---do citizens assemble in Albany or Brasilia for inaugurations, funerals, or redress of grievances?--- nor to the quotidian *piazze* and town squares of ordinary pre-

modernist European and American cities and towns. And architecturally, modernist rhetoric about function notwithstanding, the Barcelona Pavilion and the Villa Savoye, two early modernist icons, were hardly about function at all, rather (among other things) the separation of building structure from building enclosure and the new building aesthetic and conception of (anti-) space made possible thereby, an aesthetic that clearly differentiated modernism from the decadent tradition at scales both architectural and urban.

What of modernist assumptions about nature and human nature? Rowe traces (somewhat tediously) the lineage of modernism's anthropology through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries ---the human being as autonomous individual existing in and above nature but not as part of nature; the rise of social contract theory; nature itself as raw material for the industrial era--- but notes aptly that what emerges with modernism in the early twentieth century is a notion of impersonal forces shaping the formation of cities. Both the creation of cities and human well being itself are increasingly defined in economic terms derived from Marx's dialectical materialism and the prior Hegelian historicism that Marx adopted, so that by the time modernist architecture emerges full blown in the early twentieth century

> an irresistible, coercive and logical 'history' seems to have become quite as real as anything equipped with dimension, weight, colour, texture…[7]

and the architect has become

> a sort of human ouija-board or planchette . . . a sensitive antenna who receives and transmits the logical messages of destiny.[8]

Rowe himself rejects both modernist anthropology and teleology ---utopia as political prescription (or, per Rowe: "utopia or else")--- in favor of the "*known* psychological constitution" [original emphasis] of human beings as moral agents who both remember and hope; whose moral fate is not determined but who persistently demonstrate an inability to perfect ourselves in virtue; who desire and find goodness in both individual freedom and communal membership; and who in our collective existence in history are capable of both progress and regress in our attempts to discover and attain our own well-being. Rowe admires the aesthetic achievements of the early modernist masters; makes an implicit (and unintentionally ironic) argument for extending modernism *as an aesthetic tradition*; and asks sensibly enough why our ideal city ought not to be conceived of and act as both a theater of prophecy and a theater of memory, with place for both the prospective and the retrospective gesture. Nevertheless, Rowe's essentially emotivist reliance upon a knowing connoisseurship rather than metaphysical realism as the intellectual foundation for his own preferred alternative to the dynamics of 1970s modernism (which he castigates for its mindless complicity in "the rape of the great cities of the world") is insufficient resistance to the flood of hyper-modernism in which we are today engulfed --- a subject to which shortly I will return.[9]

Many invested in the original moral content of modernist architecture have been disappointed in its performance and lament its failures, without quite knowing what to do next other than embrace the cause of sustainability as modernism's last best hope (typically unaware of the metaphysical realist implications of the embrace). In his collection of twenty years of essays on architecture and urbanism published in 2007 by Princeton University Press

under the title *From a Cause to a Style: Modernist Architecture's Encounter with the American City* (and writing as a genuine *amateur*), the redoubtable Nathan Glazer traces his declining faith in the modernist architectural project; and even has the *chutzpah* to argue that Prince Charles has valid points in his criticisms of contemporary architecture and urban design. The book begins with an account of how in the 1980s and 90s the Prince of Wales emerged as a critic of modernist architecture and planning; and that, even more astonishingly, Charles's outspoken preference for more traditional buildings and towns and urban quarters appeared to have widespread popular support in the United Kingdom. Architects, writes Glazer

> to their disgruntlement, were portrayed as arrogant, unresponsive [and indifferent] to what ordinary people wanted…. [W]hat was most shocking to modernist architects was how easy it was to portray them as distant from the people and their interests. For at the origins of modernism…[architects] were, in their own minds, leagued with the people against what they saw as archaic, overblown, extravagant and inefficient architecture and design, *the taste of princes* [emphasis added]…. Modernism in architecture and planning spoke for the people and their interests ---in good sanitary housing, in green space, in access to air and light, in more living space, in an urban environment adapted to their needs and interests--- and against the interests of princes, or merchant princes, or profit-minded developers. Modernism in its origins was a cause, not simply another turn in taste. What, then, had happened, that a prince could better represent the people, their interests and tastes, than the architects?[10]

One could hypothesize that what happened is that modernist architects ran into modernity itself, in its fuller implications; and I mean "running into modernity" as both a practical experience of bureaucracy and as a theoretical proposition. Practically, architecture is a social art in an obvious sense that architecture is always present *to* (if not today always *for*) society; but also in a less obvious sense with respect to the many factors in addition to design intentions that shape the contemporary built environment. Architects in every age work within such natural constraints as those provided generally by the laws of physics and specifically by the characteristics of their sites; and are also constrained by the taste and temperament of their patrons and clients. But in addition to these, contemporary architects are constrained by modern zoning ordinances and building codes; by contemporary construction practice as affected both by the organization of labor and the production and transport of modern building materials; by contemporary traffic engineering standards (often enforced with exceptional bureaucratic insouciance); by contemporary banking practices and financing conventions; by cultural expectations established and reinforced in the news media and by the culture of architecture itself in its professional and academic milieus; and by environmental and preservation agencies and NIMBY organizations that have arisen largely in reaction to the pervasiveness of modernist architectural practices and assumptions. These constraints frustrate utopian ambitions. Given the characteristically modern juxtaposition of bureaucratically regulated public institutions with modernity's minimal institutional regulation of private life and ambition ---no longer are we simply *able* to choose how to organize our private lives, but increasingly we are *required* to organize them on our own--- one simply notes the affinities between 1) these modern constraints, 2) the difficulty (if not anthropological impossibility) of creating a just society by means of architecture and bureaucratic management, and 3) the abandonment by hyper-modernist architects of the early modernist social agenda in favor of hyper-modernism's *comparatively* simple aesthetic ambitions to make buildings unlike any that have ever been seen before --- because we can. And this suggests a corollary to my original proposition about architecture, power, and legitimate authority as these relate especially to any notion of *civic* space:

> *A widespread desire for and expectation of social predictability from everyone else ---the culture of bureaucracy--- combined with a widespread desire for and expectation of maximum freedom for oneself --- the culture of personal autonomy--- will never produce a common, coherent or beautiful public realm.*

But if this suggests practical reasons why well-intending modernists have, at least professionally, forsaken 'social concerns' for hyper-modernist formalism, it does not explain the hyper-modernist intellectual and theoretical abandonment of modernism's social concerns themselves. And here the work of Alasdair MacIntyre illuminates.[11] Friedrich Nietzsche is the fountainhead of post-modern theory, and MacIntyre argues that it was a primary intellectual achievement of Nietzsche to demonstrate the impossibility of grounding morality in reason without reference to teleology (and, *eo ipso*, nature and human nature); and that the attempt of Enlightenment philosophers to do so ---more specifically, to conceive of 'morality' as an independent subject of inquiry and to promote the *content* of Christian morality apart from Christian anthropology and metaphysics--- was either an error born of cultural habit or a conscious masking of their own will-to-power (as was Christianity itself, or any religion or implicitly metaphysical realist intellectual tradition). And yet Nietzsche, western culture's most famous and insightful atheist, lamented the loss of the art inspired by Christian culture

> *The Beyond in art*---With profound sorrow one admits to oneself that, in their highest flights, the artists of all ages have raised to heavenly transfiguration precisely those conceptions which we now recognize as false: *artists are the glorifiers of the religious and philosophic errors of mankind*, and they could not have been so without believing in the absolute truth of these errors. If belief in such truth declines in general, then that species of art can never flourish again which---like the *Divine Comedy*, the paintings of Raphael, the frescoes of Michelangelo, the Gothic cathedrals---presupposes not only a cosmic but a *metaphysical* significance in the objects of art. A moving tale will one day be told how there once existed such an art, such an artist's faith [original italics]…[12]

and despised the post-Christian 'last men' of his own decadent European civilization.[13] In what then does the good life consist for that individual who has recognized that nature is what nature does, and that all of what human beings have heretofore regarded as 'virtuous' and 'good' ---i.e., human civilization itself--- is but a record of the exercise (sometimes open, more often masked) of each individual's will-to-power, which itself is *impersonal non-teleological nature's* own defining characteristic? It can be nothing but to maximize one's own will-to-power, whether by strength, guile, rhetoric or skill.[14] MacIntyre makes a powerful and provocative case that Nietzsche must be seen as *both* the foremost critic *and* the individualist culmination of Enlightenment "rationality" divorced from teleology. *In just this way*, the post-humanist / post-rational / hyper-modernist abandonment of modernism's utopian teleology and social agenda likewise is simultaneously both post-modernist and the culmination of modernism. Hyper-modernists have characterized the loopy but poignant architectural post-modernism of the 1970s and 80s as a "transitional period" from early modernism to today's hyper-modernism; but in the larger historical view suggested by MacIntyre, it seems more true [sic] to say that *architectural modernism itself*, now dead as an intellectual project, was a 100-year-long transition from the pre-modern tradition to post-modern hyper-modernism.[15]

If the metaphysic of the pre-modern city was sacred, the metaphysic of the hyper-modernist city is thoroughly secular, the usually unarticulated but *de facto* operative ontological assumptions of its several efficient causes being alternately empirical and virtual, this-worldly, pragmatic, utilitarian, contractual, therapeutic, and consumerist. The spatial characteristics of the hyper-modern city are best captured in Rem Koolhaas's term *junkspace* ("the new

flamboyant, flexible, forgettable face of architecture").[16] Here the blurb taken from his own essay, one that might make Nietzsche himself proud:

> If space-junk is the human debris that litters the universe, junk-space is the residue mankind leaves on the planet. The built ... product of modernization is not modern architecture but Junkspace. Junkspace is what remains after modernization has run its course or, more precisely, what coagulates while modernization is in progress, its fallout. Modernization had a rational program: to share the blessings of science, universally. Junkspace is its apotheosis, or meltdown... Although its individual parts are the outcome of brilliant inventions, lucidly planned by human intelligence, boosted by infinite computation, their sum spells the end of Enlightenment, its resurrection as farce, a low-grade purgatory...[17]

And what ---following my initial proposition, which presumes that from authority there is for human beings no escape--- is the substance of the legitimate authority that hyper-modern architectural and urban form would represent? For "the masses" --a peculiarly modernist and hyper-modernist notion I think; pre-modern Europeans were persons, members of a community ("the faithful") or known by their social rank ("the serfs")-- most of what hyper-modernism means apart from its expression of power can only be a puzzle; but in the aggregate I propose the authoritative content of hyper-modernism is *the legitimacy of and permission to live an experimental life*, writ large.

But this is the theory of junkspace for academics. There is a popular reality of junkspace for the post-modern masses [sic], one faintly prophesied by Alexis de Tocqueville in his observation that modern democracy has a tendency to promote the (in 1840 novel) phenomenon of individualism,[18] and to inculcate the desire for equality over liberty. The most popular and pervasive physical expression of contemporary individualist culture is the post-WWII American suburb, which manifests the ideal of a freestanding house in the landscape. This ideal has a long history in Western culture, but until the eighteenth century was an aristocratic ideal reciprocally related to, and valued as a temporary respite from, urban life. However, when the villa / country-estate ideal became democratized in the modern era *in opposition to* the Industrial City, it set off a series of historical events resulting not in a rural landscape dotted with grand or modest dwellings, but rather a "middle landscape" neither rural nor urban that practically everywhere looks like contemporary Long Island or suburban Atlanta. This post-1945 middle landscape ---a physical embodiment of the democratic cultural tendency toward individualism identified by Tocqueville, made possible (for now) by government policies and the proliferation of the automobile--- is a world of unprecedented private luxury in a junkspace context of unprecedented public spatial poverty, an environment in which the public realm doesn't matter. And here we arrive at the democracy question of our colloquium and whether a democratic society at the scale of a continent, absent authoritative and virtue-inculcating civic institutions that make civic buildings and spaces, can long endure.

What are the political implications of and prospects for the increasingly global new International Style ---none call it imperialism--- of hyper-modernism and junkspace? Understanding democracy proper not as an actual state of equality but rather a system of government where citizens enjoy equal rights versus the government and in relation to each other (and presuming for the moment that hyper-modernist architecture and urbanism are economically and environmentally sustainable), more and more our immediate political future appears only nominally democratic and increasingly oligarchic. Charles Murray's *Coming Apart* (2012) ---I am not a libertarian, and there are other

witnesses if Murray is not to taste; but Murray makes my point--- documents how geographically, educationally and conjugally the oligarchy has formed and is consolidating, congregating our ruling class of politicians, financiers, tech-wizards, academics, journalists and celebrities in the super-zip codes of the USA's hyper-modernist global-cities; and who, after biennial and quadrennial internecine jousts, select and define the narrow range of issues and candidates that will go before the *demos* for vote. The oligarchy does allow fresh talent from the lower classes, but the price of admission is total cultural immersion (say goodbye to flyover country) and in this scenario hyper-modernist architecture and urbanism by and for the oligarchy will simply proceed apace --- though in America sprawl suburbs are likely to deteriorate or disappear almost entirely owing to a combination of factors that make the future of sprawl development untenable: the economic decline of the middle class; the primary paradox inherent in sprawl itself, viz., that it consumes the landscape that is the very source of its faux-Jeffersonian appeal; but above all the economic unsustainability of sprawl infrastructure.

MacIntyre concludes in *Three Rival Versions of Moral Inquiry* that both Aristotelian-Thomist metaphysical realism and Nietzschean perspectivism possess an internal philosophical coherence lacking in Enlightenment moral philosophy (and by inference, if I am correct, also lacking in modernist architecture and urbanism); though their practical consequences are quite different,[19] and contemporary culture ---or, at least, its ruling class--- is conscientiously more Nietzschean than Aristotelian in outlook, and more hyper-modernist than traditional in its architectural and urban preferences. (In the vernacular: hyper-modernism is the dominant cultural paradigm, tradition a niche market.) One could imagine that hyper-modernists ---being in control of the main institutions of contemporary architectural culture--- might talk around, dismiss out of hand, perhaps even be oblivious to the issues that are the subject of this colloquium. But as a thought experiment, consider a scenario for how traditional architecture and civic space (accompanied by a revival of legitimate authority, if not democracy) might again become normative.

We are to this day beneficiaries of some very good traditional architecture and urbanism created between 1880 and 1930 ---excellent examples of which can be found here in Princeton--- when there was a felicitous meeting between modern technology, wealth, and traditional architectural and urban sensibilities. Why did those sensibilities begin to recede and almost disappear after about 1930? Essentially, because modernists were poised to capitalize [sic] (and did) when a succession of catastrophes ---World War I, the Great Depression, World War II--- first in Europe and then in the United States shattered what was left of the confidence of the west in its own historic culture, and opened the west to (and fostered a disposition for) architectural modernism; of which hyper-modernist architects today remain beneficiaries. Is there catastrophe in our future that might affect a corresponding historic reversal?

If hyper-modernism has a long run as the architecture and urbanism of an oligarchic state overseeing a slow-growth crony-capitalist global economy in which wealth accrues to an elite and economic opportunity is denied to the majority, we should expect that a select few architects ---but only a few--- will be members of the oligarchy (Nietzsche's 'naturally superior men,' and perforce rivals). The rest will presumably be consigned to the miserable

lives ---or, at least, the lives of lowered expectations--- that many architects in the modern world do in fact lead. So let it be said that, in the old Aristotelian terms of promoting human flourishing, some (and not only architects) will view the hegemony of hyper-modernism and twenty-first century oligarchy themselves as catastrophes.

But even assuming for now that this is a minority view, there is no shortage of catastrophic scenarios that could render hyper-modernism untenable and unsustainable. Apocalyptic anxiety today abounds outside the oligarchy, across the political spectrum. Environmentalists see rising tides, fiscal conservatives economic collapse, social conservatives the human costs declining marriage, family formation, and civil society; young people unending debt and underemployment. Koolhaas chides such anxieties as a failure of nerve and in any case irrelevant,[20] but does so from within the relative safety and comfort of the oligarchy. But imagine that some combination of these events or others comes to pass that causes the global economy to shrink, and calls into question the resources that even the oligarchy will spend on experimental buildings; or that calls into question the legitimacy of the oligarchy itself, and by association its cadre of hyper-modernist designers of expensive buildings that require frequent repair, don't last very long, and are not all that easy on the eye. In those circumstances, what will be needed to reestablish *as normative* an art of building that rests intellectually (even if only implicitly) upon a metaphysical realist foundation?

One thing needed will be architects who are themselves members of communities for whom they are experts in the building arts. But architects themselves constitute a community, and a coherent community of architects ---not least to understand coherently their own activities as architects--- needs to understand and articulate that Man is an intermediate being, at once part of, different from, and responsible for nature. Beyond that, architects need to understand the history of our art, and need to articulate (first for ourselves) a teleology of building, a teleology of urbanism, a theory of construction as it relates to the durability and sustainability of the built environment, a theory of architecture and urbanism's relationship to the natural and cultivated landscape, a theory of architecture and the city as these relate to economic exchange, and a theory about architecture and urbanism's aesthetic, symbolic and sacramental content with respect to beauty, moral order and sacred order respectively.

Ultimately, if we are to have an architecture and urbanism that are not merely an expression of political power and economic arrangements but also a *common* symbol and embodiment of legitimate authority (and suitably decorous), there can be no substitute for a living and future-oriented ---and this means *teleological*-- tradition, no way to avoid a deeper knowledge of our own history and all its entanglements and opportunities. Once this is understood, some fundamental questions ---What is good? What is true? What is beautiful?--- that have been suppressed by hyper-modernism (*Ce naivete! Comment injuste! Quelle horreur!*) assuredly will return, for both architects and at least some persons in the larger culture. For if democracy and hyper-modern architecture are not themselves matters of human nature, legitimate authority, and above all human flourishing, what claim do they have on our allegiance?

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NOTES

[1] Max Weber's phenomenological taxonomy of authority and its most common expressions in both pre-modern history and modernity entailed *traditional authority* for pre-moderns and *rational authority* (by which he meant *bureaucratic* authority) for moderns. Weber also articulated a theory of *charismatic authority*, but probably did not imagine it would become normative for post-moderns.

[2] As Alasdair MacIntyre has noted, in pre-modern/metaphysical-realist cultures "living well" is the *telos* of a human being in the same way that farming well is the *telos* of a farmer, and keeping time well is the *telos* of a clock. (*After Virtue* 2nd edition (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1984), pp.57–58.)

[3] Norris Kelly Smith, "Crisis in Jerusalem," *The Chicago Tribune Competition: Late Entries, Vol. II*, Stuart Cohen and Stanley Tigerman, eds. Rizolli Press, 1980, p.106.

[4] Smith, *loc. cit.*

[5] Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, *Collage City*, MIT Press, 1978, pp.3-4 (in a chapter not kind to the progressivism of Woodrow Wilson).

[6] Steven Peterson, "Space and Anti-space," *Harvard Architectural Review: Beyond the Modern Movement*, MIT Press, 1980.

[7] Rowe and Koetter, *op. cit.*, p.28.

[8] *ibid*, p.8.

[9] I 'mis-read' Rowe (and argue for his continuing importance) in my essay "St. Colin Rowe and the Architecture Theory Wars," *Bulletin of Science, Technology, & Society,* Volume 20, Number 4.

[10] Nathan Glazer, *From a Cause to a Style: Modernist Architecture's Encounter with the American City*, Princeton University Press, 2007, pp.1-2.

[11] See especially *After Virtue* (1981), *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (1988), *Three Rival Versions of Moral Inquiry* (1990), and *Dependent Rational Animals* (1999).

[12] Friedrich Nietzsche, "From the Souls of Artists and Writers," *Human, All Too Human*, #220.

[13] Friedrich Nietzsche, from *Thus Spake Zarathustra:*
    I will speak . . . of the most contemptible thing: . . . the last man!"
    Lo! I show you the last man.
    "We have discovered happiness" - say the last men, and blink….
    A little poison now and then [for] pleasant dreams. And much poison at last for a pleasant death.
    One no longer becometh poor or rich; both are too burdensome. Who still wanteth to rule? Who
        still wanteth to obey? Both are too burdensome.
    No shepherd, and one herd! Everyone wanteth the same; everyone is equal: he who hath other
        sentiments goeth voluntarily into the madhouse.
    "Formerly all the world was insane," - say the subtlest of them, and blink….
    They are clever and know all that hath happened: so there is no end to their raillery….
    They have their little pleasures for the day, and their little pleasures for the night, but they have a
        regard for health.
    "We have discovered happiness," - say the last men, and blink….

[14] MacIntyre quotes Nietzsche, from *The Will to Power*:
    A great man---a man whom nature has constructed and invented in the grand style---what is he? If he cannot lead, he goes alone; then it can happen that he may snarl at some things he meets on the way...he wants no "sympathetic" heart, but servants, tools; in his intercourse with men he is always intent on *making* something out of them. He knows he is incommunicable: he finds it tasteless to be familiar; and when one thinks he is, he usually is not. When not speaking to himself, he wears a mask. He rather lies than tells the truth: it requires more spirit and *will*. There is a solitude within him that is inaccessible to praise or blame, his own justice that is beyond appeal [original italics]. (From Note 962 of *The Will to Power*, quoted in Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981, pages 257-258.)

[15] Though shorn of modernism's utopian teleology and social agenda, hyper-modernism remains modernist in its dependence upon the methods and materials of modern industrial construction technology, ramped up by computer visualizations in service to formal novelty.

[16] It is a neat if unconvincing trick for Koolhaas and other hyper-modernists to demur that in a world of impersonal powers they have none --- a trick because they do, not least in shaping young architects about the norms and ideals of architectural practice in the contemporary world.

[17] Rem Koolhaas, *Junkspace*, Quodlibet, 2006.

[18] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, translated and edited by Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 482 ff.

[19] It is worth noting, for example, the similarities between Augustine ---the foremost philosopher with whom Aquinas synthesized Aristotle--- and Nietzsche with respect to the primacy of willful desire as observed in both themselves and in what might be called the 'natural man.' The difference is that Nietzsche thought that successfully exercising one's will-to-power to the full was the essence of human flourishing; whereas Augustine found that indulging his lust for domination (*libido dominandi*) was precisely what *prevented* him (and any human being) from flourishing.

[20] Rem Koolhaas, from "Whatever happened to Urbanism?"
    [We] have to take insane risks…be utterly uncritical…bestow forgiveness left and right. The certainty of failure has to be our laughing gas/oxygen; modernization our most potent drug. Since we are not responsible, we have to become irresponsible… (from *S,M,L,XL*, OMA, The Monicelli Press, New York, 1995, pp. 959/971).