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**A view Made Unnecessary**

Questioning a theory of irony-work in architecture

(..) Architecture comes into being only as we talk about and hypothesize about it; the buildings left ‘out in the rain’ participate in the discourse of architecture inasmuch as architects include them in their conscious act of theorizing.

Emmanuel Petit, 2013

As *deus ex machina*, theory posits that public art cannot exist in a culture of disrupted certainties, unless its innate representational virtues are subject to it. Is it a matter, characteristically ironic, of what we *expect* to talk about and how when we address the strange poetics of irony-work in architecture?

Irony-work was once restrained to the private consumption of social art, the novel, from which the modern notion of irony first sprang. With the ascent of certain theories that favor the social aspects of art, architecture has been made to mimic the novel’s virtue.

This paper sets out to defend architecture’s acquired sense of uncertainty in the modern age. The term irony-work, borrowed from Freud’s description of the social function of the joke, is paramount in making a parody of theory’s quest to save architecture from oblivion.

For the purpose of illustration, I will look at architectural archetypes, such as a series of temples in modern guise (London, Leeds, Berlin). At the end, a car park in Berlin, where context brings about an inescapable ironic charge, will serve as the stage for an anti-heroic architectural gesture, which negates originality in favor of lost purpose.

To what end? One might suggest that the stetting sun on architecture’s public identity coincides with the dawn of a certain genre of theories, which claims the idioms of criticism for itself. The view that theory adds value to our understanding of social aspects of irony-work in architecture will be challenged.

(300 words)