

**The other "ich" or the desire for the void:  
for a tomb of Adolf Loos<sup>1</sup>**

Hubert Damisch, Translation by Ross Jenner

*"Warum haben die papuas eine kultur und die deutschen kein?"*

A city, Adolf Loos used to say, gets the architects it deserves. Hence the question: does Vienna, the "1900" Vienna, imperial Vienna deserve the credit, like the later republican, or democratic Vienna, which for a time entrusted Loos with the direction of the Municipal Housing Department, for having produced, kept in his person, a man who did not cease indicting, in his practice as well as in his writings, the falsity of the condition granted in the capital of the *oster reich* to those who claimed the title—in his eyes at least, suspect—of architect? And if it decidedly does not deserve credit, why did this polemicist, still better known today, and in Paris itself, for the part he took at the beginning of the century in the dispute against ornamentation, than as the author of Tristan Tsara's house at the rear of the Butte Montmartre, why did this architect (who practised architecture so little) not choose to

emigrate to America for which, unlike so many of his colleagues who, quite simply, refused to go and see it, he had embarked on leaving school, and the precocious discovery of which would make of him once returned to Europe, in a paradoxical way, uprooted? Was Vienna at this point necessary to him, and on what grounds, with what end in view ?

### *1. Potemkin City*

Vienna, for Loos, was in the first place a "Potemkin" city: a city which hid its true identity, its nature, the realities of its class divisions, under the clothing, the tinsel which its architects ran up for it, in the way Catherine the Great's favourite knew how to set up entire villages in trompe-l'oeil made of canvas and pasteboard on the deserted planes of the Ukraine, during the visits of the Empress<sup>2</sup>. The Potemkin city which had destroyed the girdle of its medieval walls only to raise in their place a new *ring*, made of a row of false palaces, rentable properties treated in the image of the princely abodes of the time of the Baroque or the Renaissance. An architecture of the mask, it deserved a capital which meant to preserve its aristocratic appearance up till the era of the bourgeoisie and which assigned to its architects the task of concealing under the camouflage of a garb of false ashlar and a decoration made up of elements repeated in cement, all social difference between its inhabitants, at least those of the better districts (the problem of the people's districts will not be posed until later, once Vienna became "Red"). Architecture in trompe-l'oeil, which Loos considered "immoral" because it was founded on falsehood and imitation (the "substitute"), and born of a feeling of shame: falsity of materials, imitation of signs of a past that was completed, shame, not of being poor, as Loos wrote, but should one be well-heeled, as a bourgeois established on the *ring* amongst the banks and de luxe hotels could be, shame of not counting amongst the well born, shame in having to admit what one is, a bourgeois, a man of one's time, a "modern" man.

## 2. *Art, architecture.*

But modernity itself is already bound up with clothing, if not also, as will be seen, with the mask. From the outset, on the day after the creation, with the aid of the State and in the prestigious shadow of Otto Wagner, of the *Secession*, the Viennese avatar of the “art nouveau”, the tone is set by a succession of articles on the exhibition of the Jubilee of 1898, which develop around the themes of clothing (*kleidung*) [vêtement] and cladding (*bekleidung*) [revêtement], and by Loos’s first work as architect, the fitting out of Goldmann’s, the menswear shop, in Vienna. A tone it must be said, which had nothing revolutionary about it, even if Loos could not stand authority in any form (and made no secret of it): the tone of an architect, and one who wanted to be modern, that is to say, of his time. Some years later, and anticipating in his way the opposition, itself charged with ideology, which Karl Mannheim made between ideology and utopia, Loos will not hesitate to write that if art, the work of art, has a revolutionary vocation, the house is conservative (the house, not architecture: since the latter produces not only houses but also monuments, tombs, to which—as will be seen—his art leads and to which it confines itself). *Das kunstwerk ist revolutionär, das haus konservativ*<sup>3</sup>: the work of art is oriented toward the future, it opens new ways to humanity, whereas the house is of its time and “thinks” of the present (*das haus denkt an die gegenwart*). In this sense, if the work of art (and the tomb itself, the simple tumulus where class relations become meaningless as well as the “monument” which carries them to their limit) can take on the value and function of utopia, which transcends the “given” and seeks to break the bounds of the existing order, the “house” on the contrary comes under the heading of ideology, of consolidation, of confirmation of reality; as distinct from the work of art, whose action extends, in law, until “the last days of humanity” (*bis an die letzten tage der menschheit*<sup>4</sup>), it responds to a need of the moment; it is in the service of present day utility; the house has nothing to do with art, it must please us: *man loves the house, he hates art*. But this is really why he does not know how to make himself comfortable, except by way of putting on a

borrowed garment, in a dwelling conceived according to his intention by an "artist", even if he were a member of the *Secession*: a house, an apartment lives and transforms itself with him or those who inhabit it; it must tell a story, that of an individual, of a family, and not bear witness to the art of the person—decorator, architect, and soon, Loos had foreseen, sculptor or painter—who from a usurped position is able to exercise an insupportable tyranny on the body of trades, but on that of his clients as well.

### 3. *The principle of discretion*

But why can any and everybody, if he has the means, not be housed like a king (even if, or all the more easily, by the effect of a contradiction which did not escape Loos, kings have lost the sense of display and live henceforth like any and everybody, that is like bourgeois)? As to clothing to which he always directly tied the question of housing, did Loos not maintain that one could judge the level of culture of a country by the number of its inhabitants who use their newly acquired freedom to dress outside of all constraint or hierarchical norm, and if they wanted to, like the king himself? As proof, the Anglo-Saxon countries, where "everyone" is well dressed, whereas in the Germanic countries the only ones are members of high society. But *well* dressed, what does this mean? It is to be conspicuous in the least manner possible (*dass man am wenigsten auffällt*). Again it must be understood: an Englishman will not dress in Peking like a Pekinese, nor in Vienna like a Viennese; but for his own part he has attained the height of civilisation. In its complete, developed formulation, the "principle of discretion" displays a radical ethnocentrism: to be well dressed, is to be dressed in such a way that one is not noticed when one is at the centre of the culture (*im mittelpunkt der kultur*), that is to say, according to Loos, and at the time when he was writing (since a "centre" is always subject to displacements) in London and in *the best society* (on condition, even in this privileged place, of having to change one's clothes at each street crossing). "An

article of clothing is modern if, having dressed for a particular occasion, and being at the centre of culture and in the best society, one attracts the least possible attention"<sup>5</sup>

#### 4. *Displacement of the centre*

It is thus in a calculated setting in perspective that Loos' discourse, if not his practice as architect has had to assume, beyond the Viennese context, a function, a critical stance—to the point that, by the effect of his meeting with Tsara as much as for the singularly corrosive tone of his writings (these did not miss, once is not custom, attracting very soon the attention of the "advanced"<sup>6</sup> Parisian milieu), he attached to his name like an aura of "avant-gardism", perhaps equivocal, but in itself very revealing of the ideological contradictions of which the system allowed a meeting, in the pages of *L'esprit nouveau* as well as at the Weimar *Bauhaus*, of the Dadaist negation and the constructive propositions of the "modern movement". If Loos could feel the sense of speaking into the void (as is indicated by the title of his first collection, *Ins leere gesprochen*, published in Paris, moreover, before being published in Vienna), in reality the void was necessary to his discourse so that it might produce its effects, so that first of all it might produce *itself*. But as for this void, it would not be enough for Loos to state it, in marking the difference, the distance between the state of affairs which prevailed in the West, predominantly Anglo-Saxon, and the culture (or the absence, the lack of culture: of this more later) which according to him characterised the German speaking countries. He would have to set it up in as much as place, the generative space of his statements, by an operation which, looking at the matter closely, made the province of all his ventures in the ideological (literary) field as well as in that of architecture. An operation, if one can say it (and Littré wanted this indispensable word used so, to save it from disuse), by which the ego *estranges* [s'étrange] itself from itself, establishes itself with respect to itself in an off centre, if not eccentric, position as far as assuming the discourse of the other. *Das andere*: again the title is explicit, the journal that Loos, in the same way as his friend Karl Kraus's *The Torch*, would himself undertake to edit, in 1908, in order to "introduce western culture

into Austria" (since such was the subtitle of this publication, which only had two issues). If Vienna was necessary to him it was because it alone, of the capitals of the West, created the myth that it was at the centre of Europe, "at the crossing of the old axes of the world" (Musil), of a circle (the *ring*) so perfectly *void*—in the grammatical sense of the term—that at its place the very question of "centre" had to be posed from a position of exteriority, of otherness.

##### 5. *The place of the other.*

*Das andere*, the other, the other I, the other "ich", the I other, the *öster reich*, the power of the the East, Vienna, soon to be "red" (the east is red), fictitious place, place of fiction and, as such, propitious for all manner of operations on the notion of the subject, of identity, of centre, (of point of view,) if not of quality. Referring to Freud, obviously, and at a more modest level (but a modesty which had nothing innocent about it) to Loos himself. (To say nothing of Musil who pretended that no special significance should be attached to the name of 'the' city itself. It is true that, from the point of view of *The Man without Qualities*, to ask, in the case of this complex entity, what city one is staying in, what particular city one is dealing with, was to leave out otherwise important questions<sup>7</sup>. But of what other city could Musil pretend that it had no name? What other city, if not Vienna, taken in the vaguest generality, as an *empty* sign?)

##### 6. *Modernity and the function of the mask.*

"Certainly, the artist is other. But precisely on account of that, in his exterior appearance, he must conform to others. He can live alone only if he disappears in the crowd [...]. The more

everything justifies the artist's being alone, the more necessary it is that he make use of the clothes of the average man as a camouflage." (Karl Kraus, *Dicta and Contradicta*).

"The person who runs around in a velvet suit is no artist but a buffoon or merely a decorator. We have become more refined, more subtle. Primitive men had to wear various colours to differentiate themselves, modern man uses his clothes as a mask. His individuality is so strong that it can no longer be expressed in terms of items of clothing." (Adolf Loos, "Ornament und Verbrechen" (1908), *S.S.*, p. 288.)

Modernity implies as its condition, if not as its sign, that the function of the mask has returned. There, in effect, where in archaic societies the mask confers a social identity on its wearer, registers him in his place in the body of society, modern man (and the artist himself, this "other" *par excellence*, whose discourse is always part of the collective unconscious, but who, as such, cannot be "modern" because the collective unconscious cannot have a history, and how is the artist to make a work of art, work turned to the future and the end of time, not of 'his' time?) uses it on the contrary to hide his difference, his otherness. Even the professional revolutionary has recourse to this trick; H.G. Wells was right when he said he distrusted Lenin *in a waistcoat*.

The paradox, but a paradox of class, meaning a paradox which, in a class structure, plays as indicator, such a paradox means that in the Viennese void the refusal of clothing as signifier, of dress as sign, itself functioned as a sign immediately recouped as such: discretion (the non-difference) became a mark of distinction (the difference). As a matter of fact, Loos was quite happy to write that the greatest tailors in Europe were to be found in Vienna, and that he was their client (it is for one of them moreover that he will construct the building on the Michaelerplatz): true artists according to him, who, working for a select clientele, shunning all publicity and showing, when the occasion demanded it, only clothes which lend themselves to copies, to imitation. Nothing more deceptive, consequently than the

"class" of a garment, in a context where the aristocracy dressed as the bourgeois should, and where the self-made wore a dress-coat and false shirt front. Like "style", there is never "class" but *a* class; that alone can have *some* style (*some* class), whereas historical epochs only ever have a (or several) style(s). But the tendency of the middle class to confuse its own interests with those of humanity as a whole would lead to a diffusion, a circulation, an unprecedented change of signs (and of styles). All clothing, and *a fortiori*, all cladding<sup>8</sup> is deceitful by definition; even if he should be in appearance as "smooth," as devoid of ornament as the Viennese cigarette-cases which Loos was fond of, a well dressed man wearing short hair should not be judged by his appearances (or scars so prized by German students), is to be related to the rule, no less *fascinated*, passed down in his discourse to 'art'. Since if it is true that the remarks of Loos on the house, conceived as an object of everyday use, have been able to contribute to the de-sacralisation of architecture, henceforth reduced to being exercised, in its artistic capacity, in cemeteries, indeed it is not even art, it has been seen that art escaped, by definition, the general law as well as the imperatives of modernity, that is to say of Capital, and that it represented in fact—even if this were under the ever so significant object as the *tomb*—the last refuge of the Sacred. If art, as the epoch desired it, originates in decoration, and if, in the fashion of a body painting or the decoration of a pot, it might appear at first like an adjunct, grafted onto a support, onto a *pre-existing body*, the supplement which it introduces has nothing, at the outset, of a supplement of "soul": the most simple, elementary tracing, that of a cross, which Mondrian will interpret in a mystical sense before Le Corbusier recognised in it less and less the sign of positivity, this tracing associates, in the copulation of the vertical and the horizontal, the masculine element with the feminine<sup>9</sup>. Which is to say for Loos all art was erotic, tied in principle to the life of unconscious drives. But the progress of civilisation, if it implies according to Freud's reading the forcing back, the repression of drives, does not lead for all that, quite the contrary, to the elimination of all possibility of surrogate satisfactions of the type of those which art, under its most elevated forms is in a position to procure: under its most elevated forms, that is to

say, on condition that the artist renounces ornament, that ridiculous variant of the elementary drive which made the primitive daub the walls of his cavern with erotic drawings, in the way in which "criminals" and "degenerates" today still cover the walls of public conveniences with obscene graffiti. In the same way (but Loos could hardly write that) in which the painters of the Secession, principally Gustav Klimt, covered the ceilings of the university buildings and the walls of the theatres or the museums of Vienna with frescoes where the decorative *overload* was put in the service of an eroticism which, while owing nothing the illusion of the 'flesh', revealed all the more, the marvels of ornament—wholly symbolic, and linked to the denial of the flesh—abetted by decorative painting. "The cultural level of a people is measured by the degree of degradation of the walls of its latrines"<sup>10</sup>.

### 8. *Division of labour.*

Ornament, if not art itself from its decorative, applied kind of origin, functions well then as the repressed, posed as such, in Loos' discourse. Much better: it is only from this discourse, and by its operation that ornament takes on the position of the repressed. It is important to find out in what kinds of ways the repressed element will make its return in Loos' work itself: in fact if he hardly built anything (some private residences, and in addition to a number of interior arrangements, the building on the Michaelerplatz, set up—the height of blasphemy—facing the monument to the might of Austria, by Edmund Hellmer, one of the masters of the Secession), the very project of an architecture which owes the essence of its effects, of its wonders, to the combination of a truthful use of materials and the play of form which was, on the contrary, totally arbitrary (following the model which in music is called "serial" proposed in the tonal quality of sound) was not itself without borrowing something of its force from the element it claimed to be excluding. Loos conceived decoration (but a decoration which owed nothing to ornament?) quite adequate for shops, cafes, private apart-

ments, although this substantiates the affirmation according to which the task of the architect must be limited to enclosing within walls a void which will belong to those who will inhabit it, to *furnish*, with the aid only of cabinet-makers and curtain makers, those who have no need of being directed by an 'artist'. It is here that the assumption comes to the fore which made him denounce the attempts of the Werkbund, and later those of the Bauhaus, to define the conditions of an intervention of art in the process of production: since this apostle of the *American way of life*<sup>11</sup> (from the eating of *eggplants* to the wearing of short hair) would stay put, in the matter of social organisation and cultural hierarchy, with the traditional opposition between art and handicraft, the work of art and the object of everyday use. "God creates the artist; the artist creates the epoch; the epoch creates the craftsman; the craftsman creates the button." In other words, the artist, and the architect himself (for every architect dreams of being a bit of an artist, and Loos would be no exception to the rule) have better to do than claim to control the manufacture of buttons. Loos' idea was that every epoch, and the modern epoch itself, has at its disposal, by definition, objects, furniture, utensils, etc. which answer to it: were an object, a piece of furniture to escape from this law then one can be sure that the fault is in the untimely intervention of a master in aesthetics (even if it were industrial aesthetics). The sketch of a critique of ideology, and still more of the practice of *design* that one can isolate from his writing goes under the heading of degeneration, of cultural void. "The history of mankind has not known till today a period lacking in culture, this privilege was reserved for urban man of the second half of the nineteenth century": this means that an urban structure becomes one of the places, one of the instruments of the accumulation of capital, and in which the craftsman, no more than the architect, found opportunity for employment *as such*. Loos' repugnance, evident right up to the projects for public developments in the twenties, to take into account the change in scale of the problems in urban development is on a par with the idealisation of the craftsman's conditions of production. In this place of "alienation" *par excellence* which constitutes the great modern city, the architect is never anything but a displaced person, like in their way the

peasant masses abruptly proletarianised. The best that can be done is to limit oneself to punctual operations which he will strive to insert without damage into the urban fabric: (as can be seen) a very real program: that which the Michaelerplatz building conformed to, which had to create a scandal by the fact that it excluded plagiarism as well as every sign of usurped recognition: as distinct from those of the Baroque palaces, the columns of the ground floor are of real marble, and monolithic.

But the craftsman? In pretending that left to himself, and if only the architect let him make things as he understood them, a cabinet-maker could not but produce furniture perfectly adapted to the conditions of modern living, as the shoes which the shoemaker produces are to their use, forgetting that the effort of the architect to bend to his views (and to his interests) the different bodies of crafts is itself an integral part of the constant process of the restructuring of the division of labour of which the architect in his turn is the victim. The English furniture, those of Thonet which Loos appreciated so much, were not produced by craft but industrially. And that is the real question, which Loos refused to ask, which, quite on the contrary, he set about suppressing under the cladding [revêtement] of a class attitude, "aristocratic", and altogether characteristic: are the mechanisms of industrial production so perfectly rational that in letting them play 'naturally' one could expect the best *qualitative* results from them? Industry, second nature: this is what is implicit, the unspoken in the liberal ideology of laissez-faire, the real standpoint from which it discourses, but without being able to establish itself there, the *other* with which it pretends to hold discourse, but under the mask of the first person.

### 9. *The law of cladding.*

If the profusion of primitive ornament responds, in the traditional interpretation, to the

*natural* horror of the void, why would a highly sophisticated, urbanised, antinatural culture not play on the void (as others have played on velours), till it drew out from this "horror", and from the desire which the reverse makes of it, the principle of new pleasures (while allowing oneself the luxury of enjoying, simultaneously, the most archaic products, the products of *the other*, the discourse of which Loos did not neglect, but on the condition of defining the place well, that of the unconscious. A Maori sculpture, like a Corinthian embroidery, belongs to the unconscious side of our culture, a culture so perfectly *void* that to take an extreme example a Thonet chair can come under the heading of the *off centre*, if not the eccentric).

But, if he liked taking as point of comparison the peasant who constructs his house by himself, without thinking about it and as is fitting, Loos was far from preaching a return to a 'rural' architecture, which was to become one of the themes of the Nazi propaganda. He had learned from experience that an architect could only know how to make a work against nature: while he wanted to use the stone from the lake to build his first house at Montreux, was it not obvious to accuse him of casting a slur on the majesty of the site (but that day, as in the affair of the Michaelerplatz, the summons from the police would be worth it since it imparted the delicious sensation that he was an "artist")? It remains then to dispose of the materials in the most honest, the most judicious possible way: the law of cladding forbids giving to one material the appearance of another, and above all that of being a better quality than that which is its own ("fake wood"). The intolerable is not seeing the aristocracy dress like the bourgeoisie, but the bourgeoisie endeavouring to imitate aristocracy even to its most ridiculous signs: it may well be that everything is made of wood, not all woods are valuable (but what would Loos have said on seeing cabinet-makers disguise under thin sheets of precious wood the 'composites' which industry consigns to them today?). Loos' taste for material, for the *tactile* aspect of construction and of interior fittings, responds to the care with which he was to define, in the cultural void of the modern city, the condition of a new

architectural culture. A culture founded no longer on ornament but on cladding, which is the beginnings of all architecture, having been, originally, only an extension of clothing, as the umbrella can still be. Loos derived a particular pride from having introduced panels of polished marble or beaten copper into interior decoration: the look in which the banks of Zurich, of Milan or of New York, are clad, is made to let one think that the frontier between cladding and ornament is unsettled, and that from one to the other, change, the inversion of signs is always possible; is cladding not—even—masking, dissimulating, deceiving—but with the “discretion” which is fitting, that is to say, ornamentation? In fact, Loos’s architecture testifies well, in its own way, to the “drama” which is modern architecture, and to which Manfredo Tafuri has given its most precise characterisation: an architecture reduced to wanting to be pure architecture, strictly formal instance, deprived of utopia, useless, but preferable, in any event, to the attempts made to dress in ideological rags actual buildings controlled, in reality, by the existing order <sup>12</sup>.

### 10. *Tomb.*

It is this which confirms, by a supplementary paradox, Loos’ project of 1922 for the *Chicago Tribune*. This project, a sky-scraper of more than thirty storeys in the form of a Doric column, set on a cubic base, represents not only, as Tafuri has well seen, the first proclamation of a ‘pop’ culture, and announcement of someone like Claes Oldenburg’s finally much more modest ‘monuments’<sup>13</sup>. It corresponds to utopia in its form, in its purest function, that of the dream which, to satisfy desire, knows how to play systematically with contradiction. “The most beautiful and distinctive building in the world” (as the competition’s program demanded) in taking the shape of Trajan’s column from the Capital, constituted a risk of which the sponsors were not aware or did not wish to take: one can only see to it that monuments of this kind do not take on [revêtent] a funereal meaning, made as they are to be knocked

off their pedestals (and revolutions, as is known, sometimes succeed in it). This project, like that of the project for a house for Josephine Baker (where a cube of transparent glass, forming the swimming pool would have made up the core), confers on the stubborn purpose which would be Loos's, its true dimension, which has nothing in common with the scale of problems architecture would appear to be confronted with today. Loos affected to judge that one of his main contributions to the architecture of his time would be to learn from the plumbers and cabinet-makers how to conceal a toilet pipe under a wooden cladding. "When, crossing a wood, one comes across a tumulus six feet long and three feet wide, raised by shovel in the form of a pyramid, we become serious, and something in us says: *That is architecture.*"<sup>14</sup> It happens, still today, that on entering a bathroom, one notices the sanitary installation is so made that nothing can be seen of the process by which it is emptied. Adolf Loos would have wanted no other tomb than that, a tomb which, combining in its layout, in its structure, the function of cladding (the pleasure of tactile appearance) and that, concealed, of emptying out (the desire for the void, in its anal connotation, characteristic of the reign of money), was in the very image of the pleasures which the modern metropolis, the capital of Capital, procures for any and everybody, even for the most disinherited, pleasures which he was not, with regard to himself, prepared to renounce. A toilet in its wooden coffin or its marble (or beaten metal) catafalque. *Das ist architektur.*

#### Notes:

- 1 This essay was first published in *Critique*, n. 339-340 (August-September 1975), "Vienne début de siècle", p. 806-818, republished as "L'autre 'ich' ou le desir du vide: pour un tombeau d'Adolf Loos," *Ruptures Cultures* (Les Editions de Minuit, Paris 1976), pp. 143-159, which is the version used for this translation. Unless otherwise stated all subsequent footnotes are those of the author.
- 2 Adolf Loos, 'Die potemkinsche Stadt' (1898), in *Sämtliche Schriften*, t. I, *Ins leere gesprochen* (1897-1900), *Trotzdem* (1900-1930), Vienna, Munich, 1962, p. 153.
- 3 "Architektur" (1910), *ibid.*, p. 315.

- 4 "Antworten auf fragen aus dem publicum" (1919), *ibid.*, p. 372. The title of Karl Kraus' tragedy on the 1914-1918 War (*Die letzten Tage der Menschheit*) will be recognised: but if today we are living the "last days of humanity", what is today *the future of the work of art?*
- 5 "Die herrenmode" (1898) *ibid.*, p. 21.
- 6 From 1913, Georges Besson published in *Les cahiers d'aujourd'hui* the first translation of the essay on "Ornament and Crime", which would be published again by Paul Dermée in *L'esprit nouveau*.
- 7 Robert Musil, *The Man without Qualities*, [Tr. Eng. trans. Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser, Vol. I (London, Secker and Warburg, and New York, Coward-McCarm, 1953). (London, Picador Classics, Pan Books 1988), p. 4.]
- 8 [Tr. Damisch plays on the words *vêtement*, clothing and *re-vêtement*, re-clothing, revetement, cladding, facing.]
- 9 "Ornament und verbrechen" (1908), *S.S.*, p. 277.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 277. The same "Puritanism" which made Loos liken ornament to "crime" would lead him to prepare the renewal of typography, in eliminating from his text, as is evident from some preceding citations, the accumulation of capital letters with which German writing dresses up nouns, and with it all residual trace of the ornamental calligraphy considered "barbaric", in the manner of "Gothic" writing itself, which the Nazis had to restore to honour. Loos relied on the authority of Jacob Grimm to do this: "If we have rid our houses of their gables and projecting rafters, and we have removed the powder from our hair, why should we retain such rubbish in our writing (*warum soll in der Schrift aller Unrat bleiben?*)?", cited by Loos in *Ins leere gesprochen*, introduction, *S.S.*, p.10).
- 11 [Tr. English in the original.]
- 12 Cf. Manfredo Tafuri, *Progetto e utopia* (Bari, 1973), p. 3.
- 13 *Ibid.*, *Teoria e storia dell'architettura* (Bari, 1973), p.101 We will, however, not follow Tafuri to the end of his analysis, according to which Loos' project would result from the removal of a 'linguistic' element (the column) from out of its context, and its transferal into another context, at a scale outside of all norm. In fact the column monument is nothing novel, and it is this *symbolic* autonomy, long since taken over by the column by reference to its 'linguistic', syntactical, and paradigmatic functioning, that Loos would bring into play, in enlarging the monument to the dimensions of a sky-scraper.
- 14 Adolf Loos, "Architektur", *S.S.*, p. 317.