

Sex, Lies and Decoration: Adolf Loos and Gustav Klimt

I.

Adolf Loos is the only architect of his generation whose thinking is still influential today. In this he may have fulfilled his own prophecy that his work would last longer than that of his contemporaries because it would be passed on by word of mouth rather than by photographs in architectural journals.¹ Loos was a humorous, mordant, and prolific writer whose theories were organized by a radical opposition to the Viennese Secession and the Wiener Werkstätte (fig. 1). The essence of what he said over three decades of polemical arguments in leading newspapers and journals, public lectures and manifestoes is that art did not have anything to do with the everyday utilitarian object: “Everything that serves a purpose,” Loos wrote, “should be excluded from the realms of art.”² The practice of artists and architects of his time of designing everyday objects was illegitimate. Those objects were already being designed by craftsmen, who perfected them over time in an anonymous, continuous, collective process of design. The ‘objet type’ of le Corbusier, the ‘objet trouvé’ of the Surrealists, Duchamp’s ‘readymade’, the ‘as found’ of Alison and Peter Smithson, and so on, are anticipated in Loos’ appreciation of the generic wine glass, the American bathtub, the Thonet chair, and the English raincoat.

When, after an absence of three years (in America), I appeared in Vienna in the year 1896 and saw my colleagues again, I had to rub my eyes: all the architects were dressed like ‘artists.’ Not like other people, but—from an American point of view—like buffoons . . . People laughed, but the government, which was advised by journalists, made all of them Doctors and Professors. I was in favour of the old Viennese carpentry, tradition and quality—their work was like their clothing. I was left out of their circle. I was no artist, as was demonstrated by my clothing.³

Loos may have had in mind Gustav Klimt, who went around dressed in a long artist’s smock even when he wasn’t painting. In the group photograph of the Secession members taken in their building in 1902, Klimt is the only one wearing a robe (fig. 2). He was the ‘undisputed leader’ of the Secession and yet for all Loos’ continuous and virulent attacks on that institution and what it represented, the figure of Klimt remains surprisingly untouched. Loos never criticized Klimt by name, as he did with Josef Hoffmann, Joseph Maria Olbrich and Koloman Moser. On the contrary, during the controversy over Klimt’s University paintings (1897–1905),⁴



1 Poster advertising the second issue of Adolf Loos's journal *Das Andere*, Vienna, 1903.

Loos came to his defense: "With the Klimt affair we saw a band of professors ally themselves with the haranguers from Naschmarkt whose motto was 'Down with individuality.'"⁵⁵ Loos, the great defender of anonymous form, sided with the unique individual.

Why this unexpected solidarity with Klimt? Why was the leader of the Secession exempt from Loos' usual devastating cri-



2 Group photo of members of the Vienna Secession inside the Secession building, 1902. Photo: Bildarchiv der Oesterreichischen Nationalbibliothek.

tique? Why protect the very figure that most exemplified the tendencies he so famously denounced? Why, throughout all of Loos' extensively published writings, are there no references to Klimt, the most renowned and controversial artist of his day? Why would Klimt's extraordinarily rich and intricate layering of color, pattern and symbolism not offend the formulation that ornament is a crime because it is not of our time? The architect, so proud of his muted Goldman and Salatsch suit and the austere exterior of his buildings, stands unusually silent before the flamboyant, loud, overly sexualized, technicolor artist in a smock.

Klimt is also one of the rare subjects about whom Loos was not in agreement with the critic Karl Kraus, his great friend and ally in the campaign against the Secession. Kraus had repeatedly criticized Klimt in the pages of *Die Fackel*, holding him up to scorn: "Now the same gentleman [Hermann Bahr] proclaims that a picture by Klimt in the Secession (the 'Schubert') is simply the best picture ever painted by an Austrian. Well, the picture is really not bad at all. And the good Herr von Dumba, who in his old age has had his living room decorated by the Secession, only needs to hang it in a dark corner." About one of the University paintings, Kraus wrote that Klimt, "who had already painted over the pale cast of his thought with luminous colours, wanted to paint 'Jurisprudence' and [instead] symbolised criminal law."⁵⁶

What was at stake in this argument was two rival ways of rejecting pseudo-historical styles, two modernities. Kraus accused the Secessionists of a “false modernity,” of “fighting the wrong antiquarianism for the propagation of an inauthentic modernity”⁷:

*A dramatic revolution has occurred in Viennese artistic taste: the salons of our wealthiest men are no longer furnished by Sandor Jaray, but by Olbrich or Hoffmann; and instead of the youngest Ninetta by Blass or the oldest invalid by Friedlander, they are adorned with the newest creations of Klimt and Engelhardt. What does this mean? Simply that those gentlemen who today are rich and tomorrow might be poor always take care to buy commodities that are as marketable as possible whenever they invest a part of their fortune in art.*⁸

The Secession group, which had split from the academy (the Künstlerhaus) on the grounds that art should not be ruled by the market (“the Künstlerhaus is a mere market hall, a bazaar—let the traders set their wares there”⁹) was now criticised in precisely those terms—the market of the art fair replaced by that of interior decoration. As with Loos, Kraus’ critique of the Secession is bound up with a critique of the new Viennese bourgeoisie, the ‘Poor Rich Man’ of Loos’ famous story, who had commissioned a house from a Secessionist and was afraid to go from room to room because the clothes designed for one room were not appropriate for the next.¹⁰ Everything down to his slippers was designed by the architect and could only be used in the designated room. As Karl Kraus put it: “They have the dirt off the streets in their homes, and even that is by Hoffmann.”¹¹

II.

The clients and supporters of the Secession and the Wiener Werkstätte were primarily young, progressive and Jewish, and the critique of the Secession is bound up in racial stereotypes, if not in anti-Semitism. Karl Kraus, born to a prominent Jewish family, had renounced Judaism in 1899—the same year that he started the magazine *Die Fackel*¹²—reported that the great success of the Viennese Secession at the 1900 World Exhibition was due to the fact that Parisians had called the style “un goût juif” (a Jewish taste).¹³ This is also how Hermann Bahr described the reception of Klimt’s *Philosophy* (1900), one of the polemical University ceiling paintings.¹⁴ In a number of texts that were excluded or edited from Loos’ volumes of writings (*Ins Leere Gesprochen* [Spoken into the Void], 1921, and *Trotzdem* [Nevertheless], 1931), he explicitly associates the Secession with the Jewish bourgeoisie, even arguing that the new ornate gilded interiors constituted a new “ghetto.” In an article entitled “The Emancipation of Judaism,” Loos writes that the interiors of Hoffmann and Olbrich “betray” their owners as much as their new names do: “Surely there must be Moritz and Siegfried who are Aryans, just as there are Aryan owners of interiors by Hoffmann. They are exceptions.”¹⁵ Having abandoned their caftans sometime ago, Loos argued, they end up wearing a new one. The Secessionist interiors are “no more than masked caftans.” Loos, like Kraus, was in favour of the assimilation of Jews and saw it as a key symptom of modernity. “Every sympathiser of the emancipation of Judaism, every person hostile to the ghetto, therefore every person favourable to our culture, must suffer seeing how the Jews create a new ghetto for themselves.”¹⁶ Most of Loos’ clients, his collaborators, his students and his friends were Jewish intellectuals, and two of his wives were also Jewish.¹⁷ In place of the pseudo-modern caftan of the Secession interior, Loos

offered with his architecture an alternative form of clothing to his clients—an English raincoat.

Loos' critique of the Secession and Wiener Werkstätte was also gender loaded. His association of ornament with femininity and Jewish ambition remains unexplored, perhaps because of the reverence that Loos stills inspires in architects, but it clearly organises his polemics. In a lecture delivered by Loos in Vienna in the Spring of 1927, "Dans Wiener Weh (Die Wiener Werkstätte): Eine Erledigung" ("The Viennese Woe [The Wiener Werkstätte]: A Settlement of Accounts"), Loos criticised the Austrian Pavilion at the Paris exhibition of 1925, which had been designed by Josef Hoffmann and filled with Wiener Werkstätte objects, in these terms:

I warn Austrians against identifying themselves with the Wiener Werkstätte movement. The modern spirit is a social spirit, and modern objects exist not just for the benefit of the upper crust but for everybody. . . . To bring us first-rate work no architects are needed, no arts and crafts students and no painting, embroidering, potting, precious-material-wasting daughters of senior civil servants and other Fräuleins, who regard handicrafts as something whereby one may earn pin-money or while away one's spare time until one can walk down the aisle.¹⁸

Loos' attacks on "daughters of senior civil servants and other Fräuleins" were not without foundation, as Werner J. Schweiger has pointed out:

The WW had been numerically dominated by women even since the initiation of the workshops in 1913, and after the deaths of Dagobert Peche in 1923 and his successor Julius Zimpel in 1925, there were practically only women left as designers, except for Hoffmann and Max Snischek. Ten out of the thirteen members exhibiting in Paris were women.¹⁹

Loos was warning Austrians against identifying themselves with women's work, with the effeminized world of interior decoration. The figure of modernity for Loos, as for most writers of modernity, was emphatically male.²⁰ Women and children were primitive, ignoble savages, as distinct from the heroic figure of modern man as primitive noble savages. The heroic male figure—energetic, cool and detached—was the figure of architectural modernity. Architectural order here, the control of the senses, was first and foremost social control.

For Loos, "the lack of ornament is a sign of intellectual power."²¹ "The *Critique of Pure Reason* could not have been created by a man wearing five ostrich feathers on his hat, the Ninth Symphony did not spring from one wearing a ring around his neck the size of a dish."²² But this intellectual power, which is presented here as above the "brutalities" of the "savage," seems in other passages to be an exclusively male attribute, as when Loos writes: "Ornament at the service of woman will last forever. . . . The

ornament of woman . . . answers, at bottom, that of the savage; it has an erotic meaning.”²³ The ornament, which for “the child, the Papuan and the woman” is a “natural phenomenon,” for modern man is a “symptom of degeneration”:

*The first ornament that came into being, the cross, had an erotic origin. The first work of art... was in order to rid himself of his natural excesses. A horizontal line: the reclining woman. A vertical line: the man who penetrates her. The man who created it felt the same urge as Beethoven...But the man of our time who daubs the walls with erotic symbols to satisfy an inner urge is a criminal or a degenerate.*²⁴

And when this “degeneration” of the masculine into the feminine becomes associated with homosexuality, Loos’ raid against ornament is not only gender-loaded but openly homophobic. The main target of Loos’ attack becomes the effeminate architect, the Secessionist and Wiener Werkstätte figure of the “decorator,” Josef Olbrich, Kolo Moser, Josef Hoffmann: all these “dilettanti,” “fops” and “suburban dandies” who buy their “pre-tied ties in the women’s fashion displays.”²⁵

More than any other member of the Secession, Klimt created a cult of the feminine, and was the favourite artist of the Jewish bourgeoisie. Most of his clients were women and he produced increasingly eroticized images in which women, clothing, ornament and walls became fused together in symbolic narratives—images often literally filled with gold as if the very emblem of Loos’ target. Yet Klimt is absent from Loos’ critique. Perhaps Loos’ position was similar to that of his close friend, the poet Peter Altenberg, who wrote: “Gustav Klimt, you are at once a painter of vision and a modern philosopher, an altogether modern poet. As you paint, you suddenly transform yourself, fairy-tale-like, into the most modern man, which perhaps you are not in daily life.”²⁶ Separating the personal from the public, Klimt becomes a “modern man” through his art. But what is it that makes Klimt modern despite his embrace of the very things that hide modernity for Loos? Not eroticism as such, since for Loos “all art is erotic,” as he wrote in *Ornament and Crime*. Rather the question is the relationship between this sensuality and the design of objects of everyday use, including buildings. In the end, it is the line between art and architecture that Loos wants to draw, and as long as Klimt remains on the side of art, he can be exempt from criticism. As Loos wrote:

*The work of art is the private affair of the artist. The house is not...The work of art is answerable to no one; the house, to everyone. The work of art wants to shake people out of their complacency. The house must serve comfort. The artwork is revolutionary, the house conservative.*²⁷

III

The clues to Klimt’s unique status for Loos can perhaps only be found in what he says about the figures he denounces the most. Loos’ real enemy is not Olbrich, as it is commonly believed, or even the Secession itself, but Hoffmann, Klimt’s closest friend and collaborator. This did not escape his contemporaries. As Richard Neutra wrote: ‘Hoffmann was the professor whom Loos demolished in my eyes, or had tried to demolish in the eyes of his generation.’²⁸

The intensity and lifelong repetition of Loos’ attacks on Hoffmann seem to be driven by the fact

that they began so close. Loos and Hoffmann were both born in the same year, 1870, only five days apart, and in the same place, Moravia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and after the war to become part of Czechoslovakia. They attended secondary school (Gymnasium) at Iglau (Jihlava) together, where they were friends and where Hoffmann failed the fifth year twice, resulting in a “feeling of inferiority that never left me.”²⁹ Hoffmann was later able to enrol in the State Technical School at Brünn in 1887 (a school that Loos also attended from 1888 to 1889), where he distinguished himself but nevertheless felt that “he was not taken seriously because of his failure at the Gymnasium.”³⁰ Hoffmann went on to study at the Academy of Fine Arts with Carl von Haseauner and Otto Wagner, and won the Roman Prize, allowing him to spend a year in Rome. Loos, who was not a very good student either, went on as auditor to the Technische Hochschule of Dresden (Dresden College of Technology), was in the military and then travelled to America for three years between 1893 and 1896, coinciding with the Chicago Exhibition. Both ended up in Vienna around 1896.

Loos had been initially sympathetic to the Secession, agreeing with their revolt against the use of historical styles and with their support for the architecture of Otto Wagner. He even contributed to the Secession journal *Ver Sacrum*, where he published ‘Potemkin City’, his famous critique of the buildings on the Ringstrasse.³¹ He was also on good terms with Hoffmann, writing somewhat positively of his work³² and even commissioning him to do the illustrations for his two articles in *Ver Sacrum* (‘Die Potemkin’sche Stadt’ and ‘Unsere Jungen Architekten’).³³ He only broke with Hoffmann when the latter prevented him from doing the interiors for the “Ver Sacrum-Zimmer,” the small meeting room in the Secession building.³⁴ Loos wrote about this rejection in 1913: “Fifteen years ago, I approached Josef Hoffmann to ask that I be allowed to design the conference room of the Secession building, a room which anyway the public would never see and on which only a few hundred Kronen were to be spent. I was turned down flat.”³⁵ From that moment on a life-long battle was launched, an asymmetrical conflict in which Loos never tired of accusing Hoffmann, but Hoffmann never responded in kind. On the contrary, he praised Loos’ Kärntner bar as a “jewel” and, as if to make up, invited him to participate in the Austrian Pavilion at the Paris exhibition of 1925, the very exhibition that Loos later savagely criticised.³⁶ Loos, who was then living in Paris, declined the invitation on the grounds that “he never wished to have anything to do with Vienna and Austria again.”³⁷ Loos was invited, and attended Secession openings (apparently even giving advice to customers on what to buy), and was even offered the opportunity to exhibit his work there, which he declined: “They have asked me to exhibit in the Secession. I shall do so when the dealers have been driven from the temple. The dealers? No, those who prostitute art.”³⁸

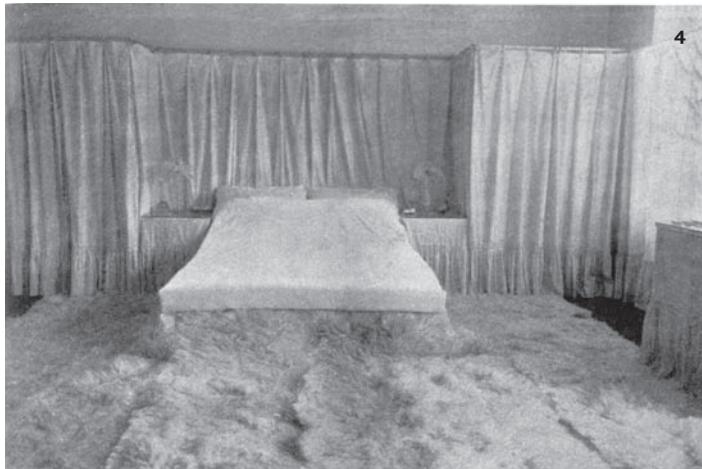
Despite this animosity, the different attitudes that Loos and Hoffmann reveal in their architecture can be understood as different ways of negotiating the same dilemma: the modern split between private and public, the difference in the metropolis between the space of the intimate and the space of the social. Both Loos and Hoffmann recognized that being in society involves a kind of schizophrenia between one’s private and public self. Both responded to this estrangement by understanding architecture as primarily a social mechanism, like dress or manners, a way of negotiating social situations. Hoffmann confronted the split in the modern individual between his private and public being in a different way to Loos. For him, the house was to be intentionally designed to be in harmony with the ‘character’ of its inhabitants. There is nothing as personal as character. But the client could not add objects to the house on his own account,



nor could he hire another artist to do so for him, as if one only had one character for an entire life!³⁹ This was the object of Loos' criticism. Loos believed that the house grows with one, and that everything that goes on inside it is the business of its inhabitants.⁴⁰

When Loos wrote, "The house does not have to say anything to the exterior; instead, all its richness must be manifest in the interior," he had recognised a limit to architecture in the metropolis, the difference between *dwelling* in the interior and *dealing* with the exterior, but at the same time he had formulated the very need for this limit, which has implicit in itself the need for a mask.⁴¹ The interior does not have to say anything to the exterior (figs. 3 and 4). This mask is not, naturally, the same as the one which he had identified as being fake in the façades of the Ringstrasse, the face of equivocal, fictitious language, which implied that nobility was living behind the walls, whereas in reality the inhabitants were deracinated upstarts.⁴² To be uprooted, Loos believed, was nothing to be ashamed of; it was part of the modern condition. The silence he prescribed was no more than the recognition of schizophrenia in metropolitan life: the inside has nothing to say to the outside because our intimate being has split from our social being. We are divided between what we think and what we say and do.

The house's silence vis-à-vis the outside represents the impossibility of communication; but it is also this very silence that protects its incommunicable intimacy. At this moment, silence is also its mask. It is a Simmelian mask. The mask, Georg Simmel writes in his essay "Fashion," allows the interior to be intimate. "Over an old Flemish house there stands the mystical inscription: 'There is more within me.'"⁴³ It is precisely in Simmel's terms that Loos speaks about fashion:



3 Adolf Loos, House Horner, 1912. View from the garden 1930. From *Rukschcio and Schachel*, Adolf Loos, 492.

4 Adolf Loos, Lina Loos bedroom, published in *Kunst*, Vienna, 1903.

*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 differentiate themselves by the use of various colours, modern man needs his clothes as a mask. His individuality is so strong that he cannot express it any longer through his clothing. The lack of ornament is a sign of intellectual power. Modern man uses the ornament of past and foreign cultures at his discretion. He concentrates his own power of invention on other things.*⁴⁴

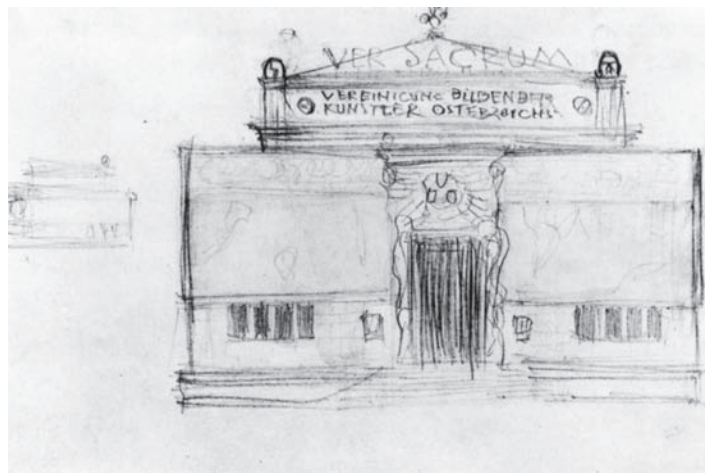
Where is “he” who has assumed the condition of the modern to find an identity? This was Loos’ question. No longer protected by the fixed and the permanent, by the things that speak, modern man now finds himself surrounded by objects without meaning. In no way, Loos said, can he make use of these things, force them to speak an invented language, or to construct a false pedigree, precisely what he was accusing the artists of the Secession and the Wiener Werkstätte of attempting. The modern, like the artist and the primitive, can only restore an order in the universe and find a place in it by reaching within himself and his own creation. But the modern, like the primitive, needs a mask to make this possible.

Modernity implies a return to the function of the mask. But as Hubert Damisch has noted, whereas in primitive societies the mask gave social identity to its bearer, modern man uses the mask to conceal any difference, to protect his identity.⁴⁵ Kraus did not exclude the artist from that predicament: “No doubt, the artist is other. But precisely for that reason in the exterior it has to comply. It cannot live alone if it does not disappear in the crowd. . . . The more the artist is other, the more necessary it becomes that he uses common clothing as mask.”⁴⁶ For Loos, every member of the crowd has to comply on the surface by masking his interiority, his sexuality, but also his creativity, his “power of invention.” Everyone is a new “primitive,” everyone has to wear a mask, a modern mask, a form of protection, a cancelling of differences on the outside, precisely to make identity possible, and this identity is now individual rather than social. The mask constructs the private.

IV

Loos was influenced by Semper’s theories from his year in the Dresden Technische Hochschule, where Semper had been a professor between 1834 and 1849, and remained a strong voice. In “The Principle of Cladding” (1898), Loos’ most Semperian text, he wrote:

The architect’s general task is to provide a warm and liveable space. Carpets are warm and liveable. He decides for this reason to spread one carpet on the floor and to hang up four to form the four walls. But you cannot build a house out of carpets. Both the carpet on the floor



5 Gustav Klimt, Design for the Secession Building, 1898. Crayon and watercolor on paper, 11.2x17.7 cm. Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien.
Taken from *Secession: The Century of Artistic Freedom*, 20.

and the tapestry on the wall require a structural frame to hold them in the correct place. To invent this frame is the architect's second task.⁴⁷

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For Loos, architecture was a form of covering. But it is not simply the walls that are covered. Structure plays a secondary role, and its primary function is to hold the covering in place. In those terms, Klimt's friezes are a form of architecture. In the end, Klimt is as much the architect of the Stoclet Palace as Hoffmann. His work is an integral part of the design.

In fact, Klimt had begun his career as a successful architectural decorator in the Ringstrasse. Even before he left the School of Applied Arts in Vienna (Kunstgewerberschule), where he had studied since he was 14 years old, he started a workshop called the Künstlercompagnie, with his brother Ernst and another student from the school, Franz Matsch, which was very successful in obtaining commissions for the decoration of public buildings. Among other things, the team completed the decorations of the Burgtheater (Imperial Court Theatre, 1886–8) and the staircase of the Art History Museum (1890–1).⁴⁸ On becoming the leader of the Secession, Klimt drew some architectural sketches of the new building (fig. 5). While Olbrich ultimately designed the building, Klimt's sketches were clearly influential. It was apparently his idea to have a blank façade without openings, rather than the columns that Olbrich's sketches proposed, and to have the

entrance centred and elevated from the street level by a set of steps. Klimt's sketches precisely demarcate the proportions and entrance of a possible temple of the arts. As the President of the Secession, Klimt countersigned all of Olbrich's plans, sections and elevations for the new building. It could be argued that Klimt's most significant architectural works, the University paintings, the Beethoven frieze and the Stoclet frieze, never left behind the logic of architectural decoration he had employed early on at the Ringstrasse. At the Secession, Klimt tended to associate himself less with the other painters than with the architects Hoffmann and Moser.⁴⁹ He engaged in multiple collaborations with those architects removing, as he had already done in the Ringstrasse, the line between art and architecture.

Loos therefore could not exempt Klimt from criticism simply because he was an artist, rather than an architect. Klimt operated as an architect in the very Semperian sense that Loos embraced in his own work. Furthermore, Klimt committed all the crimes Loos indicts in Hoffmann: he designed catalogues and posters for the Secession exhibitions, covers for *Ver Sacrum*, applied wall decorations and even created dresses and textile designs for Emily Flöge and the fashion house Schwestern Flöge (Flöge Sisters) (fig. 6). Loos' silence about Klimt seems louder than ever.

In fact, Loos and Klimt may have identified with each other. They both were the target of virulent and moralizing critiques. Klimt was portrayed by the Viennese press as a pornographer, flaunting public lewdness, particularly with regard to the paintings for the university, where, symptomatically, Loos came to his side. Loos' work was also the subject of a prolonged and heated controversy during the construction of his Goldman & Salatsch building in the Michaelerplatz (1901–11), involving municipal councillors and newspapers such as the *Neue Free Press*, the *Extrablatt* and the *Kikeriki*, on the one hand, and Karl Kraus, Otto Wagner and Paul Engelmann, on the other.⁵⁰ It was precisely in this context that Loos had conveniently invoked the memory of the Klimt University paintings scandal, comparing it to the one then exploding around the Looshaus in the Michaelerplatz. Loos' persona was also questioned. In the 1920s there were already a number of articles in the Viennese press attacking his moral character.⁵¹

Both Loos and Klimt had complicated private lives that became public scandals. Klimt, who lived with his mother and



two sisters all his life and had a long Platonic relationship with his partner Emily Flöge was, at his death, facing fourteen paternity suits from the women he had used as models. Loos spent four months in prison accused of pederasty, having had a succession of child-like wives and other affairs with women who never seemed young enough (fig. 7).⁵² He shared this interest with his friend Peter Altenberg (also suspected of child molestation), who used the term *Kind-Mädchen* (child-girl) to describe the women they were attracted to.⁵³ As Loos's ex-wife Elsie Altmann-Loos put it:

*I have always been a woman-child and this is what Loos loved in me. But all of a sudden, he finds that I don't have sex appeal, and moreover, that my legs are too short. If I had longer legs, he said, it would change my life. So Loos decided to take me to a surgeon who would break my two legs and elongate them.*⁵⁴

Loos' public moralism denouncing ornament as a savage perversion is perhaps a pathological symptom of what it attacks, a disguise, a displacement. Loos could never object to Klimt's overt sexual intensity. Rather, he effectively credits Hoffmann's abstract black and white patterns with sexual degeneracy by making Hoffman his emblem of Secessionist crime.

In the end, Loos' silence about Klimt, like the silence he advocated for modern identity, remains a mask, perhaps disguising feelings stronger than those he felt towards Hoffmann. There is no reason to think that Loos had any strong negative feelings about the person he continually attacked. Like a school bully, he simply sensed weakness and used it strategically to promote his arguments. The consequence of Kraus' and Loos' position was precisely that public statements don't reveal personal feelings. On the contrary, they hide them. Hoffmann was just a convenient prop to make an argument that remains surprisingly influential today.

6 Gustav Klimt and Emily Flöge in dress.

Taken from Gustav Klimt: Modernism in the Making, ed. by Colin Bailey.

7 Elsie Altman, 1918?

Published in Rukschcio and Schachel, Adolf Loos, 223.

Endnotes

1 Adolf Loos, 'Architecture' (1910), trans. W. Wang, in *The Architecture of Adolf Loos: An Arts Council Exhibition*, exh. cat. (London: The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1985), 106.

2 Ibid.

3 'Adolf Loos über Josef Hoffmann', *Das neue Frankfurt*, February 1931 [my translation].

4 In 1894 The Austrian government had commissioned Klimt to paint three allegorical paintings for the ceiling of the University of Vienna on the themes of 'Philosophy', 'Medicine' and 'Jurisprudence'. Klimt began work around 1897 and as he completed the paintings, he exhibited them at the Secession and in other exhibitions internationally, even obtaining a gold medal for the 'Philosophy' panel at the *Paris Exposition Universelle* of 1900. In Vienna, the work was praised by some and viciously attacked by others: university professors, some members of the Parliament, journalists and the general public. Serge Sarbarsky, *Gustav Klimt*, exh. cat. (Isetan Museum of Art, Tokyo 1981), no page nos. Carl Schorske has pointed to role of the "new anti-Semites" in the controversy, which went on for many years; see Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York 1980), 227. In the spring of 1905 Klimt decided to return the fee and repossess the painting, rather than compromise his work.

5 "Dans l'affaire Klimt, nous vîmes s'allier une bande de professeurs et de harangères du Naschmarkt don't la devise était: A bas 'l'individualité.'" Adolf Loos quoted in Burkhardt Rukschcio and Roland Schachel, *Adolf Loos: Leven und Werk*, (Salzburg/Vienna, 1982), 108. There is no reference for this quote. Loos' published writings do not include any reference to Klimt.

6 Karl Kraus, *Die Fackel* (The Torch), no.147, 21 November 1903, 10. Quoted in Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, 251.

7 Kraus, *Die Fackel* no.89, December 1901, 24. Quoted in E. Louis (ed.), *Secession: Permanence of an Idea*, Vienna 1997, 119.

8 Kraus, *Die Fackel* no.29, January 1900, 16.

9 Hermann Bahr, *Secession*, Vienna 1900, 2. Quoted in Werner J. Schweiger, *Wiener Werkstätte: Design in Vienna, 1903-1932* (New York 1984), 11.

10 Loos, "Vom armen reichen Mann," in *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 26 April 1900.

11 Kraus, *Die Fackel*, 13 October 1913. Quoted in Schweiger, *Wiener Werkstätte*, 90.

12 Fredric Bedoire, *The Jewish Contribution to Modern Architecture 1830-1930* (Jersey City 2004), 332.

13 Kraus, *Die Fackel*, no.41, 1900. Quoted in Rukschcio and Schachel, *Adolf Loos*, 70.

14 Bedoire, *The Jewish Contribution to Modern Architecture*, 332. See also Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, 227.

15 Adolf Loos, 'Die Emanzipation des Judentums', 1900, in Adolf Loos, *Escritos 1897/1909* (Madrid 1993), 251. This collection of Adolf Loos' writings in two volumes is the most comprehensive to date. It is based on the first editions of all Adolf Loos' published texts, as the texts published in his collected works have been extensively altered.

16 Ibid.

17 Hugo and Lilly Steiner, Gustav Turnovsky, Dr. Otto Stoessl, Theodor Beer, Leopold Goldman, Tristan Tzara. His pupils Richard Neutra, Paul Engelmann, Josef Frank, Oskar Wlach, Frederick Kiesler. See Bedoire, *The Jewish Contribution to Modern Architecture*, 333-9.

Loos' closeness to the Jewish milieu has made people assume that Loos himself was a Jew. He was even offered the possibility to settle in Palestine, but he declined. He wrote to his last wife, Claire Beck: "I am an anti-Semite. All Christians should marry Jews and vice versa . . . I am on my second Jewish wife." Claire Loos, *Adolf Loos privat* (Vienna 1936), 101. Quoted in Rukschcio and Schachel, *Adolf Loos*, 295.

18 Loos, "Das Wiener Weh," lecture as quoted in *Neues Wiener Journal*, 23 April 1927, and the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 21 April 1927. In Schweiger, *Wiener Werkstätte*, 118.

19 Schweiger, *Wiener Werkstätte*, 120.

20 As Janet Wolff has pointed out, the literature of modernity describes the experience of men: "The influential writings of Baudelaire, Simmel, Benjamin and, more recently, Richard Sennett and Marshall Berman, by equating the modern with the public, thus fail to describe women's experience of modernity"; see "The Invisible Flâneuse: Women and the Literature of Modernity," *Theory, Culture and Society*, 1985, 2 (3), 37-48. See also Susan Buck-Morss, 'The Flâneur, the Sandwich-Man and the Whore: The Politics of Loitering', *The New German Critique* 39 (Fall 1986), 99-140, where she presents the argument that the most significant female figure of modernity is the whore.

21 Loos, "Ornament and Crime" (1908), in *The Architecture of Adolf Loos*, 103.

22 Loos, 'Die Überflüssigen' (1908), in *Sämtliche Schriften, Adolf Loos*, vol. 1, (Vienna and Munich 1962), 269.

23 Adolf Loos, 'Ornament und Erziehung' (1924), in *Sämtliche Schriften*, vol.1, 395-6.

24 Adolf Loos, 'Ornament and Crime' (1908), in *The Architecture of Adolf Loos*, 100.

25 Adolf Loos, 'Underclothes', in *Neue Freie Presse*, 25 September 1898, translation in *Spoken into the Void Collected Essays by Adolf Loos, 1897-1900*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts 1987), 75. The "pre-tied ties," that Loos goes on and on about are cardboard-inset ties which Hoff-

mann later accused Loos of having used himself. See also 'The Leather Goods and Gold—and Silversmith Trades', *Neue Freie Presse*, 15 May 1898, translation in *Spoken into the Void*, 7–9.

26 Fritz Novotny and Johannes Dobai, *Gustav Klimt* (Salzburg, 1971), 70. Quoted by Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*.

27 Loos, *Architektur* (1909), in *The Architecture of Adolf Loos*.

28 Richard Neutra, 'Review of *Adolf Loos: Pioneer of Modern Architecture*, by L. Münz and G. Künstler', *Architectural Forum* 125, no.1, July–August 1966, 89.

29 Quoted by Eduard F. Sekler in, *Josef Hoffmann: The Architectural Work* (Princeton 1985), p.11.

30 Ibid.

31 Loos, "Die Potemkin'sche Stadt," *Ver Sacrum*, July 1898.

32 See for example, 'Eine Konkurrenz der Stadt Wien', ('A Competition for the City of Vienna'), *Die Zeit*, Vienna, 6 November 1897, where Loos defends the entries of Olbrich and Hoffmann, even if he already recriminates their 'sincere "Rabitznian" architecture'. (Rabitz was the inventor of a system of construction that raised entire buildings with iron, wire netting and plaster). See also Loos, 'Ein Wiener Architekt', *Dekorative Kunst*, 1898, an article on Hoffmann in which Loos praised two of Hoffmann's buildings, even if he "can't, in any way, agree with his furniture"; see Loos, *Escritos I*, 16–19 and 112–113.

33 Unsere Jungern Architekten, *Ver Sacrum*, July 1898. Rainald Franz, "Josef Hoffmann and Adolf Loos: The Ornament Controversy in Vienna," in *Josef Hoffmann Designs*, ed. Peter Noever (New York 1992), 12.

34 Rukschcio and Schachel, *Adolf Loos*, 52. Adolf Loos, 'Meine Bauschule', *Der Architekt* 19, October 1913.

35 Adolf Loos, 'Meine Bauschule', *Der Architekt* 19, October 1913.

36 Josef Hoffmann, undated manuscript from the 1920s, quoted by Eduard F. Sekler, in *Josef Hoffmann: The Architectural Work* (Princeton 1985), 232.

37 *Neues Wiener Journal* 2, July 1927, quoted in Schweiger, *Wiener Werkstätte*, 117.

38 Adolf Loos, "Keramika," *Die Zukunft*, 13 February 1904. In Loos, *Escritos I*, 311. In this article, Loos also writes about how a lady had asked him to accompany her to the Secession to give her advice, and he had recommended a "small block of marble by Rodin," 312.

39 Peter Behrens, "The Work of Josef Hoffmann," in *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*, October 1924, 426.

40 See for example, Loos, "Die Interieurs in der Rotunde" (1898), and "Interiors in the Rotonda," *Spoken into the Void*, 22–7.

41 Loos, "Heimatkunst," 1914.

42 While Loos does not refer to it directly, the Ringstrasse was predominantly inhabited by Jews and built by Jewish developers. A popular city guide referred to the Ringstrasse as "Zionstrasse von Neu-Jerusalem . . . the most splendid street of the Imperial city. The palaces adorning it nearly all belong to millionaires of the chosen people; only a few belong to Christian intruders." See Bedoire, *The Jewish Contribution to Modern Architecture*, 321.

43 Georg Simmel, "Zur Psychologie der Mode," *Die Zeit*, 12 October 1985; translated as "Fashion," in *International Quarterly*, New York, October 1904, 130–55.

44 Loos, "Ornament and Crime" (1908), in *The Architecture of Adolf Loos*, 103.

45 See Hubert Damisch, "L'Autre 'Ich' ou le desir du vide: pour un tombeau d'Adolf Loos," *Critique*, "Vienne, debout d'un siècle," August–September 1975, xxxi, 339–40, 811.

46 Karl Kraus, *Sprüche und Widersprüche*, Munich 1909, 83.

47 Adolf Loos, "The Principle of Cladding" (1898), in *Spoken into the Void*, 66.

48 Vergo, "Between Modernism and Tradition," 20.

49 Jane Killer, "High and Low in Imperial Vienna," in *Gustav Klimt: Modernism in the Making*, 61.

50 Benedetto Gravagnuolo, *Adolf Loos: Theory and Works* (New York 1982), 125.

51 Vergo, "Between Modernism and Tradition," 161.

52 Loos married Lina Obertimpfler in 1902, when she was eighteen, twelve years younger than him. Envious of her success as an actress, he tried to discourage her from following her career. She divorced him after two years. He met his second wife, Elsie Altmann, a dancer, when she was seventeen and thirty years younger than him. His third wife, Klara-Franziska Beck, Claire, a photographer, was thirty-five years younger than him.

53 Janis Staggs, "The Inside: A Female Realm. Abandoning the Corset to Express Individual Character," *Josef Hoffmann Interiors*, ed. Christian Witt-Dörning (New York/Munich 2006), 106.

54 Elsie Altmann-Loos, *Adolf Loos: Der Mensch* (Vienna/Munich 1968), 154. Quoted in Rukschcio and Schachel, *Adolf Loos*, 305.