IN SEARCH OF THE ROOTS OF MINIMALISM IN ARCHITECTURE:

FORMAL SILENCE OF ADOLF LOOS

ABSTRACT:
Architectural examples of minimalism together with strict forms of modern movements and the possibilities offered by new materials and technologies contribute to the triumph of aesthetics, which has become a symbol of our times. Minimalism in architecture, as the most original contribution to the idea of simplicity in architecture today has its roots in different areas, as well as in the creation of prominent individuals – authors’ strong individualities that do not tolerate any kind of categorization. One such author is certainly Adolf Loos. His theoretical ideas regarding decorations were sensational, because while the modernists had a dilemma about where and how to place ornaments, Loos was adamant: his drastic solution predicted the complete elimination of ornament. In our time, minimalist architecture revives the simplicity of Adolf Loos, whose design rejected historicism and its parasites, decoration, on behalf of pronounced rationalism. It is possible to follow the guiding principle of his "formal silence" from Carl Andre to Herzog & de Meuron, as well as over the Mediterranean vernacular architecture to Alberto Campo Baeza and Alvaro Siza.

Keywords: minimalism, architecture, Adolf Loos, „formal silence“, rationalism

INTRODUCTION
Adolf Loos clearly must be considered among those whose ideas have effectively supported and contributed to the modern movement, although his contribution was sporadic, personal, and not always very serious. As an architect, he emerged as one of the first to build in a way that really appreciated the simplicity of form as a virtue in itself, however, usually spoiling this simplicity by his practice of deliberately abandoning it, or by his choice of the materials he used. As a writer, he was tumultuous, showing the grit, contradiction, and the ability to convert personal strife into public crusades; yet he was admired and privileged, and people were still proud to have claimed that they knew him, twenty or more years after his death.

It is well known that the solitary architectural and critical act of Adolf Loos was accepted by the Modern Movement as a drastic price of cuts and mutilation, turning him into a figure of a stoic pioneer or someone who is expelled for his role as a proposer, someone who is on the border of a new world, tired from the previous which is about to disappear forever, but that is still out of contact with the real problems and demands of mass technological society.
Adolf Loos largely worked within the cultural and social climate of widespread aestheticism in Vienna in the early years of the last century. He considered this aestheticism to be an inauthentic and outdated approach to formalism, as a kind of tattooing of the inhabitants' bodies in the cities overly clad in Potemkin facades. Loos opposed these facades with irony and critical width that allowed him to overcome the original field of work and identity in a broader sense; the contradictions of the period whose consequences are still present even today (Bock, 2007: 34).

His active career divides itself into three main parts. The first, before his return from the U.S.A. in 1897, was the period of his education. The second was the period of active building, teaching and journalism in Vienna, during which he reached the peak of his productivity around 1910, and during which he produced his most influential writings and most characteristic buildings. The third, which begins with his arrival in Paris in 1923 as an acknowledged celebrity, is the phase of his greatest personal influence, but one that is hardest to deal with historically – one has to accept the testimonies of those who knew him, and were flattered to be accepted into his circle of friends and admirers.

**ADOLF LOOS’ AESTHETICS AND „SPOKEN INTO THE VOID“**

Upon completion of his studies, eager to expand his horizons, Loos spent three years in America, where he studied by observing the achievements of the Chicago school, the expressive steel panel structures by William Le Baron Jenney, which he later applied to his projects for office buildings; then the strict block structure by Daniel Hudson Burnham and John Wellborn Root, as well as the uncompromising strength and sharpness of buildings by Louis Sullivan visible in his famous Guaranty Building, built in Buffalo, New York in 1895. It was Sullivan who, having marked American architecture with his original personal style (which includes plant and surface decoration), wrote an essay titled "Ornament in Architecture" in 1892. "It would be great for our aesthetic good if we were completely refrained from the use of ornaments in a period of years, so that we can critically focus on building well-formed and nicely bare buildings,” he wrote (Sullivan, 1892:25).

This attitude reflects the central position of Loos' aesthetic which was strongly influenced by his time in America. In his lecture "Architecture" he said that "... the American worker has conquered the world. The man in overalls." (Loos, 1908:97). The American worker that had conquered Loos was Louis Sullivan who had covered his essentially proto-modernist buildings with roccocoesque ornamentation, essentially playing one off against the other, as if marking a transition point (Sullivan, 1892:25). The young Adolf Loos was inspired by Sullivan and often cited him as an influence. What Loos noted was the iconoclastic nature of Sullivan's ornamentation, for the presence of ornamentation on top of the buildings emphasized its absence from the grid of the proto-skyscraper, that is, attention is being drawn not so much to the decoration as to that which it decorates. This can be clearly seen on the Guaranty Building (Fig.1). „Clearly outlined contours of the building with an equally distinctive vertical of secondary motives, with arched ends - the line is returning to its starting
base - the compressed horizontal foot ... evidence that the ornaments of various kinds in the building are actually redundant" (Dobrović, 1963:291). In Loos' dialectics, this could be termed as a secular space: an existing gap that developed into the liminal universality of whiteness, or steel and glass, and for once no longer the essence, decoration can be discarded as unnecessary. So the white walls (a network of steel and glass) produced what might be called a definable presence, occurring between structure and decoration, that is vague "neither simply physical nor abstract" (Wigley, 1995:30). The other element that Sullivan's ostentatiously decorated modernism revealed was that while the underlying structure seemed to represent some universality, the applied ornamentation not only seemed to locate the building in a particular place and time, but it also related it to „now“. In other words the ornamentation stopped the structure from being modern "just now", becoming instead, contextually "back then." (Cook, J.W. & Klotz, H., 1973:28).

Fig. 1 – Louis Sullivan: Guaranty Building, 1895. Buffalo, New York

Upon his return to Europe, Loos settled down in Vienna in 1896, a cosmopolitan cultural center characterized by restraint and elegance of sophisticated thinking and experiential manner. In this environment, he immediately proved himself as an aggressive and passionate debater. In the first series of articles, published mainly in Neue Freie Presse in 1897 and 1898, he diligently took up arms against the stylistic tendencies and essays preached by Gustav Klimt and the architect Joseph Maria Olbrich and Josef Hoffmann, the founders of Secession in 1897. Loos often conflicted with the Secession group (2004 Topp:136).

Forming his own views partly on Sullivan's clear arguments, and partly on the rationalist doctrine presented by Otto Wagner at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts in 1894, Loos publicly spoke out against the kind of ornamentation, introduced by Art Nouveau, claiming that it did not correspond to European culture. Aware that his ideas were out of fashion, Loos named his main collection of essays "Speaking into the Void" and "Inconsiderate". His theoretical ideas regarding decorations were sensational, because to him, nobody was against them but against their unnecessary and inappropriate use. While the modernists had a dilemma about where and how to place ornaments, Loos was determined: his drastic solution predicted the complete elimination of ornament.
His essay "Ornament and Crime" written in 1908, represented the crown of his simple but radical approach. (Loos, 1982: 78) In this essay Loos treats the ornament as graffiti, crude and criminal; and for him a building with decorations was like a man covered in tattoos. For the Papua tribes tattoos are acceptable, but as Loos said, "a modern man who is tattooed has to be either a criminal or a bum". The edition from which is this well-known essay, he ended by saying: "Freedom of ornamentation is a sign of spiritual freedom." He believed that "the development of culture is moving towards the removal of ornaments from useful objects" (Trachtenberg, 2006: 494). This article was published in Paris, where the architects in the process of developing high modernism welcomed Steiner House as an important precedent, and Loos' anti-ornamentality as one of the new architectural key ideas. This essay is the most severe Loos’ debate, the great critic of secession aesthetic hybridity, who saw decorated secession design as erotic and degenerate. Postmodernists had condemned modernists like Loos for their puritan modesty reflected in this opinion.

In another essay, again dating from 1908, entitled “The Superfluous Items”, in a polemical debate with the Deutscher Werkbund and the reigning concept of formalism, Loos reiterated the need for objects and architecture that clearly demonstrated their separateness from artistic intentions and non-belonging to the essentially appreciated Secession of the time. The essay dedicated to “The Elimination of Furniture”, 1924, in which Loos asks himself: "What must the truly modern architect do? He must build houses in which every item of furniture that cannot be moved must be concealed inside the walls” (Bertoni, 2002:47).

Loos began his battle with the Secession years before "Ornament and Crime". In 1900, he launched a sharp attack in the form of an allegorical satire about a "poor little man" who engages Secession designers to bring "art, in fact, into all things": "Every room was a symphony of colors, complete in itself. Walls, wallpaper, furniture and materials were designed to make the harmony of the highest artistic level. Each item in the house had its own place and was integrated with others, creating the most amazing combination. The architect has forgotten nothing, absolutely nothing. Ashtrays, cutlery, light switches - everything, absolutely everything he has done himself" (Foster, 2003:27).

For the Secession designer the perfection combines art and life, and all signs of death are forbidden. On the other hand, the bad, the triumphant crossing of the limitations of a catastrophic loss of the same - the loss of the objective necessary to define any "future living and striving, development and desires" (Foster, 2003:88). The misfortune of "the poor simple man" is that instead of being a man of properties, he is a man without them; they just lack diversity in their perfection. Adolf Loos shows that there is a difference between an urn and a night vessel, and that this difference above all provides culture with freedom of space. Loos opposes not only the total design of the Secession but also its unbridled subjectivism, however, he says nothing about art or life, or about the absolute autonomy of culture.
Architectural accomplishments of Adolf Loos became famous, first of all, thanks to his attitude towards ornaments: “His most significant contribution to architecture remains his literary discourse” (Gravagnuolo, 1995: 18). In his opinion, a work devoid of ornamentation is a sign of pure and lucid thinking and a high level of civilization; such good form has its own beauty to find in the degree of usefulness expressed and in the unattainable unity of its parts, so that all of the ornamentation has to be systematically rejected. He believed that the modernism followed by his colleagues could attain the proper heights. He strived for the extreme, geometric purism, which he achieved in his two projects: House Scheu from 1913 (Fig. 2) and House Steiner from 1910 (Fig. 3), both are located in Vienna.

House Scheu had a terrace and a flat roof; House Steiner itself bold and powerful, one of the first houses to be built of reinforced concrete and a landmark in the architecture of the twentieth century. It was created under the influence of Purkersdorf Sanatorium by Josef Hoffmann, a square, bare box lined with plaster, which resembles a discrete form of the letter U, with simple square windows and a thin flat wreath on top, which so clearly captures the geometrical tendency (Fig.4). Hoffman, the founder of the Vienna Werkstattea, because of his obsessive square ways of expression was called the "Square Hoffman” (“Quadratl-Hoffmann”). For Loos, geometry is the most important, especially on a curved roof beginning from the facade looking onto the street. The limited height of the sides facing the street and the big height towards the side of the garden characterized this remarkable house. While the street facade and the facade looking onto the garden are symmetrical, the side facades are completely asymmetrical. The structure was more compact and more confident; the windows appear to be more "functionalist", particularly their horizontal parts, while the crown is thinner. The windows do not say much about the interior behind them. On the facade looking onto the garden, the windows are vertical and horizontal, anticipating a common game that is a rule of modernism. Minimalism is characterized by a facade without any decoration. The building is shocking for its "ugliness".

A new method of compression was applied together with clarity in expressing the interior space, clean straight lines, a flat roof, horizontal windows and the dominance of solid, cubic style. As the Hoffman building can be compared to the Palladio's naked, geometric Villa Godi (Fig.5), as an early work significant for the absence of external decoration; or Villa
Pizani (Fig. 6) to which a modern look was added, so can Loos’ house be viewed as an example of functionalistic, geometric purism.

Fig. 4 - Josef Hoffmann: Sanatorium Purkersdorf : main entrance and west entrance

Fig. 5 - Andrea Palladio: Villa Godi, 1537-1542, Lonedo di Lugo Vicentino/ Fig. 6 - Andrea Palladio: Villa Pisani, 1544, Bagnolo

"I preach to aristocrats," declared Loos in "Ornament and Crime" (Ornament und Verbrechen) (Loos, Adolf, 1971: 19) and it was aimed at the elitist Central European bourgeois who understood his message and allowed him to create architectural projects, such as Rufer House (Fig.7) and Moller House (Fig.8) in Vienna, or Muller House in Prague (fig.9) which represents the culmination of his work. The nakedness and the formal essence of Loos’ buildings could only be appreciated in closed social circles, where there was no need for showing off one’s status, and whose members were able, thanks to their culture and sensibility to respect the stimulus of purification that the Viennese architect gave to the local architecture. As De Chirico (Giorgio de Chirico) in his metaphysical works (scuola metafisica art movement), Loos also questioned himself due to his internal doubts that shaped the essence of his architecture, which may well have been addressed to the „aristocrats“, certainly not to the common man (Bertoni, 2002.: 47).
What is characteristic of Loos’ houses is the Raumplan concept or "plan of volumes", in which he expressed his commitment to reconsidering the traditional plan based on the configuration of space in the pre-specified volumes. Loos believed that every room should be individually designed, with a height that suits it best. The plans of his houses consisted of small rooms connected by a short staircase. In his pursuit for modern architecture, Loos started this complex system of internal organization with Rufer House in Vienna. In this house, unlike his later houses, the openings were set completely free, by following freely available internal volume - which was an introduction to the canon of De Stijl. Further development of ideas led by Steiner House in Vienna, the culmination which was achieved in the disaggregated level house, which he realized at the end of his life: Moller house in Vienna and the Miller home near Prague. By the time of the occurrence of the Steiner House, Loos had already achieved a very abstract outward expression - his unadorned white prism predicted the appearance of "international style" at least eight years before its time.

"The final analysis of Loos’ importance as a pioneer depends not only on his great insight as a critic of modern culture, but also on his formulation of Raumplan as an architectural strategy for overcoming the contradictory cultural heritage of bourgeois society, which has freed itself from vernacularism, but could not replace it with the culture of classicism. No one was better prepared to accept this hyper-aware sensibility than the post-war Parisian avant-garde, especially the circle that was regulated by the New Spirit (L'Esprit Nouveau), to which belonged the Dadaists - poet Paul Dermee and purist painters Amedee Ozenfant and Charles-Edouard Jeanneret - Le Corbusier, and who published again in 1920 the French translation of "Ornament and Crime" from 1913. While, as noted by Reiner Banham, the roots of purism lie in the abstract classicist tendencies of Parisian culture regardless of the sensibility of the "ready-made" Marcel Duchamp, there is little reason to suspect that Loos’ influence was decisive in the processing of the typological program of purism, as he gave an impulse for the synthesis on all possible scales, the "tipeobjects " of the modern world. Above all, Loos must
now be regarded as the first to have postulated the problem that was eventually solved by Le Corbusier through the full development of the free plan. The typological question posed by Loos was how to combine the safety of the ceiling/platonic mass with the practicality of the irregular volume “(Frampton, 2007:39).

One of the buildings that express the character of his work, is certainly the building named Goldman & The Salatsch in Michälerplatz in Vienna from 1910 (Fig.10), where different levels of organization facilitated the complete expression of the volumetric plan made in his Rufer House in Vienna in 1922. It is noticeable that the total absence of ornamentation on the building (except for the window frames that Loos was forced to design). Loos has been criticized because of the simplicity of the building, in the sense that it seemed it was in conflict with its immediate environment. In the case of Looshaus, as is currently the name of this building, it is possible to argue that Loos used urban elements as he saw them in the urban development of the tradition, the demands that modernity makes to the capital city and its cultural ties (in London, Chicago etc.). This universality for creating a new unique reference system, he explained as an absolute.

![Fig. 10 – Adolf Loos: The Goldman & Saalatsch, Wien, 1910. / Fig. 11 - Adolf Loos: Zentralsparkasse, Wien, 1914.](image)

His attitude to architecture, Loos explains on the example of a bank that must claim that their money is safe and well stored there with honest people. Loos believed in the concept of building to achieve a proper understanding: the environment has to speak to the guest or resident in a way that is required, which is consistent with its function. He suggested honesty, because nature itself is only on the side of truth. The interior of the Zentralsparkasse Bank, 1914 (Fig. 11), is an example of what Loos tried to do: the bank appears as a determined and sincere place, encouraging customers to entrust their collateral to this financial institution. Loos uses circular or spherical light nodes (as in the House Scheu or Miller House), and emphasizes the use of marble, a network of squares drawn on the floor, ceiling, and even in the upper parts of walls. Highly placed mirrors are similarly used in the Goldman & Salatsch.

Loos had a lasting impact on the next generation of architects, including Andre Luicat (Fig.12), Erich Mendelsohn (Fig.13), Richard Neutra (Fig.14) and Rudolf Schindler (Fig.15). His influence is even felt on our domestic architectural scene. "To design a town house for the family Zaborski, Milan Zlokovic (1898-1965) used an unrealized model project of Loos’ villa Strauss, 1922. ... In 1926, the Czech architect who lived and worked in Belgrade, Jan
Dubovi (1892-1969) wrote about "Worker house and worker home", gave lectures on "garden cities" and published them in Zagreb "Technical Sheet". His drawings illustrate the text, where Adolf Loos’ influence is quite visible (1870-1933) "(Maldini, 2007).

Fig. 12 - Building by André Lurçat, Vienna, Austria, 1932. / Fig. 13 - Erich Mendelsohn: Cohen House, London, 1936.

Fig. 14 - Richard Neutra, Kuća, Berlin, Germany, 1923. / Fig. 15 - Rudolf Schindler: Lovell Beach House, Balboa Peninsula, California, 1926.

In Loos’ inexpressive facades of houses, a philosophical outlook can be discerned that presents a building as "stupid in its exterior and reveals its wealth only from the inside." (Sarnitz, 2003: 22). For Loos, strict, silent abstraction is an ethical imperative for cultural evolution:

"Nomadic pastors had to be differentiated by using different colors; modern man uses his clothes as a mask. Therefore, his individuality is so strong that it cannot be expressed any longer in terms of apparel products. To be free of decorations is a sign of spiritual strength. Modern man uses the ornaments of the past or those from foreign cultures if he sees that they fit. He focuses his inventiveness on other things "(Tournikiotis, 1996:123).

**CONTRADICTIONS IN ATTITUDES**

Loos showed dual personal humanism with his misrepresentation of the art, for he brought confusion into the proper understanding of architecture: "Everything that serves a purpose ought to be excluded from the realm of art" (Dobrović, 1963:92). "A work of art shows people new ways and thoughts focused on the future. A house thinks about the present."
Because he believed that art and architecture, for their exclusive spheres of influence should be completely independent of each other, it is precisely why Loos' position was that only the grave and monument were the allowed exceptions, because only they had the ability to combine functionality with excitement and emotions. "Only a very small part of architecture belongs to art: the tomb and monument. Everything else that fulfills the function should be excluded from the domain of art" (Sarnitz, 2003:15). The mausoleum modeled for the Viennese professor and art historian Max Dvorak (Fig. 16), is the only Loos' project in the field of graves and monuments.

The attitude which denies the architecture as an art that serves a purpose is the denial of its closest features: "A house needs to satisfy all parties, contrary to the work of art that does not have to. The work is a private matter for the artist. The house is not." And: "The House should serve convenience. The work of art is revolutionary, the house is conservative" (Sarnitz, 2003:24).

His humanism has variable character; there is no inner strength that gives a strong resistance. His project for workers' homes in Hietzing in Vienna, which remained only on paper, designed for the needs of the Viennese social democratic municipality was accompanied by his statement: "It was a long-standing desire to design a terraced building with workers' apartments. The fate of the proletarian child from birth until the start of school is especially hard. For children from ordinary rental barracks, closed in a room, a large common terrace could open their imprisoning apartment when their parents go to work" (ibid, p.93). This was consistent with his attitude: “Architecture evokes sentiments in man. The work of an architect, therefore, is to make these feelings as specific as possible” (Sarnitz, 2003:14).

Two years later, in Paris, Loos presented the idea of a terraced designed hotel, the Grand Hotel Babylon in Nice, based on the idea of luxury of this international metropolis. In order to avoid a rift in his personal humanism, Loos wrote in his report that it is also possible to adapt the project needs to a large collective workers' home. This attitude is the negation of the functionality principles (Dobrović, p.93).

The application of luxury materials is Loos' expression of his internal discord, in terms of new architecture, and also in terms of ornament exposure. Simplicity and the absence of ornamentation are prerequisites for economy in architecture, or as Loos said: "A man with modern nerves does not need ornament" (ibid, p.90). Many permanent truths revealed in the debate "Ornament and Crime" are in irreconcilable contradiction with his recommendations for the use of expensive materials.
Loos did not develop his attitudes and views as a system. "Loos maintained a simplicity in terms of the external appearance of buildings, understanding their mass as simplified volumes. However, some of his own cubist observations regarding this he never developed into a system. Space he did not explore consistently in the spirit of his views, nor did he strive to create a movement on this basis. "(Ibid., p.95)."Be truthful, nature is only on the side of truth," he said, "an object is beautiful if it is so perfect that you cannot add to it or deprive it of anything without ruining it. That would be the most perfect and absolute harmony." He believed that good form must find its own beauty in the degree of its usefulness, which is expressed through the unity of its parts, so that all ornaments must be systematically rejected. But, he did not develop this system.

LOOS’ INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE OF SIMPLICITY

Today, the most original contribution to the idea of simplicity in architecture is minimalism (Vasilski, 2008a:16), which is, therefore, called the modern architecture of simplicity. In the contemporary world, minimalist architecture is one of the most significant contributions in the attempt to establish through simplicity a more quality way of life (Vasilski, 2010: 29)

Striving for simplicity, as a light motif (Vasilski, 2008a:16) is the guiding principle in Loos’ work. It is expressed in the main essay titled "Ornament and Crime", as well as in his projects.

Simplicity, which raises the real value of life and eliminates everything that is superfluous and tricky around us, allows us to recognize the essence (Vasilski, 2009:9). In architecture, minimalism has been addressing this essential quality as the primary object, using light as a component and material (Vasilski, 2010b: 13). Adolf Loos, in a rant against the "bad taste" of modern artists and the houses decorated by the architects from the school of applied arts, had already selected what was essential:

"When I enter a house of this kind, I always pity the individuals who spend their lives there. Is this the scenario that people would have chosen for the small joys and great tragedies of their existence?!! Would it have been like this? These houses fit you like a rented Pierrot fancy-dress costume! I hope the serious events of life will never touch you, opening your eyes to your borrowed rags! (...) Just try to imagine what birth and death must be like in one of Olbrich’s bedrooms, how the painful cry of an injured son would sound, the agonizing death-rattle of a dying mother, and the last thoughts of a daughter who has decided to die. (...) A letter on the table. A letter of farewell. Is the room in which this scene takes place one of good taste? Who will worry? It’s a room and that’s all!

But what if the room is furnished by Van de Velde?
In that case, it is not a room..
In that case, it’s …
Well, what is it then?
An insult to death.
May you always enjoy the small pleasures of life!” (Loos, 1972:11)

The formal silence that denotes the best parts of Loos’ architecture, corresponds to the absence of consciousness about the dominant architecture of the period. Not only is there an absence of an ostentatious construction technique, but it is even neglected or suppressed, and when Loos’ work is compared to contemporary works of the Modern Movement, one comes to the fact that there is no similarity. The aspects present in Loos’ work, are completely absent from the practical expression of the Modern Movement that had severed all relations with the history and culture of the setting, giving preference to relations with engineering and industry which, it was thought, had the powers to resolve the extensive social problems of a mass society.

To appreciate the originality of Loos’ contribution, and to understand the reasons for his contemporary appreciation, we need to focus our attention to his two buildings. The first one is the house for the poet Tristan Tzara, in Paris, 1926 (Fig. 17), whose basement portion in rough stone echoes a typically Parisian theme of the retaining walls for Montmartre hill. The second one is the house for the ballerina Josephine Baker, 1928 (Fig. 18) in which a theme from African culture (zebra skin) is encapsulated in the facing of white and black alternating horizontal stripes, by which the power of formal abstraction is achieved (Bertoni, 2002.:46). This project has not been realized.

Fig. 17 - Adolf Loos: Tristan Tzara House, 1926. / Fig. 18 - Adolf Loos: Project for Josephine Baker’s house, 1928.

Quality of life was repeatedly examined in Loss’ written work; he was „obsessed with immediate sensations as ingredients for a perfect way of life. The quality of smell and touch, the juxtaposition of textures...All this was foreign to the ways of thinking at the time – a fact that is important to bear in mind. Loss followed the ideal of an architecture which could communicate...with the inhabitant of his buildings...and beyond him, the passer-by” (Rykwert, 1982.:73). According to Loos, everyday objects, pictures, furnishings and all the other things belonging to life must be chosen freely over time by the inhabitants, and not, as in the moral tale of the “poor rich man” be designed together in a single act (which was his disagreement with the Secession). The silent task of drawing our attention back to what is important is the task reserved for architecture, if it merits the name: ” When, in the woods we
come across a mound, six foot long, three foot wide, heaped up into a pyramid with a spade, then we become serious and something speaks inside of us: someone lies buried here. That is architecture” (Bertoni, 2002:47).

Loos’ influence on minimalism is unquestioned. We can talk about this influence, especially through the Mediterranean anonymous architecture that has influenced Loos, as well as the members of minimalism, but also through the influence of Loos’ minimalism in art and through him onto the architects who have specifically marked minimalism in architecture, such as Herzog & de Meuron (Vasilski, 2008c).

Influence: Mediterranean – Adolf Loos – Alberto Campo Baeza

Influence of Mediterranean vernacular architecture on Loos is evident (Vasilski, 2010a: 21). He often visited the Mediterranean; he traveled throughout Italy in search of marble, from the first visit which was in Massa Carrara, in 1906 to find the marble for Kartner Bar, and after that, again in 1910, he was looking for marble for the facade of the house on the Michaelplatz in Vienna. More trips followed, and then followed his projects for houses and villas, in which he applied the typical Mediterranean-style terraces.

In his project for the Moisse House, on the Lido in Venice, 1923 (Fig.19) Loos combined a regular network with local forms of architectural elements (external staircase, terrace with pergola, windows of very different sizes) and configured the windows to depend on the exposure of the facade. "But, the challenging innovation was inside the house where the complex of a clear demonstration of "Raumplan" was set on fire by a low beam of sun rays that penetrated through a crack in the floor of the terrace – of the solarium" (McDonough, 1999:17). The outer plastic of the building was treated in all its cubistic simplicity (Dobrović, 1963:314), and therefore was destined to become the type - the form of the canonical Le Corbusier’s purist villa, in Garches, 1927 (Fig.20) (Frampton, 2007:112). This simplicity, as a light motif, can be perceived in the Markos House (Fig.21) or Turegano House (Fig.22), in Madrid, by the architect Alberto Campo Baeza. It is a recognized form of box, which became a symbol of minimalism in architecture. Otherwise, the name of Alberto Campo Baeza is a synonym for someone who knows perfectly the legality of "poor" architecture, combined with the Mediterranean tradition and with the evident influence of the greats like Adolf Loos. Campo Baeza directed his objects towards the ideal of timeless, classic beauty that was the ideal of beauty for many years. The beauty of the ancient Greeks of which Loos was saying, "... they only worked practically without thinking about beauty, unwilling to meet the aesthetic requirements. And when, at last, the object became so convenient that it was impossible to make it more convenient, they called it beautiful" (Loos, 1982:33).
Influence: Adolf Loos – Carl Andre – Herzog & de Meuron

The reappraisal of Loos’ architecture is relatively rare. Alvaro Siza reproduced the upper part of the Tzara House with the central niche in the house for Avelino Duarte in Ovar, 1985 (Fig. 23), while Alberto Campo Baeza used the house on Michaelplatz in Vienna in his project for the Bank of Granada in 1992. (Fig. 24).

Loos’ tomb for Max Dvorak from 1921 (Fig. 16) is timeless, as are the planks assembled by Carl Andre (Fig. 25) and the sides of the Ricola factory (Fig. 26) (Ruby, Sachs, Ursprung, 2003: 39) or the Signal box (Fig. 27) by Herzog & de Meuron (Cerver, 1997: 47).
CONCLUSION

Even Plato said: „A man creates an architectural space according to his feelings. "One such activity in modern architecture is definitely minimalism. “Minimalism reveals the invisible...everything that lies at a depth which words cannot reach. Listening architectures are architectures of places, and they draw strength from the invisible web that is already present in reality but is waiting to be revealed to the light” (Carmagnola, Pasca, 1996: 167). And in this network, Loos’ activity can be found as well.

Loos’ white walls and his sharp stereometric volumes, which hide a variability and a shrewdness of volume that boosts our perception of space, have survived criticism and misunderstandings; and at the beginning of the new millennium, now, appear to be more firmly grounded than the buildings of his ungrateful opponents, revealing an unexpected freshness that is still full of questions. Like the idea of an eternal return of the same, which was the deepest thought of Nietzsche (Heidegger, 1999:97). Or, as Loos said: "No man can do the same work again. Every day produces a new man and the new man cannot do what the old one had already created. He thinks that he is doing the same, but he turns out something new. Something imperceptibly new. But still, after hundreds of years the difference is evident” (Tournikiotis, 1996:34). Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis (The times are changed and we too are changed in them).