THE BUILDING - READING ANALYSIS

**Inquiries and big ideas**
1) How has museum architecture in the United States evolved over time?
2) What political, economic, and social forces affect museum architecture, interior design, and location?

**Part 1: Page 29 – 37 (bottom)**

**Humble Beginnings to Beaux Arts Palaces**

**Evolving Museum Architecture**

--“grand idea” precedes “grand building” and often involves a “nomadic existence”
--repurposed “mansions, fire stations, factories, railroad depots, airplane hangars,” storefronts, ships; building from scratch or adding wings to pre-existing buildings
--end of Civil War to start of WWII: Beaux Arts design (neo-classical Greek/ Roman/Renaissance palaces); columns, arches, vaults, domes, grand stairways, elevated, guarded by stone lions
--1930s-1970s/80s: modernist principles of design (new materials—glass and steel—sleek lines)
--1990s-early 2000s spectacle + shopping mall influence

**Political, Economic, and Social Forces Affecting Museum Architecture, Interior Design and Location**

--civic leaders, boards of trustees, wealthy funders/founders + architects determine design
--developers, planners, and politicians influence location with industrialist-would-be aristocrats choosing parks away from working classes and commerce districts and later city revitalization efforts moving museums to downtown areas (see “cultural tourism” phenomenon)
--remnants of world’s fairs and expositions proclaiming wealth and glamor (late 19th; early 20th)
--museum building boom based on end of WW I strong economy

**Exemplars and/or Quotes (page #s)**

--1849 Smithsonian Institution (the Castle) inspired by medieval French and English castles (31)
--New York Metropolitan Museum of Art located in Central Park’s “wealth corridor” (32)
--Art Institute of Chicago in Grant Park (off of downtown area, however, not stated here) (33)
--John Cotton Dana’s (1917 director of Newark Museum) support for modernist design principles and downtown locations instead of park palaces (34)
--Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago (1893 Exposition) opens in 1933 (Century of Progress World’s Fair in Chicago)
THE BUILDING - READING ANALYSIS

Part 2: page 37 (bottom) - 48
New models: Two schools (nostalgia/modernism); Colleges/Universities, Science, Children’s

EVALUATING MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE
--Dana’s populist modernism vs. nostalgia for colonial past
--western U.S. Spanish mission architecture (Santa Barbara and San Diego) and eastern colonial revival in Williamsburg, VA; places and villages, architecture as the collection itself
--birth of the “International Style”

POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL FORCES AFFECTING MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE, INTERIOR DESIGN AND LOCATION
--museums founded by xenophobic wealthy industrialists to mark historic periods (Colonial Revival projects); outdoor museums serving as automobile road trip destinations
--modern design principles brought to the U.S. by artists fleeing European fascism
--move from classicism (associated with fascism) to modernism; cheaper more modern materials made available by war-time industrialization
--modernism influences museums looking to the future with commercial district locations
--colleges and universities establish “International Style” museums on their campuses
--science museums are also interested in new materials, especially concrete
--launching of Sputnik (1957) inspires planetariums; botanic gardens and zoos take advantage of new materials, such as concrete and steel
--1960s federal money starts to fund museums
--shopping mall design (atriums and interior escalators) influences museums
--museums move into condo business
--activists protest encroachment on green spaces

EXEMPLARS and/or QUOTES (page #s)
--Rockefeller funds Colonial Williamsburg (1926); “Rockefeller did not commission new buildings to house collections and exhibitions; the restored buildings were the collection objects, put on exhibition to educate and transport people back in time” (38) and Henry Ford’s Museum and Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan bought old “agricultural, domestic, and industrial” buildings and re-assembled them in his Village (39)
--Museum of Modern Art (1929), the Whitney Museum, and the Guggenheim Museum, all in New York, represent modernist influences (42-43)
--architectural critic Paul Goldberger: “The museum has become not only on campus[es] but everywhere, the architectural laboratory of our time” (46).
Evolving Museum Architecture
--science centers offer less attractive architecture with domed theaters to accommodate Omnimax and IMAX films
--postmodernist buildings replace modernist fervor; pastiche of classical symbols
--renovations abound in 1980s and 90s

Political, Economic, and Social Forces Affecting Museum Architecture, Interior Design and Location
--museums are used to “revitalize” cities through public/private partnerships; a way to bring in working classes to museums but also ends up displacing some working class communities
--non-profits open museums in alternative spaces and repurposed sites, such as storefronts
--children’s museums serve as anchors for new “museum/cultural districts” in “revitalized” areas
--move to attract “cultural tourists” (e.g., Wednesday as closed day instead of Monday when tourists visit)
--museum building boom in 1980s and 90s harkens back to 1920s

Exemplars and/or Quotes (page #s)
--Oakland Museum at the edge of Downtown incorporates park-like grounds (49)
--1977 Dallas Museum of Art “first downtown arts district” in U.S. (49)
--1979 Boston Children’s Museum’s move to abandoned warehouse district (de-industrialization of U.S. (50) (manufacturing moves to Mexico, China, and other offshore sites open up factory and warehouse districts)
--1976 Maryland Science Center and 1981 National Aquarium in Baltimore inner harbor (51)
--1984 Monterey Bay Aquarium
--“…between 1960 and 2001, 116 cities developed cultural districts to serve their citizens, attract tourists and revitalize their communities. Most of these districts contained museums” (51).
--“Postmodernism resurrected ornament, whimsy and more attention to popular taste. America’s architectural climate became pluralistic and increasingly welded to the marketplace” (52).
--1984 Neue Staatsgallerie in Stuttgart, Germany (“first notable postmodern museum” 52)
--early 90s Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates; 1991 Seattle Art Museum (53)
--1989 Peter Eisenman’s Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus, Ohio (post-modern--deconstructionist--experiment) (54)
--“In the early 1980s, researcher Marilyn Hood…found that ‘museum non-goers valued almost the anti-thesis of postmodernism: comfortable spaces, familiar surroundings, and social interaction” (54).
Evolving Museum Architecture
--80s and 90s growth of higher end cafes and gift stores and spaces for special events
--celebrity architects (“starchitects”) museums mark major cities
--computer designed buildings; pluralism and diverse designs
--the museum as campus (multiple buildings including centers for research and conservation)
--green architecture inspired by tribal museums and spreading to others
--Beaux Arts to modernism to postmodernism to green and growing

Political, Economic, and Social Forces Affecting Museum Architecture, Interior Design and Location
--support needed through entrepreneurial efforts
--government funding much reduced in 80s/Reaganomics
--creation of museum related ware with images of museums for sale on totes, umbrellas, globes
--after hours special events need specially designed spaces + rental spaces available to other organizations and private parties
--“architourism”: visits to buildings of celebrity architects
--1990s more attempts to influence design from the public (no longer only boardrooms), though not always successful; note struggle to keep de Young in Golden Gate Park away from tourist pier attraction (tensions and contradictions between elite/parks and the people/commercial districts; Exploratorium moves to pier and ticket prices became prohibitive)
--casinos and tribal museums mix: Las Vegas opens art, history, and science museums in an attempt to appeal to families and American Indian casinos (“Gaming Act” requires 3% to be spent on cultural and educational programs and allows new funds for tribal museums)
--tribal museums lead way toward green/sustainable architecture

Exemplars and/or Quotes (page #s)
--1982 “National Gallery of Art establishes upscale sit-down service on its main floor” (56)
--Retailers “encouraged architects to create spaces accessible to the non-museum going customers who could bypass admissions gates and exhibits in favor of shopping. Like their restaurant counterparts, these stores have become state-of-the-art destinations in and of themselves, filled with carefully selected mission related merchandise” (57).
--1995 SFMOMA highly successful retail spot with windows on the street (57)
--1993, University of Minnesota Frank Gehry (now every major city wants its Gehry—Bilbao, Spain; Chicago’s outdoor music center); 1995, Mario Botta’s SF MOMA; 1997, Richard Meier’s Getty in Los Angeles; 2001, Santiago Calatrava’s Milwaukee Art Museum; 2005 Herzog and de Meuron’s de Young re-build; Daniel Libeskind’s SF Contemporary Jewish Museum re-model; Billie Tsien and Tod Williams’s NY American Folk Art Museum 2004 Yoshio Taniguchi’s NY MOMA renovation + Renzo Piano in Atlanta and Moshe Safdie in Savannah (59-62)
--1990 The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) “mandated that museums return certain sacred objects to their tribes of origin” (63).
--1993 Warm Springs, Oregon Tribal Museum; Tamastslikt Institute in Oregon; Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center in Mystic, Connecticut (63) (see later supplemental reading on tribal museums after de Young visit)
--Renzo Piano’s remodeled California Academy of Sciences green building (65)