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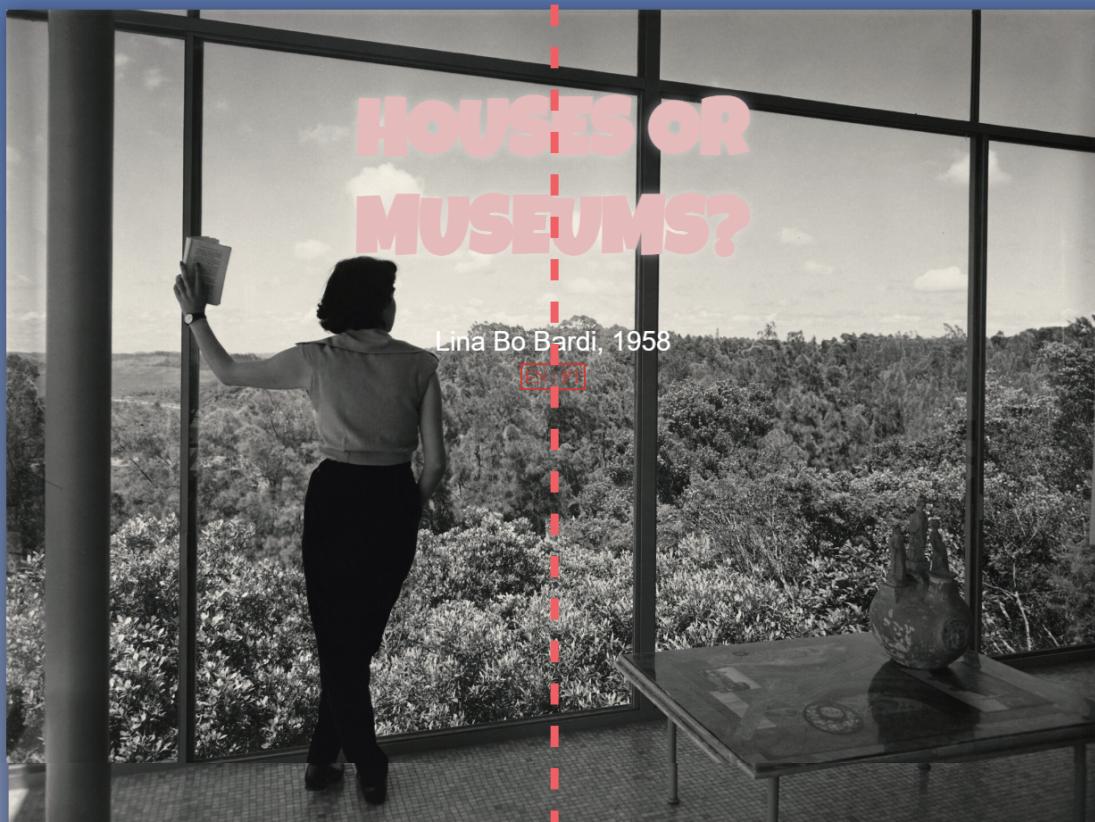
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BL's Assignment 5

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What should come first, houses or museums?

importance

Everything at once: the houses, the schools, the museums, the libraries. Urban Planning cannot ignore cultural issues. If in the construction of new neighbourhoods, new housing forms the basis of the city plan (and by housing we also mean the market, the schools and the public services like the hospital and the post offices), the planning of a city cannot overlook two key public buildings that still today are considered an intellectual luxury:

The problem of the museum has to be tackled today on 'didactic' and 'technical' grounds.

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These foundations are essential if the museum is not to become petrified, that is, entirely useless.

The experience gained in this field with the São Paulo Museum of Art can be of great use here.

After all, what is the point of an isolated work of art, even if it's exhibited with the most perfect museological technique, if it remains 'an end in itself', with no connection at all to our times, with historical continuity? The visitors, especially the younger ones, will look at the objects in a superficial way, without understanding their meaning, their historical lessons, the light they can shed on the present. Baroque sculptures, saints, silverware, tiles, paintings, altarpieces - all will be mere artistic curiosities to the visitor. In real terms, what didactic methods should we use? Evidently written texts, brief and succinct, and not in the language of the PhD, accompanied by photographs – in a sort of cinematographic commentary. It is only by satisfying these didactic needs that the museum will be able to occupy a vital place and be worthy in the gradation of human needs demanding prompt solution, and of being built at the same time as the houses.

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These considerations are of the utmost importance as Bahia stands on the brink of creating what could well one day become - given the importance of its collection and the beauty and poetic fascination of the building that will be its home - the country's most important museum: the Santa Teresa Museum of Sacred Art.

A museum that ought to have its own didactic voice in order to become a 'true' museum, which is 'alive', and not a 'museum' in the most obsolete use of the term.

BL's Assignment 5

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