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[Design](#), [Architecture](#)



Insert Skyscrapers Skyscrapers are usually tall buildings that have many floors and protrude well above the other buildings to change the skyline. Skyscrapers are habitable and may be used for residential, commercial or office use. The first skyscrapers were built in America in the late eighteenth hundreds after the civil war. They were built in Chicago and New York which competed before Chicago passed a law banning the construction of buildings with over 150 feet in height. Home Insurance building completed in 1884 and 138 feet tall was the first skyscraper. New York later emerged the winner in 1895 after the construction of the American Surety building which had 16 stories (Savage). This paper discusses the activities of the people in the cities during the period of the creation of the skyscrapers and social, economic and political factors that fueled the creation of these buildings in the nineteenth century.

Economic factors

The cities during the era of creation of the first skyscrapers were filled with Immigrants from India, Germany, Ireland and Immigrants of African descendants (Life in the city). The Immigrants were mostly farmers in the rural areas. Raw materials such as Iron and steel frames for construction were cheap and readily available as a result of the first industrial revolution. The availability of these materials led to the construction of tall buildings that did not take up much space for the base structure; steel is highly malleable taking many shapes to ensure strong connections. Steel frames supported curtain walls that could be constructed taller than concrete walls. Tall buildings require strong foundations due to their weight and the invention of special water-tight boxes made it possible to erect tall buildings

on loose wet grounds. Technology developments such as the invention of elevators paved way for construction of buildings taller than ten storey buildings which were impractical to access the upper floors through stairs. The invention of Air conditioning necessitated the construction of tall buildings that could be heated and ventilated. People were attracted to work in these buildings. The invention of water pumps that provided supply of water to upper floors and the adaptation of iron piping that allowed the provision of cold and hot water.

Social factors

Immigrants from Europe, India and some of the free Africans started moving to the cities in search of jobs and, as a result increasing the population in the urban centers. The Immigrants worked laborers in the Industries. The second industrial revolution improved the living standards of the people and increased utilization of land as a result of the economic boost in the period. Intensive use of land led to restrictions in the availability of land for development, forcing Architects to design tall buildings that took small base areas. Real estate speculations that property would appreciate led to the creation of skyscrapers. Increased desire for buildings that provided in-house services for the tenants including restaurants, shops, libraries, tailors, and salons, and competition between Architects fueled the design of tall buildings that stretched the limits of what was possible. Also competition among builders, owners and families fueled the creation of the first Skyscrapers (Douglas 71)

Political factors

Before the creation of the first Skyscrapers, ownership of property was used

as a sign of wealth and power. The desire for power and to show off wealth fueled the creation of Skyscrapers. Tall buildings were as a symbol of pride and achievement both at national and international levels, and organizations built skyscrapers to promote their image and boost recognition. The states competed in construction of skyscrapers as a show of supremacy.

Conclusively, this paper discussed the factors that fueled the creation of the first skyscrapers including the social, economic and political factors and the activities of the people living in the cities during the period of first skyscrapers creation.

Appendix

American surety building retrieved from Home Insurance building retrieved from Works cited

" Chicago." History. com. A&E Television Networks, n. d. Web. 15 Apr. 2014. .

Douglas, George H.. " The great tribune competition." Skyscrapers: a social history of the very tall building in America. Jefferson, NC u. a.: McFarland, 1996. 71-82. Web. 15 Apr. 2014.