

**BUSINESS COMMUNICATION,
RHETORIC, AND ARCHITECTURE:
CLASSICAL FOUNDATIONS
FOR VISUAL PERSUASION**

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ABSTRACT

Visual persuasion in constructing buildings is often a part of business strategy. Architects, for instance, try to link corporate goals with management's desire for company buildings to represent, for instance, the mission, goal, theme of the company. When one analyzes covert visual persuasion, it is clear modern visual strategy mirrors ancient rhetorical concepts of persuasion. As oral persuasion takes into account source, medium, audience, and content, so too does the visual strategist. In the following statement we link visual rhetoric with classical rhetoric; briefly summarize major ancient rhetorical cannons; look at banks and shopping malls as exemplifying visual rhetoric; and conclude with a discussion.

Some business leaders and marketing gurus, if they think about architecture, believe that architects merely interpret and express the culture or *Zeitgeist* in built form. Some business communicators when hearing the term rhetoric think of artificial, blatant persuasion. As a result some architects feel marginalized as serious work goes to engineers and developers; some business communicators feel affronted that legitimate vehicles of persuasion are demeaned.

But visual architectural forms--as much as oral or written persuasion--carry strong, if poorly understood, influences on audiences--or customers, or consumers, or clients. "Historic architecture was a means, through visual metaphors, of establishing, proclaiming, and transmitting convictions--i.e., of making them held universally. Architecture both proclaimed and persuaded" (Gowans, 1977: 38-39). It seems, therefore, that turning to the roots of persuasion as seen in classical rhetoric, architects, business communicators, marketing experts, PR communicators, and others can gain a greater understanding of and appreciation for the value of architectural persuasion in the business world. Perhaps at the periphery architectural persuasion may even be a part of business communication, or marketing, or strategy.

At first glance the terms rhetoric and architecture seem remote from each other. Rhetoric in a pejorative sense is empty verbiage; architecture broadly construed is constructed shelter. Yet, architecture has also been considered the mother of all the fine arts; rhetoric in its ancient robes meant searching out the available means of persuasion. In light of these ancient origins, the distance between rhetoric and architecture does not appear awesomely vast.

Business communicators, marketing experts, and architects may actually find that linking the classical art of persuasion--distantly the precursor of modern business communication theories--with architecture is not too difficult. To that end we will review some statements which seminally seek to link visual rhetoric with classical rhetoric; briefly

summarize major ancient persuasive canons of rhetoric; look at a bank and malls and how they exemplify visual rhetoric; and conclude with a discussion.

VISUAL RHETORIC

Several writers have taken developmental steps in identifying the communication theory embodied in classical rhetoric as the most appropriate starting point for systematically studying persuasion in visual design. Buchanan proposes that the most likely central idea of design studies is communication, that is, the relation between communicators and their audience (1989). Krampen constructs his design views on rhetoric, namely, that the basic function of all human communication grounds itself in the desire of a sender, or source of communication to influence a receiver (1968: 5). Further, when a designer, as a communicating source, attempts to shape or change the attitudinal state of the receiver, he or she engages in the process of persuasion. We have the right to conjecture if the academic limits of business communication can be pushed to include visual persuasion.

The need to return to rhetorical foundations thus echoes among a number of visual theorists. Investigating methods of contemporary advertising, Bonsiepe suggests that "a modern system of rhetoric might be a useful descriptive and analytical instrument"(1965: 23). Krampen forcefully reinforces the preceding

conclusion: a "careful study of classical rhetoric could lead to a catalogue of rhetorical devices that are capable of visual duplication," (1968: 18) thus implying understanding rhetorical tools are valuable to the study and practice of visual design.

Rhetoric as applicable to the visual arts is not merely persuasive: it is also informative. Observes Bonsiepe : "In thrashing out the theoretical question whether there can or cannot be any communication without rhetoric, the arguments seem to favor the second alternative....Informative assertions are interlarded with rhetoric to a greater or lesser degree" (1965: 30).

Ehshes deduces that because all human communication is rhetorical, communication via visual design simply cannot be exempt from that fact (1989). Furthermore, he suggests that design is governed by and must pay attention to pragmatic motivations and functional considerations. Inasmuch as the spirit of rhetoric is also pragmatic, this situation gives design an embedded rhetorical component. Thus rhetoric, pragmatic, concerned with effect, aware of rhetorical structures affecting message receivers can give a rhetorical underpinning to architecture. Eco essentially acknowledges this view, suggesting that architecture is a system of rhetorical formulas (1980) rather than a strict language per se. Hattenhauer , one of the first communication scholars to write on a similar theme, explicitly reinforces the presence of rhetoric in architecture; he goes even further:

Architecture not only communicates, but also communicates rhetorically. Churches and shopping malls, doors and stairs. These architectural items not only tell us their meaning and function, but also influence our behavior. Architecture is rhetorical because it induces us to do what others would have us do. Architecture, then, is a persuasive phenomenon, and therefore deserves to be studied by rhetorical critics (1984: 71).

Thus, even though ancient rhetoric treated mainly oral communication, as Bonsiepe suggests, "verbal rhetoric paves the way" to the contemporary study of visual rhetoric (1965: 31) .

Inhouse publications and trade journals less overtly mention the term rhetoric in connection with architecture. Yet the usual familiar rhetorical themes appear as well as heavy emphasis upon audience (employees or customers) awareness and image (credibility) acceptance and understanding.

Thus even cities, through visual persuasion, desire to preserve an image (McManamy, 1992; d'Aquino, 1990; Price, 1988); preserve a heritage, (Bellamy, 1992); preserve an orientation (Andreoli, 1991). In other words, across the spectrum of architectural intent there is a conscious effort to let the visual structures carry a theme, make a statement, foster an image, persuade the viewer.

Structures--as visual rhetoric--are also arranged to affect both an internal and external audience: the empowerment of employees gives them a significant voice in recommending the shape and environment for their physical surroundings. No less is the external audience of client and customer neglected; heed is given to their personal visual satisfaction, a part of quality management.

Thus adapting the building to the needs of the receiver are frequently directed, for instance, toward bank customers and employees (Britt, 1992; Obata, 1992; McCleary & German, 1991; Price, 1988) with one dominant purpose: to sell a product or service. Such an overt visual appeal appears to be no less in other visual

structures. Therefore, the needs of the customer, client, occupant, tenant, employee, worker are in part met through the physical structure in which they work or with which they do business.

In sum, preliminary statements suggest there is a rhetorical approach behind a design, the situation or audience context to which it responds, and the means by which it attempts to realize its intentions. Put briefly, classical and modern rhetorical theory would look at design as always motivated, always purposeful. Rephrasing these assertions in the terminology of Burke's (1945) motivational pentad,¹ design, as motivated, must involve a maker or agent with a purpose (a source); a context or scene which must be addressed or engaged (a receiving audience); and an act or agency through which the purpose is to be carried out (a medium). Or as Burke states in another writing, "Eloquence is simply the end of art, and thus its essence" (1931: 265).

Consequently, when looked at rhetorically, architectural design must unavoidably be considered serious work. It is serious not only because of the high competence demanded for its practice, but also because of the calculated and ultimately inescapable effects directed at its intended audience, the general public that must daily view and inhabit buildings.

CLASSICAL RHETORIC AND ARCHITECTURE

A review of the major precepts of classical rhetoric allows us to more fully examine the concept of visual rhetoric in building design and its relevance to architecture. From there we may begin to see the power brought by the rhetorical system to both the analysis and synthesis of design.

If one accepts the above premise--that rhetoric and architecture do have rational linkages--, we must spend some time in reviewing how those rhetorical linkages occur. Later we will view those classical underpinnings as applicable to the genre of banks and shopping malls.

Rhetoric with its ancient genesis ranged between the philosophical criticisms of Plato (1927), to Aristotle's (1932) scientific view, to Quintilian's (1943) pragmatic view. But Aristotle's definition dominated: "So let rhetoric be defined as the faculty [power] of discovering in the particular case what are the available means of persuasion." (1932: 2.2). Those available means can be viewed in five canons and three modes of suasion.

Five Canons of Rhetoric

Classical rhetoricians usually discussed the precepts of persuasion (rhetoric) under invention, disposition, style, memory, and delivery. Each will be briefly viewed to show the relationship of these canons to architectural persuasion.

Invention. Invention or *inventio* or *heuresis*, denotes discovery or finding arguments. What rhetoricians sought in invention is the content of the discourse, the substance and modes of persuasion effective in persuading an audience. Since Invention establishes the basic elements of the rhetorical plan, it stands first among the five canons. The inventive process, in its search for proper content, looks specifically for usable argumentative premises and strategies. In classical Roman rhetoric (Cicero, 1942a: 2.39.162, 1942b: 2.5; Quintilian, 1943: 5.10.20) an

argument's major premise was called the *locus*, or *ex locis*, the place where a strategy resides. Greek rhetoricians called these places the *topos* or topics.

A persuasive argument started from a *topos* or place which recognized the existing common values held by the audience. Such a *topos* was essentially also a definite element of the existing social, cultural and political topography. In this aspect, the rhetorical "place" might appear as an emotionally familiar cultural *locus*, so to speak. In American culture, the principles of "democracy" and "all men are created equal" are just such common *loci*. (Later, when the *topos* evolved into a standard familiar theme for a discourse, the word "topic" evolved into the common connotation that it has today.)

In addition to possible general *topoi* or "commonplaces," the process of invention searched for special topics for special situations. Thus the three common forms of oral rhetorical activity which gave reality to the inventive process²--deliberative, forensic, and epideictic--demanded more specialized knowledge than the common topics. While the *topos* was usually broad enough to have interdisciplinary application, the *eidōs*, or special topic, was restricted to a definite field of art or science or one of the three genre of discourse noted above.

Whereas a *topos* or *eidōs* asserts probability only, what Aristotle terms an infallible sign (*tekmerion*) of a proposition indicates certainty, and so can form the basis of a proper logical syllogism, the schematic device he devised to measure the validity of deductive reasoning.³

In architecture, as in rhetoric, Invention dominates the first phase of the design process, corresponding roughly to what is called the pre-schematic or conceptual design phase. As such, architectural invention focuses on finding the ideas, concepts, content, requirements that will serve as an effective starting point or basis for the architectural design. It also entails discovering effective ideas for the particular design situation; the central visual idea or concept that will drive the design constitutes what is termed the architectural *parti*.

In architectural design, counterparts of the *topos* or place can be found in *partis* or familiar types of visual organization. One such type--for example, the ranch house or Greek temple--might serve as the basic starting point for shaping a new work of architecture. In bank architecture--perhaps the most conspicuous example of visual persuasion--Invention would seek to identify the basic strategy on which to ground the visual design. Should the architecture try to instill a sense of humility, awe, and deference in the potential customer? Should it be customer friendly and open or suggest solidness and endurance? Or, should it strive to lure its clientele as a casino would gamblers? In the first two cases, the bank might be presented as a classical, enduring monument; in the second, as a glittering, customer enticing inducement. Each has a definite audience purpose.

Disposition. The canon of arrangement or *dispositio* or *taxis* addresses the sequential parts of oral rhetorical discourse and the arrangement of its chief arguments. While there was inconsistency in labeling the parts of a speech, six steps were most often accepted (Rhetorica ad Herennium, 1945: 1.3; Cicero, 1949: 6; Quintilian, 1943: 3.3): *exordium* or introduction; *narration* or statement of the background and facts of the matter; *division* or an enumeration of the issues to be discussed or a brief exposition of each point; *confirmation* or offering the arguments; *refutation* or the rebuttal of potential objections; and *peroration* or *conclusion*.

Central here is the premise that the audience must be studied: sequencing of the topic would therefore vary according to the audience or even the type of speech being presented. Flexibility, audience adaptation was dominant. Indeed, principles of arrangement moved between macro and micro suggestions at all levels of oral discourse, even within the three genre of oral discourse: forensic, deliberate, and epideictic. Moreover, the whole speech, each part of the speech, the arguments, and even the distribution of words within a sentence were a part of the more classical micro discussions (Rhetorica ad Herennium, 1945: 4.12).

As rhetoric positioned arrangement second after locating suitable arguments for persuasion, architectural composition or arrangement likewise claims in second position schematic design, the phase that follows basic conceptualization. Architectural composition arranges, organizes the ideas, concepts, contents, requirements, architectural components generated from Invention. It proceeds to produce an overall arrangement of plan and massing that begins to satisfy the aesthetic demands of a coherent visual form. Ultimately the chief goal here is the welding of discrete ideas and elements into a unified, persuasive whole.

In this phase a bank designer, for example, will be concerned, among other things, with the accommodation of the bank's spatial requirements, plus the arrangement of rooms, lobbies, and offices, including their access and adjacencies. Considered also will be the aesthetic experience of the customer moving through the main sequences of architectural space. Care will be taken, for example, that when one moves from the exterior, through the main entry and into the central banking area, this sequence of spatial experiences will be felt as pleasurable and meaningful. Function--for the external audience as well as the employee--is adapted to the customer (Britt, 1992).

Style. Of all the ancient canons, style--*lexis, elocutio*--received seemingly unending emphasis in Cicero's Orator, 1939, a third of his De oratore, 1942; the Rhetorica ad Herennium, 1945: 4; Aristotle's Rhetoric, 1932: 3; and Quintilian's Institutes, 1943: 9.10, later spawning a myriad of segmentations ultimately reaching a zenith in the late Middle Ages. A succinct explanation is that once the information had been gathered and organized, it was now time to put thought into words: "I will only give briefly my opinion, that it is impossible to achieve an ornate style without first procuring ideas and putting them into shape, and at the same time that no idea can possess distinction without lucidity of style" (Cicero, 1942: 3. 6.24). How? Via being clear, correct, and appropriate. Ornateness, a fourth precept, was the subject of interminable subdivisions and minute classifications, each seeking to provide dress for thought.

However, to attain clarity rhetoricians focused on sentences and words, desirable virtues in style, and types of style (the grand, the intermediate, and the low). All those intricacies of style shall not concern us here, rather we will focus briefly on the three perceptions of style as grounding for visual persuasion.

At the apex stood the grand style: lofty, concerned with extraordinary conceptions, heavily embellished with figures of speech. But note that while embellishment is an aim, figures of speech and figures of thought were also used to make ideas clear, (Aristotle, 1932: 3.5.-7) excite an audience to action (Cicero, 1939: 11.68-69), or as suggested by Quintilian such a style would be appropriate for the conclusion (1943: 12.10.61). Amplification is also used with grand style, to enlarge a thought with impressive figures (Rhetorica ad Herennium, 1945: 4.8.11).

At the bottom was the lowly or plain unadorned style. It was devoid of figures of speech, its goal was to make clear statements of fact in language which moved audiences by straightforward, everyday language through subtlety rather than forcefulness. It was the language of everyday life (D'Alton, 1931/1962).

In the middle was the intermediate or median style, characterized unflatteringly by Cicero as "a mean or moderate style which uses neither the intellectual acumen of the latter nor the lightening flashes of the former. It is related to both but has the excellencies of neither." (1939: 5.21). Not always clear in exposition by the ancients, we infer that this level of style borrowed from the other two styles.

Moreover, the canon of Style finds its counterpart in what is known as the design development phase of architecture. Design development follows overall compositional decision-making and focuses on the fine-scale forming and atonement of the architectural project. Chiefly concerned with stylistic issues, this phase looks at appropriate ornamentation, embellishment, and decoration; detailing and the design of joints; the choice of materials, textures, and colors; and the studied design of the building's interior and exterior elevations. Here a bank architect, for instance, will decide such things as whether the dominant material will be marble, concrete, glass or steel; what will work as the chief color schemes; and whether the general architectural style of the building will be more suitably high-tech, Postmodern classicist, or regional vernacular.

One notes that in terms of stylistic genera, formal monumentality in architecture corresponds to rhetoric's grand style, and vernacular forms are essentially the counterpart of the plain or subtle style. As with ancient classifications of style, polarities as grand and plain are more easily defined in architecture than the middle style where the criteria are less precise.

Memory. At first view this fourth and little discussed classical canon might seem to have little relevance to visual art and design. Originally it focused on retaining the speech once its substance had been mastered. Quintilian (1943: 12.2) and Cicero, (1942a: 2.8.350ff) explain in detail the Simonides of Ceos story, allegedly the inventor of the art of memory.⁴ Surprisingly, attentive study of this classical mnemotechic strategy reveals its concern with the spatial (and even architectural) character of the way we assimilate and retain knowledge.

Analogously, memory may be considered primarily a process of information storage and retrieval relevant to architectural design. Here memory parallels the basic task of the contract documents phase of architectural design that produces and assembles legal records. Written and oral communication ensure the delivered work will approximate the designers' original intent. As one of the most labor-intensive phases of the design process, it can become exceedingly complex for large projects.

Delivery. Cicero succinctly states the importance of giving life to the oration: "Delivery is the one dominant power in oratory," (1942: 3.56.213), or in another statement: the speaker "invests his speech with lucidity, brilliance, convincingness and charm not by his [words] but by changes of voice, by gestures and by glances, which will be most efficacious if they harmonize with the class of speech and conform to its effect and its variety" (Cicero, 1942: 7.25). At its simplest level, its study gave speakers hints on how to do well at the verbal and nonverbal level. Today this canon is taught in oral business communication classes.

Delivery in architecture essentially constitutes the physical execution of the design; it gives life in visual form. This last phase is carried out in construction or construction administration. Significant decisions about the eventual form of the work may be made in this phase if the designer and builder have a close working relationship, or, as is often true, if they happen to be one and the same person. This is especially true where hard-copy working drawings and specifications are kept relatively loose; in such a case many design decisions are either retrieved from memory and customary practice, or are improvised directly on site. Such a process is similar to an orator who, responding to on-going feedback from the audience, modifies the tone and emphasis of his or her speech during delivery.

Three Modes of Suasion

Once the speaker had the substance under control, it was time to focus on three modes influencing listeners: Ethos, Pathos, and Logos. In other words, it is reasonable to expect decisions to be made on the basis of reason; we also know that emotional and other factors influence receptivity of the speaker's persuasion. Three appeals form the basis for classical suasion.

Ethos. The ancients used Ethos to mean the credibility and favorable reaction which a speaker produced in listeners. Here the sender emphasized in the message and via him or herself good sense, good moral character, and good will (Aristotle, 1932: 2.1). An unknown speaker, for instance, must create that Ethos during a speech. How? A speaker communicates Ethos through, for instance, cues as the following: knowing the subject; displaying disdain for the unethical; suggesting a wide orbit of readings; using valid evidence and reasoning; displaying an understanding of the audience; suggesting good taste; or maintaining a consistent image. Indeed, the entire speech must give unfluctuating assurance that here is a good person speaking well.

Quintilian put the concept this way: "For he who would have all men trust his judgment as to what is expedient and honorable, should possess and be regarded as possessing genuine wisdom and excellence of character" (1943: 3.8.13). Today we approach the classical concept of ethos via a communicator establishing credibility, believability, with the consistent end of influencing an audience.

In architecture, the concept of Ethos extends to the building as well as to the client (customer) and designer. Ethos indicates internal character, both of the building and its makers. As such, Ethos tells us what internal traits and details may reasonably be expected of the entity being visually presented. A building's design establishes its Ethos or character, leading the viewer to anticipate from its visual presentation certain qualities, or to expect from its owner a particular behavior. In this way Ethos helps the viewer determine the building's appropriateness, that is, whether its inherent characteristics will match the customary preferences of the client's or viewer's context.

The architectural presentation of client Ethos works similarly: the building may act as a medium through which the institution establishes agreement or harmony with the values of the community. There is a conscious attempt to link the structure with the viewer, the client, the customer. Alternately, the building may be presented as objective evidence of the owner's (services, companies) character, visually reinforcing assertions of the owner's generosity, civic-mindedness, and general good will. Thus, in a bank building, for instance, Ethos suasion is largely at work. There, the austerity of classical forms was used for years in part to persuade the customer of

the sobriety and rectitude of the banking institution. There was, formerly, a conscious attempt to portray a consistent image of inherent strength.

Pathos. Here the emphasis is upon the audience: putting them in a certain frame of mind or mood, coupling emotion to a sender's rational content of a proposal. Among the ancients, Aristotle--even in seminal form--is at his best in analyzing the psychology of the audience: the circumstances in which an emotion is felt; the audience (their state of mind) toward whom it is felt; and the things which arouse it (Aristotle, 1932: 2.2-17). Cicero, not so complete as Aristotle, (1948: 2.27.114-115) and Quintilian (1943: 3.5.2) likewise see the value of feelings in persuading an audience.

In contrast to Ethos--a factor considered to develop from within the person and exhibited during a presentation--Pathos was assumed classically to originate from forces exterior to the human subject. This distinction, recognized in the ancient Greek language, today is acknowledged for instance in the German word for voice, temper, or mood: *Stimmung*, translatable as "a tuning." As a mode of architectural rhetoric, Pathos seeks to "attune" the customer's, client's, receiver's *Stimmung*, thus conditioning the way he or she resonates with the design represented by the institution. Some forms of architectural expression may seek to evoke feelings of awe, intimidation, or humility, as in some classic bank designs.

Other overt strategies seek to elicit moods and feelings associated with civic pride, public festivities, domestic contentment, or national patriotism. Particular design details--spires, banners, or monumental columns for example--may be enlisted to create the proper mood. In any case, a Pathos-oriented strategy, using the indirect means of imitative images or associative elements, attempts to change the spectator's mind-frame itself, and so modify his or her psychological receptiveness.

Logos. Third, this element of persuasion is summarily defined as the appeal to reason, as found in the structure of the suasive vehicle itself, either in a speech or a piece of artwork. Much of what we have noted earlier under Invention falls in this category. Briefly, Aristotle (1932: 1.3) more so than other ancients suggests that reasoning and its raw material evidence, fits under two processes of rational thinking: deductive and inductive analysis.

Used deductively, Logos suasion asks an audience to early accept a conclusion or thesis, then sequentially supports that thesis with evidence. Inductive reasoning progresses--from valid observations and evidence--to a terminal conclusion where the action to be taken or the proposed idea to be accepted is stated.

Architecture uses Logos suasion whenever it presents images of potential benefits, pleasures, comforts, or advantages to the viewer. Such presentation aims to dispose the viewer to make a certain choice or take a course of action. As Gill (1990: 4) observed, a bank building may effect an image of solid impregnability in an effort to persuade customers that their deposits will be secure. A building's "hi-tech" form often strives to convince observers that scientifically up-to-date methods and technologically efficient services can be found within.

Analogously, visual monumentality may try to evidence the praiseworthiness of its subject. With architecture, the very fact that a client has erected a large building may function as a logical sign of economic power and social prestige. Accordingly, tenancy in such a location (*locus*) may also signal prestige; thus it is

that firms and enterprises come to value a "good" address, the right street, the right center of activity.

We have argued that all three components of the communicative process are delineated in the above three modes: the communicator (source, Ethos); the audience (receivers, Pathos); and the suasive vehicle (medium, Logos). Additionally, each can be seen operating in the oral world of rhetoric or in the functional and aesthetic world of architecture. We now turn to specific examples which illustrate the use of rhetoric as applicable to visual persuasion: the bank building and shopping malls as exemplifying visual persuasion.

A BANK AS PERSUASIVE ARCHITECTURE

To get a better idea of how architectural rhetoric aids an institutional self in satisfying its perceived need to attract and hold customers, in giving the proper image to the outside world, in establishing rapport with a community, we can take a look at bank buildings as strategic persuasion.

Banks have one major resolve: in order to survive, banks generally must attract and keep depositors, plus they must draw solid borrowers who will repay profit-making loans. The visual rhetoric of architecture pragmatically functions to help potential depositors and borrowers reach a decision about the institution with which they will deal.

Nisbet (1990: 8) notes that even though it is created by a private organization, "bank architecture at the same time turns a public face to its community in a vigorous attempt to communicate, persuade, assure, impress, and convince."

Expanding on this need to assure and impress patrons, Gill (1990: 4) observes bank architecture undergoing a number of changes in suasory attire. Perhaps our most familiar image of American bank buildings was established almost 200 years ago by the classicist works of Benjamin Latrobe and William Strickland.⁵ In this Greco-Roman guise, architecture, through images of ancient imperial power, principally concerned itself with persuading potential and current depositors of the bank's security, stability, and authoritative competence. In classical rhetoric, this is the strategy of establishing a persuasive sense of character, or Ethos with the audience:

[Before the advent of the FDIC,] even in prosperous times...banks would fail and people's savings would be wiped out. This unfortunate possibility had to be disguised, if not expunged, by what amounted to cunning stagecraft. Whether a given bank was sound or unsound, it took care to put up what was literally a good front a facade that, whatever happened to lie behind it, proclaimed an impregnable fiscal integrity (Gill, 1990: 4).

While Greek and Roman forms were thus used to bolster customer confidence in the bank's solidity, they also conditioned consumer attitudes in other ways. Capitalizing on a puritanical bent in the American populace, the imperial grandeur of classical architecture deliberately presented an intimidating authoritativeness, and thus another important facet of the bank's Ethos. Austere monumentality was employed to create a clientele that would be a bit submissive and so perhaps less likely to question intensely the bankers' claims of competence.

Whether we approached a bank in order to deposit money or to borrow it, we were made to feel humbly grateful indeed, that we were allowed to cross the threshold of the arcanum at all was in itself a reason for congratulation. Passing between majestic stone pillars and then thorough mighty gilded bronze portals, we would find ourselves at last inside a lofty chamber....How lucky we were to be there! In an awed whisper, we would make our wants known and then hope for the best Gill (1990: 4)

The rhetorical Ethos effected by architecture in this way was stern, impenetrable, unmovable and resistant not only to supposed adversities, but also to the consumers' doubting inquiries. While this sober, severe image served the banker well enough through the nineteenth century and even a bit beyond, the twentieth century eventually inspired a new strategy for attracting and keeping depositors and borrowers. The image of the bank as an imperial temple, Gill (1990: 4) observes, changed over time. In place of austerity, conscious attempts were made to replace granite with flowers, walls with windows, stoicism with sauciness. In place of a cowed depositor passing carefully by on the outside, now that potential client could become a voyeur, quickly determining what was occurring inside.

Such an overt architectural technique of guilt-free seduction carried with it a latent idea: one could now come and do business in this financial edifice without worrying about visual intimidation. Customers were invited to willingly lower their inhibitions. The exterior and interior Ethos of the building had changed. Yet this free-love image of banking eventually, too, yielded to another: neoclassicism returned in a Postmodern incarnation. Architecture now embraced the stylistic strategies of parody and irony, two rhetorical figures typically used to give the target audience a sense of insulated superiority. For all its grandeur, states Gill (1990: 4), Postmodern neoclassicism "is nearly always an inferior work mocking a superior one in the name of paying it homage. The preposterous exaggeration of the scale on which it is designed and the over-ripe richness of the materials employed in its construction parody and display what may well be an unconscious contempt for the original upon which it is based."

Combined, the twentieth-century attitude of covert contempt for fiduciary rectitude, perhaps encouraged by architectural imagery, may mirror the behind the scenes financial disasters of the 1980's. Nothing prevents a persuader from using rhetoric for short-term strategies while neglecting the consideration of long-range consequences.

In any case, what is to be noted is that the visual persuasive appeals embodied in bank architecture roughly correspond with attitudes and behaviors exhibited by bankers and some of their major clients. Whatever the precise degree of causality, banking institutions, attempting to advance their self-conceived interests, use their architecture to carry out various rhetorical, persuasive aims.

The case of banks demonstrates that the visual rhetoric of architecture can influence public attitudes for commercial ends. It demonstrates several capabilities of architectonic and visual media: how they can be used to direct attention, to inculcate attitudes, to influence dispositions to act, and to fortify beliefs and concretize teachings.

A MALL AS PERSUASIVE ARCHITECTURE

As bank architecture seeks overtly or covertly to persuade, so too does the conglomerate architecture found in shopping malls. There pathos-oriented deliberative rhetoric (persuasion in the future) in architecture aims to create a total ambient mood or atmosphere that rouses the target audience to action and decision. Via this approach, the visual form of the architecture may seek, for instance, to relax clientele inhibitions or stimulate recreational activities. In some cases, the architecture-evoked mood itself may be what the observer primarily seeks to acquire.

We encounter this phenomenon perhaps more often than we realize. As Chase (1991: 216) observes, pathos-oriented deliberative suasion constitutes the key feature of what he terms the primary level of consumerist architecture. Primary level buildings are designed as "an integral part of the experience of consuming the goods and services offered inside. These buildings enhance the experience of consuming the product associated with the building." Under that concept are amusement theme parks: Disney Land, Disney World, and Knot's Berry Farm serve as canonical examples. Older examples include the lavish movie palaces and burlesque theaters of the 1930's, such as New York's Radio City Music Hall. Mood and fantasy figure as key ingredients in the packages being sold in such complexes.

Primary consumer buildings, such as resort hotels or gambling casinos, must offer a more complex and often more intense experiential package so that their public spaces, as well as their facades, must convey a special ambience. Consumer buildings at this level carry a broader range of representational meaning than does corporate architecture....[Make]-believe and altered identity is part of what these buildings are selling. They must appeal to their potential user's emotions and to their fantasy lives, sensations, and experiences presumably not available elsewhere in the consumer's surroundings. The consumer's most important experiences are not an integral part of life; rather, they must be purchased (Chase, 1991: 217).

It is relatively easy to understand how such purchasing of fantasy experiences became important for Depression-era audiences. We are less aware of how the flattening and dulling of our current physical environment now generates similar emotional needs. Themed shopping malls now form perhaps the most visible, everyday examples of the mood-enhanced consumerist architecture analyzed by Chase. For many Americans, shopping for pleasure has become a pre-occupation, an experience which removes them from the mundane; wandering through malls surpasses in excitement other aspects of their everyday life.

Attempting to capitalize on this sensed need for visual persuasion, developers in Minnesota have created its ultimate American manifestation, the Mall of America, colloquially known as "the *megamall*." This piece of mercantile exuberance descends from an even larger one in Edmonton, Canada; in both cases the developers have calculatedly tried to "create a space that can make the megamall a destination, an idealized community, fun" (Karlen, 1992: B-1). The complex in Bloomington, Minnesota encloses a space that stands as "a 78-acre full-sensory smorgasbord of consumerism whose indoor vistas, its builders hope, will redeem Mr. Gruen's [the architect responsible for the invention of the shopping mall concept] misbegotten dream" (Karlen, 1992: B-1). The mall uses various architectural maneuvers (visual and aural persuasion) to retain its captive audience, arouse their spending mood, and prevent shopper burn-out.

To beat back claustrophobia, the mall's innards have been remade wherever possible to make shoppers feel as if they were outside. The most notable of these efforts is the mall's seven-acre Camp Snoopy. It sits in a central courtyard and rises from ground level to the fourth floor, stocked with 400 trees, 30,000 plants, a mountain and a four-story waterfall.

Upstairs, around the height of the highest peak on Camp Snoopy's roller coaster, are dozens of restaurants, both fast and fancy, as well as an assortment of nightclubs and a 14-screen movie house (Karlen, 1992: B-1).

The design attempts to create a self-contained quasi-utopian town center, an almost autonomous village immune to urban strife and North American winters. Underscoring this utopian community theme are rumored plans for incorporating a hospital, church, and public school into the retail complex. Even without these additions, the mall's designers have played up its village-like atmosphere, much achieved through visual persuasion.

[The] developers had to configure the mall's foreboding caverns to seem somehow inviting. So the complex was chopped into four winding corridors, each with a different theme. Matching their mood to a corridor, shoppers can start, say, in the gazebo- and wooden trellis-lined North Garden, the hallway billed as Main Street U.S.A. (Karlen, 1992: B-3).

So far, this architectural effort to inspire a mood for frenzied shopping appears successful. Wintertime crowds promise to be even more enraptured than summertime hordes apparently already are.

As bodies ebbed, flowed and banged up against one another during opening week, shopping proved a near-hallucinatory experience. From the epicenter near Camp Snoopy, it felt like an ecstatic mall rave, the staccato *ka-ching* of thousands of cash registers serving as the high-frequency techno-beat for hundreds of thousands of Midwest shoppers (Karlen, 1992: B-3).

The parent West Edmonton Mall in Alberta enjoys perhaps even greater success; transcending the role of a retail complex, it seems to function almost as a therapeutic leisure and health resort. As well as serving as a "temple of consumerism," the West Edmonton Mall provides an "escape from ordinary life while structuring how the body and mind are recharged" (Karlen, 1992: B-3). Replete with lush foliage, abundant flowing streams, and even tropical wildlife, the mall's interior goes so far as to incorporate reflective materials "deliberately chosen to give the illusion of permanent sunshine," a quality relatively exotic in the semi-arctic winters of Edmonton (Davis, 1991: 4). The developers apparently understood rightly that an atmosphere of the exotic and the bizarre evoked the proper consumer mood, and thus provided the key to high profits. As shopping has become one way to attempt escape from the drabness of suburbia, the more fantastical the escape route, the more intense becomes the shopping.

The architect, respectful of orthodox decorative traditions, was asked to provide "a sugar-coated dream world where we can shop, play, and experience danger and delight without once stepping outside; where

we can change experiences like flipping T.V. channels. . . where the plastic credit card is the open sesame to every experience"
(Hemingway, cited in Davis, 1991: 5).

The escape route is designed to be essentially a one-way experience for as long as possible. Each of the fifty-eight entrances into the Edmonton mall presents an unusual sight luring visitors into the elusive vortex of the interior. Once the consumer has been thus captured, architectural elements "are deliberately manipulated to give the impression of hermetic completeness, rendering the world beyond superfluous....And like a conventional shopping mall, the architect makes it as difficult as possible to find an exit" (Davis, 1991: 5).

In sum, the designers and developers at Edmonton have made a thoroughgoing effort to engage all the personal, emotional factors that motivate visitors to a shopping mall (Dawson, 1983). As a result, this Mother of All shopping malls, along with its Minnesota offspring, amply demonstrates the rhetorical power of architectural mood-creation--i.e., pathos suasion--to condition and stimulate the buying behavior of an experience-hungry, fantasy-starved public.

DISCUSSION

1. Both rhetoric and architecture are inherently purposeful. The rhetoric of the ancient world moved on the wheels of words, specifically giving life to those words through the oral medium. Architecture is persuasion through things: creating visual images through the medium of sight in place of sounds. Core to both is the desire to influence, to move an audience, or customers, or clients to accept faith in the past (forensic rhetoric), the future (deliberative rhetoric) and the present (epideictic rhetoric). Listeners know that someone speaking with them does so out of a sense of purpose, if nothing more than establishing phatic bonding that suggests both are humans.

Rhetoric, as used in our statement, is inherently strategic: it has a definite end (Kellerman, 1992). Such a theory stresses the intentions behind a design, the situation or audience context to which it responds, and the means by which it attempts to realize its intentions. Put briefly, classical and modern rhetorical theory, and for that matter business communication, marketing, ad agencies, PR strategies, look at design of a physical structure or a speech or a strategic marketing plan as always motivated. Design as motivated must involve a maker or agent with a purpose (a source), a context or scene which must be addressed or engaged (a receiving audience), and an act or agency through which the purpose is to be carried out (a medium).

Classical and modern rhetoric seek to track the ways in which source, receiver, and medium typically link up; how typical persuasive acts engage typical contexts for typical human purposes. By doing so, rhetorical theory never assumes architectural design to be accidental, pointless, inert, passive, frivolous, or purely subjective. Rather, design is focused: every design is connected to matters of import for someone or some group applicable to some target audience.

2. We maintain that visual forms of persuasion carry strong, if poorly understood, influences. In the case of architecture especially, uninformed customers are unaware of the persuasive effort behind the scenes to bring about a desired visual impact. Viewers, customers, clients, passersby before a building are less aware of an

overt purpose in an inanimate structure; indeed, their level of awareness of being persuaded may not rise beyond an unintelligible, unknown reaction. But quietly, and unknown to many, the structure is not designed without some motive in mind.

Yet for many people, twentieth-century art and architecture, with their relentless avant-garde stress, seem indecipherable subjects. Indeed, modern architectural forms do not regularly elicit a feeling of spontaneous engagement. Unsuspected, for instance, is the feeling that what one spontaneously thinks of a piece of architecture is much less important than what one is supposed to think. The full comprehension of architecture seems to many to be the exclusive preserve of the art connoisseur.

Nonetheless architecture, by and large, is public art, public persuasion. Buildings, unless they are shielded within restricted, private estates, are designed for public view, a general audience, potentially including the full range of spectators from plebeian to elite. In the same way, much of business communication targets a public audience. The ad agency, the creative arm of that agency, the PR department of an organization, the internal marketing department, and the business communicator all play a role in preserving and fostering a desired image, attracting a desired client, eliciting a desired response from that public audience.

3. Architecture serves as one of the chief media for making appeals to a public audience. Indeed, any visual persuasion at such a large scale is rarely directed at a specific individual. Thus while a speech is impermanent, directed at a specific group at a specific time on a specific topic, a building has more enduring permanence. It is there: daily, monthly, yearly. As such a permanent fixture, a commercial structure, for example, shoulders the task of instilling continuing confidence in its present customer while at the same time seeking to add new ones. One need only review the structural changes which occur in buildings, interior and exterior, as a new executive group often in conjunction with a new ad agency takes charge: everything from signage on that structure to cosmetic or sweeping alterations attempt to convey a new ethos, a new image, a new mission. Buildings visually represent the results of a marketing, persuasive, business communication strategy. Shelter is but one of a building's purposes. So too a building may communicate a company's ethos, its culture, its mission, its user friendliness. A bank, for instance, even temporarily doing business out of a trailer does not communicate stability.

Said differently, both visual and oral rhetoric are the art of getting done what the sender wishes to get done. Because of persuasion's ubiquity, this ongoing rhetorical process can and should be understood as determinant of much of our cultural life. As part of that life, architecture, a preeminent part of public presentation, constitutes one of the major vehicles for visual rhetoric and nonverbal suasion.

When looking at architectural design rhetorically, and at what business students study under any rubric termed communication, we must recognize that both are serious, considered work. They are serious not only because of the high competence demanded for their practice, but also because of the calculated and ultimately inescapable effects directed at their intended audience: the general public that must daily view and inhabit buildings as well as encounter oral and written persuasion.

4. Both business communication and visual rhetoric have their foundations in ancient rhetoric. Earlier (Hildebrandt, 1988) it was suggested that the ancient world

focused on oral communication. It was the medium of expression, the dominant vehicle to move thoughts from a sender to specific receivers. The classical, and modern canons of rhetoric, from initial location of persuasive material to its final presentation to an audience, tacitly occupy a place in business schools teaching business communication, marketing, or strategic planning. Within those academic classifications rarely are these classical principles recited, much less known. Nor is it our intent to force them. But they are there nevertheless, simply under new labels.

Visual persuasion as seen in buildings and even, more particularly, in real estate properties such as malls depends inherently on some of the same persuasive tools as seen in oral persuasion. Purposeful composition steps are used by architects, or for that matter, any creators using visual talents to influence people. As such, they too follow rhetorical principles similar to those of oratory to sway audiences but visually.

Persuasion is infrequently overt in either oral or visual communication. We know the phrases which quickly come to mind: "it's too blatant;" "he comes on too strong;" "that's gaudy, gross;" "you're pushing me." Thus speakers covertly locate arguments thought to be the most convincing; use a delivery which adapts to the size, friendliness, or unfriendliness of an audience; strategically position arguments within a speech so as to produce maximum effect; consciously select attire in sync with the audience; and numerous other conscious rhetorical decisions. All these strategies are covertly planned, and if done well do not call attention to themselves.

Similarly, businesses give architects edicts that the building or a series of franchise buildings around the world should "represent" the company. It is not unusual for even such micro details as the curvilinearity of an eve spout to be discussed, or the degree of openness of the building to allow a voyeuristic public to peer inside. In brief, persuasive elements such as user friendliness, openness to the customer, creativity of the company, solidness for the future are concepts some companies wish expressed through buildings. Again these motives are covertly planned, yet are to be given visibleness through a building's public appearance.

Consequently, in developing appeals architecture also uses rhetorical principles, similar modes and structures as founded by ancient orally focused rhetoricians. Rhetoric is the discipline of persuasive engagement, the art of linking one's personal or corporate goals with those of a receiver. Architectural design for buildings does no less.

FOOTNOTES

¹What Burke means by pentad is the relationship between the act, that is, name what took place in thought and deed; the scene or naming of the background of the act and the situation in which it occurred; the agent: what kind of persons or person performed the act; what agency or instruments were used by the agent; and the purpose (1945: xv).

²Aristotle--and echoed by other classical rhetoricians and those following after--defined three classes of persuasive discourse, each connected with a particular type of audience and temporal perspective (1932: 1.3.1-6). One genus is termed forensic or judicial; its concern is past fact, such as issues adjudicated in a court of law.

A second genus involves future actions and attitudes--an attitude being in essence a disposition toward action. Termed variously deliberative, political or advisory rhetoric, this second genus typifies the discourse of legislative assemblies and deliberative bodies. Where forensic rhetoric concerned itself with assessing what would be fair and just, deliberative rhetoric focuses predominantly on deciding what course of action should be expedient, useful, or advantageous.

The third genus is epideictic, demonstrative, or ceremonial rhetoric (also termed declamatory, panegyric or laudatory), is discourse that takes present values, ideas, and attitudes as its basic subject matter. Here existing cultural attitudes and beliefs are reinforced as they are highlighted in assigning praise, criticism, and evaluations of worth. Here, too, communicative discourse aims to entertain, to inspire, and to intensify communal cohesion. Where audiences for the first two rhetorical genera consist of past and future actions, spectators and citizens with no official decision-making capacity from the audiences for demonstrative discourse.

In the field of architecture, discussions of prior events are perhaps exclusively relegated to historical analyses and essays. Architecture as a visual and material medium rarely attempts to weigh the fairness or equity of past actions and thus seldom can be said to engage in forensic persuasion. Rather, the visual persuasion that we regularly encounter in architecture usually seeks either to influence our future attitudes and courses of action or to reinforce our present values and ideas.

Bank architecture, for instance, is directed toward encouraging deposits and borrowing, and toward dissuading panicky withdrawals; the rhetoric of bank architecture well illustrates the deliberative genus of discourse. Alternately (or additionally), monumental buildings--and built monuments of all kinds--virtually by definition comprise straightforward examples of ceremonial--thus *epideictic*, architecture. Similarly, religious architecture, inasmuch as it reassures believers and helps deepen faith, also functions in this demonstrative, epideictic capacity. Indeed, it is perhaps here in the epideictic that we find architecture's most important, pervasive, and inherent rhetorical use.

³Those interested in pursuing the inner workings of the syllogism or its near relative the enthymeme can find it in symbolic logic courses, or in a potpourri of articles: (Shorey, 1924; Palmer, 1934; McBurney, 1936; Solmsen, 1941; Bitzer, 1959; Lanigan, 1974; Conley, 1983) and others.

A traditional example in most introductory logic books explains the syllogism as the following:

- 1) All men are mortal
- 2) Socrates is a man
- 3) Therefore, Socrates is mortal

Oversimplified, here the major premise is "all," the minor premise is "Socrates," and the conclusion from these two premises is signalled through terms as therefore, hence, consequently, so, or thus.

An enthymeme, usually omits the major premise and is often a probability rather than a fact as in premise one above:

1) Now human nature is always fallible, and to meet with some unpredictable mishap is not the fault of the victim.... But when we err with our eyes open..., then everyone agrees that we have nobody to blame but ourselves.

2) It follows therefore that if a people's failures are due to ill-fortune, they will be granted pity,... but if to their own folly, then all men of sense will blame and reproach them.

3) Certainly in this case the Greeks would have every reason to find fault with the Epirots [who fully knew the dangers of their decision] (Polybius, 1979: 2.7).

Here statement 1) is a general, common-sense assumption or principle. Statement 3), the conclusion, brings that principle down to a specific case, here involving grievances the Greeks had against their inprudent former allies, the Epirots.

⁴Briefly, the story is that a man called Simonides of Ceos was attending a banquet. And during the banquet he was called away for an urgent message. While he was absent, the banquet hall collapsed and all the guests were killed, making it hard to identify them. Simonides identified each guest because he recalled where each had been sitting. Out of this mnemonic demonstration arose the art of memory: that recollection is assisted by impressing places or localities on the mind. Some modern mnemonic techniques classes move on the same principle.

⁵Benjamin Latrobe and William Strickland, early 19th century American architects known for introducing the Greek Revival style into bank architecture.

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