

Il Cielo sulla Terra: le Corrispondenze di Swedenborg nel Piano di Chicago

Heaven on Earth: Swedenborgian Correspondences in the Plan of Chicago¹

Daniel Hudson Burnham, l'architetto e urbanista di Chicago, è conosciuto per il suo lavoro sull'edificio alto per uffici americano; per la costruzione della World's Columbian Exposition del 1893; e per i suoi piani urbanistici per Washington, Cleveland, San Francisco e Chicago. È anche ricordato per la citazione "Non fate piani piccoli." Ciò per cui non è ricordato è la sua fede swedenborgiana, né come abbia influenzato il suo lavoro. Emanuel Swedenborg era uno scienziato svedese e ingegnere che, a partire dalla metà degli anni '40 del 1700, ha subito un risveglio spirituale. Il focus del suo lavoro è cambiato per gli aspetti mistici dell'esperienza umana. Egli credeva che tutte le chiese cristiane fossero morte ed avessero bisogno di una rivalizzazione e che la chiave per essa si trovasse in una nuova interpretazione delle Scritture. I suoi seguaci fondarono la Chiesa della Nuova Gerusalemme, a volte indicata come Chiesa Nuova o la Chiesa Swedenborgiana.

Daniel Hudson Burnham, the Chicago architect and city planner, is recognized for his work on the development of American tall office building; for the construction of World's Columbian Exposition of 1893; and for his city plans for Washington, D.C., Cleveland, San Francisco, and Chicago. He is also remembered for the quote "Make no little plans." What is not recalled is his Swedenborgian faith nor how it influenced his work. Emanuel Swedenborg was a Swedish scientist and engineer who, beginning in the mid 1740s, underwent a spiritual awakening. The focus of his work changed to the mystical aspects of human experience. He believed that all Christian churches were dead and in need of revitalization and the key to revitalization was to be found in a new interpretation of scripture. His followers founded the Church of the New Jerusalem, sometimes referred to as the New Church or the Swedenborgian Church.



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Parole chiave: **Burnham; Piano di Chicago; Swedenborg; Nuova Gerusalemme; Corrispondenza; Usi**

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Daniel Hudson Burnham, the American architect and city planner, is possibly best known for the quote attributed to him: "Make no little plans." He is well known for his work on the development of the tall office building in Chicago with his early partner John W. Root; for the organization and construction of World's Columbian Exposition of 1893; and for his city plans for Washington, D.C., Cleveland, San Francisco, and Chicago.² What is not so well known is how his Swedenborgian faith influenced his work, especially his 1909 *Plan of Chicago*. Burnham's encompassing large-scale view was related to his religious beliefs that posited the correspondence of the physical realm to that of spiritual, and Burnham's planning work sought to make that correspondence manifest.

Swedenborg

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) was a Swedish scientist and mystic. A Lutheran, he was called the Buddha of the north by D.T. Suzuki, and by others the Leonardo da Vinci of his era. Although most people know little or nothing about Swedenborg today, he was well known in his own day and throughout the nineteenth century. His ideas influenced American artists Hiram Powers and George Innes, and American architects

John Root and Louis Sullivan, as well as Daniel Burnham.

Swedenborg's early scientific studies included chemistry and physics, and his engineering work centered on mines and canals. Beginning in the mid 1740s and continuing into the 1750s, Swedenborg underwent a spiritual awakening and the focus of his work changed to the more mystical aspects of human experience. He sought to understand the nature of the human soul and find its location in the human body. From this specific search he developed a generalized theory that all external physical form was generated and sprang from an internal spiritual origin. This became an essential tenet of his writings. The most important part of this spiritual emergence was Swedenborg's belief that he had communicated with angels and experienced revelations that gave him insight into the celestial realm. Swedenborg interpreted these experiences as a message from God that he was to deliver. He believed that all Christian churches were dead and in need of revitalization and the key to revitalization was to be found in a new interpretation of scripture. Here it is important to note that Swedenborg's emphasis on hermeneutics influenced Burnham's interpretation of the physical world as spiritually significant.³

Swedenborg was prolific in turning his revelations into prose. Between 1749-

56 he published his eight-volume *Arcana Coelestia*, published in English in 12 volumes as *Secrets of Heaven* from 1783–1806. He followed that with *Heaven and Hell* (1758, translated 1778), *New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* (1758, 1780), *Last Judgment* (1758, 1788), *Divine Love and Wisdom* (1763, 1788), *Divine Providence* (1764, 1790), *Revelation Unveiled* (1766, 1791), and others. Based on his extensive writings, his followers founded the Church of the New Jerusalem, sometimes referred to as the New Church or the Swedenborgian Church.⁴ The Church of the New Jerusalem is named for the heavenly city of the second coming described in The Revelation to John, more commonly known as the Book of Revelation.⁵

Burnham's Swedenborgianism

While we may not readily call to mind Burnham's religious beliefs, those who knew him understood that it was an essential part of his character. For instance, in his *Autobiography of an Idea*, Louis Sullivan remembers Burnham as:

a sentimentalist, a dreamer, a man of fixed determination and strong will — no doubt about that — of large, wholesome, effective presence, a shade pompous, a mystic — a Swedenborgian — a man who readily opened his heart if one were sympathetic ... He liked men of heart

as well as brains. That there was so much loveliness in nature, so much hidden beauty in the human soul, so much of joy and uplifting in the arts that he who shut himself away from these influences and immured himself in sordid things forfeited the better half of life. It was too high a price to pay, he said. He averred that romance need not die out; that there must still be joy to the soul in doing big things in a big personal way, devoid of the sordid.⁶

It is Sullivan, too, who reminds us that, from the outset of his career, Burnham strove to obtain big projects for his firm. Sullivan associates this with Burnham's emulation of the contemporary practices of large business corporations, "for in its tendencies toward bigness, organization, delegation and intense commercialism, he sensed the reciprocal workings of his own mind."⁷ This is one of the underlying dualities of Burnham. As Swedenborg was both an engineer and a seer, Burnham was, as one colleague put it, a visionary with sound business judgment.⁸

Burnham's parents were well-known Swedenborgians in the New England and upstate New York religious communities, and his maternal grandfather was a minister in the New Church. When the family moved to Chicago, his parents helped found the New-Church Society there. As a child, Burnham went to both public and Swedenborgian

schools; Snow's Swedenborgian Academy in Chicago, and later the New Church School in Waltham, Massachusetts. He was also tutored for university entrance exams by the Reverend Tilly B. Hayward of Massachusetts.⁹

As a young adult, Burnham joined the Swedenborgian Church and gave thought to entering the ministry, but instead found his calling in architecture. He wrote to his mother about his career choice, describing architecture as the "striving after the beautiful and useful laws God has created to govern his material universe." Burnham believed that the study of architecture would "open [my] mind more and more to the Great Architect of the Universe the more I study it in simplicity of mind and ask Him to help me."¹⁰ Burnham related his discipline to the laws of the material universe created by God. Even as he was rising in the profession, distracted by work commitments and ambitiously building his firm, he wrote to his mother that he could not live "without a steady religious life."¹¹ Ultimately, he was not a regular church attender, but he read Swedenborg throughout his life, sometimes holding services or readings at his house.¹²

Burnham's spirituality was evident to Edward H. Bennett. Burnham's protégé and coauthor of the *Plan of Chicago* (Fig.1), Bennett worked closely with Burnham on the design of the Chicago parks

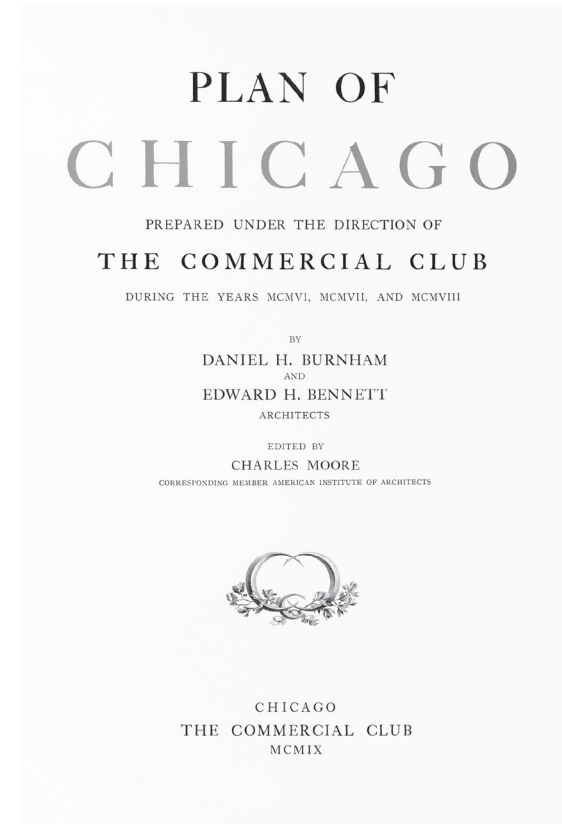


Fig. 1 - Title page of the 1909 *Plan of Chicago* [*Plan of Chicago*, title page]

fieldhouses.¹³ He described Burnham as “a blazing human spirit of pure gold ... [who] flooded [my] life with its warmth and inspiring faith for years.”¹⁴ He recalled their spiritual discussions and Burnham’s belief that men were at their best when they channeled some higher force.¹⁵ After visiting a hospitalized Burnham, Bennett noted that “[w]e talked of Swedenborg or rather I listened to him discourse on the subject and came away strengthened in purpose.”¹⁶ According to Bennett, the “laws of spiritual correspondence were often in [Burnham’s] mind;” that he believed “in the infinite possibilities of material expression of the spiritual” and “consciously or unconsciously no great work can have been conceived without a sense of an underlying spiritual meaning.”¹⁷ Burnham himself linked his plan for San Francisco to Swedenborg’s idea of “correspondence.” Bennett recalled that while they working on that plan, he had seen Burnham trace “the correspondence of spiritual powers and ... municipal powers as indicated in the physical lay-out.”

Therefore, in order to understand how Burnham’s religious beliefs related to his planning activities, two of Swedenborg’s concepts must be introduced, *correspondence* and *uses*. Correspondence relates to Burnham’s work, especially his planning work, and the meaning he invested in it. Uses concerns Burnham’s attitude

toward his work, his values and motivations.

Correspondence

Swedenborg believed that when he communicated with angels, they had revealed to him the divine structure of the universe and the organization of the spiritual realm. He also believed there was a correspondence, a meaningful connection, between the various planes of being, and that everything we perceive in nature symbolizes something in the spiritual world.¹⁸ Correspondence is Swedenborg’s theory of the relationship of the natural (or material or physical) world to that of the spiritual realm. He believed that “everything outward and visible has an inward and spiritual cause.”¹⁹ He wrote:

*The whole natural world corresponds to the spiritual world ... It must be understood that the natural world springs from and has permanent existence from the spiritual world, precisely like an effect from its effecting cause.*²⁰

In the spiritual world, the character of the surroundings corresponds to the states of mind of the inhabitants and in some way is created by them. In the natural world, that which corresponds to the divine order is able to manifest spiritual goodness and convey that spiritual goodness to the inhabitants.

In the spiritual realm, Swedenborg identified three heavens: the innermost, most perfect or third heaven; an intermediate or second heaven; and an outermost or first heaven. Beyond the outermost heaven is the world of spirits, and beyond that is hell with its three divisions. The concentric configuration of his description is pronounced and its analogy with our solar system makes it clear.²¹ Both the spiritual and material realms have a sun at the center. The Lord is the sun in the spiritual world, radiating divine love (heat) and divine wisdom (light). This corresponds to the sun in our natural world, whose heat and light are merely physical emanations.²² The spiritual exists on a different plane and is made of a different substance.

In terms of human production, the goal was to produce the highest, most noble representations that would elevate, refine, and purify the mind. One such vehicle for the spiritual was beauty in art and architecture.²³ When the natural (or material) world is formed by people to more closely resemble the spiritual one and when people live according to heavenly doctrines then, and only then will the holy city, the New Jerusalem, come down to earth.²⁴

As an architect, Burnham saw the plan as a vehicle of correspondence between this material realm and the spiritual one, and that it need not be limited to the concentric plan of heaven. He wrote of the correspondence

between the design of the Court of Honor at the World's Columbian Exposition (Fig. 2) and the vision of heaven in the New Testament's The Revelation to John.²⁵

Burnham, as Director of Works, had control over almost everything at the Fair, as it was commonly known. He supervised the design, construction, engineering, and landscaping. He also helped to make possible the World's Parliament of Religions at the Fair by a direct gift and by raising subscriptions. According to his first biographer, Charles Moore, he had hoped that the religious congress would "bring about, if not a universal creed, certainly a universal code of morals," applicable to all.²⁶ The World's Parliament of Religions brought together representatives from many faiths, including Catholicism, Protestant denominations, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism, Shintoism, and Confucianism, and introduced Bahaim to the United States.

Many visitors to the Fair called it the Celestial City, the Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem. Writers at the time also made this analogy, and it seems to have been one that struck a chord with Fair goers.²⁷ For instance, Frances Hodgson Burnett made the point in her book *Two Little Pilgrims' Progress*, that the design of the White City (as the Court of Honor was called) represented an earthly realization of John Bunyan's



Fig. 2 - Court of Honor of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, Chicago [Wikipedia Commons]

Celestial City in *The Pilgrim's Progress*.²⁸ The authors of a book of photographs of the Fair remarked that its builders "must have been very near to God."²⁹ And a character in one of the number of novels that referred to the Fair thought that the builders "believed in God and put Him and their enlightenment from Him into what they did."³⁰

It was not only in the popular press that such a heavenly allusion was made. Charles Eliot Norton, Harvard University Professor of Fine Arts, also saw the possibility of the parallel, but posed it as a question. He saw that the Fair was "full of material promise." But:

*Was it full also of spiritual promise? Did the way through it lead to the Celestial City? Was it, indeed, but the type and promise of the New Jerusalem, or was it rather like the great city of the Book of Revelation, full of 'the merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones...'*³¹

Norton himself had no sure answer but another did. Elizabeth Burnham, Daniel's mother, "saw in it a vision of the New Jerusalem," in the working together of artists and capitalists to create this wondrous city.³² And Burnham herself wrote a sermon on the Court of Honor, describing its correspondence with heaven as described in The Revelation to John, II: The Prophetic

Visions.³³

Burnham's sermon repeats verses from Revelation and after each responds with a verse of his own relating it to the Fair. Burnham introduces it with: "Before closing this door forever, let us look at the spiritual import of this beautiful court of honor, and see how it is portrayed in heaven." This is followed by Rev. 4:1, in which St. John sees "a door opened in heaven." Burnham follows this with "All who entered the Court of Honor, especially after dark, saw this door opened in heaven." This pattern is continued for all eleven verses. Following Rev. 4:2, Burnham identifies the throne as the Administration building, and the one sitting on it as "the Unity of power to produce and preserve all that is beautiful, elevating, uplifting, which is true of this Court of Honor." Here Burnham makes the identification of this "unity" with that which is divine.³⁴

Revelation 4:6 speaks of "a sea of glass like unto crystal" before the throne, and surrounded by four beasts. Burnham responds that the Grand Basin is such a beautiful sea; and that the four beasts are "the four great buildings, the Manufactures, the Agricultural, the Machinery and the Electricity." In response to Rev. 4:7, Burnham links the Manufactures Building to the lion, "leading all in size and strength." The calf Burnham links with the Agriculture Building, a "type of food and sacrifice." The

"beast with the face as a man" is associated with the Machinery Hall, "where the faculties of Intelligence are especially required." Finally, the eagle is linked to the Electricity Building.³⁵ After Rev. 4:9 Burnham speaks of the "infinite and eternal" power that creates beauty. And after Rev. 4:11 Burnham, speaks of the presence of God in "that which is beautiful and uplifting," and explains that "the same power which created all things, has created this scene, never-to-be-forgotten..."³⁶

It is very clear that, for Burnham, the creation of the Fair had a divine aspect, and that the men who made the Fair were channeling a higher power. Burnham would later say that:

*our souls were played upon by a higher hand, and the outward forms we built were expressions of enduring, everlasting law ... The contemplation of the expression of law is good for man ... Therefore let the masses often see the peristyles and waterways and be set longing for a constant life consonant with such manifestations of the beauty of the face of the creator.*³⁷

The overwhelming (that is not to say unanimous) response to the Fair's beauty and harmony reinforced Burnham's ideas on the ability of architecture to represent and manifest universal laws.

Reporters, without such overt references to the divine, did note that the Fair seemed to have an effect on the behavior of Fair goers. One writer observed of the crowd:

*They stroll through the crowded halls, glancing casually at some striking object and then yielding to the invincible fascination of the exterior, wander by the lake and the lagoons, returning again and again to the entrancing Court, which satisfies the unspoken aspirations of the soul for unattainable beauty and will be forever luminous in memory.*³⁸

Many others observed the effect of Fair on the conduct of the “commonplace crowd,” which was remarked to be “orderly and well-behaved,” that is to say, possessing “hitherto uncommon characteristics.” Credited with elevating the conduct of Fair goers and arousing “their higher consciousness,” the Fair was judged to have provided an artistically and morally uplifting environment. That the Fair seemed to promote positive feelings and behavior also made it important from the social point of view that design could promote a better society.³⁹

People had found themselves drawn to the order, the unity, the beauty of these forms, perhaps without knowing why. Burnham understood that the Court of

Honor in this physical realm corresponded to John’s description of heaven. It manifested spiritual goodness and had an effect on those who experienced it.

Again, we know from Bennett that Burnham believed “in the infinite possibilities of material expression of the spiritual,” and that these “laws of spiritual correspondence were often in his mind.”⁴⁰ We know that Burnham himself linked his plan for San Francisco to Swedenborg’s idea of correspondences. In the *Plan of Chicago* we can expect to find similar correspondences.⁴¹

Burnham included in the *Plan of Chicago* Eugene Hénard’s diagrams of the essential configurations of Paris, Moscow, London and Berlin. The Paris diagram (Fig. 3), with its concentric rings, most closely resembles Swedenborg’s description of heaven.⁴² Burnham remarks in the *Plan* that “the universal mind recognizes” in Paris “that complete articulation which satisfies the craving for good order and symmetry in every part.”⁴³ The phrase “universal mind” indicating, I would argue, that Burnham is proposing a Swedenborgian correspondence between this and the spiritual realm, and that he sees in the diagrams evidence of Swedenborg’s divine configuration in the historical record in the plans of the Western world’s most important cities.

Appearing shortly after the Hénard

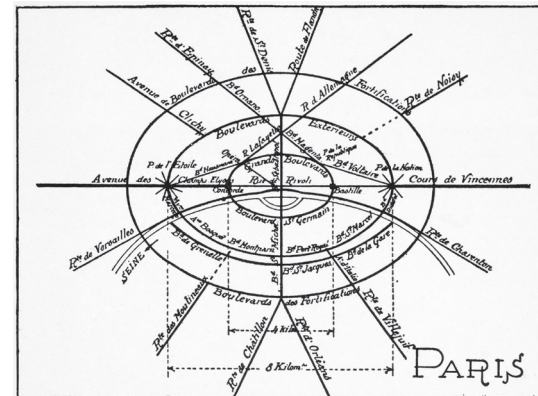


Fig. 3 - Eugene Hénard's theoretical diagram of Paris [*Plan of Chicago*, fig. XCVII]

diagrams in the *Plan of Chicago* is the plan of the new Chicago (Fig. 4), depicting the concentric configuration with encircling routes and color variation emphasizing the different territories. This plan, it seems not unreasonable to conclude, represents the concordance of the Chicago plan not only with that of Paris, but also the correspondence of the new Chicago with the three heavens of Swedenborg's description. This is the inscription of divine order on Chicago.

The motivating factor behind Burnham's commitment to remaking this world to be in correspondence with that of the spiritual realm is the second of Swedenborg's principles, uses.

Uses

"Uses" indicates the Swedenborgian principle of service to one's community.⁴⁴ Uses, in many instances, could be one's employment. To be "in uses" through one's work means that instead of paying attention only to one's own benefit, one would instead attend to the larger sense of the work and how such work is mutually beneficial to the worker in providing a living, and to the larger community in providing for its needs. Uses could be the pursuit of one's work as long as the focus was not on individual gain, but on benefit to the community.⁴⁵ For Swedenborgians, it is important to "discharge with fidelity

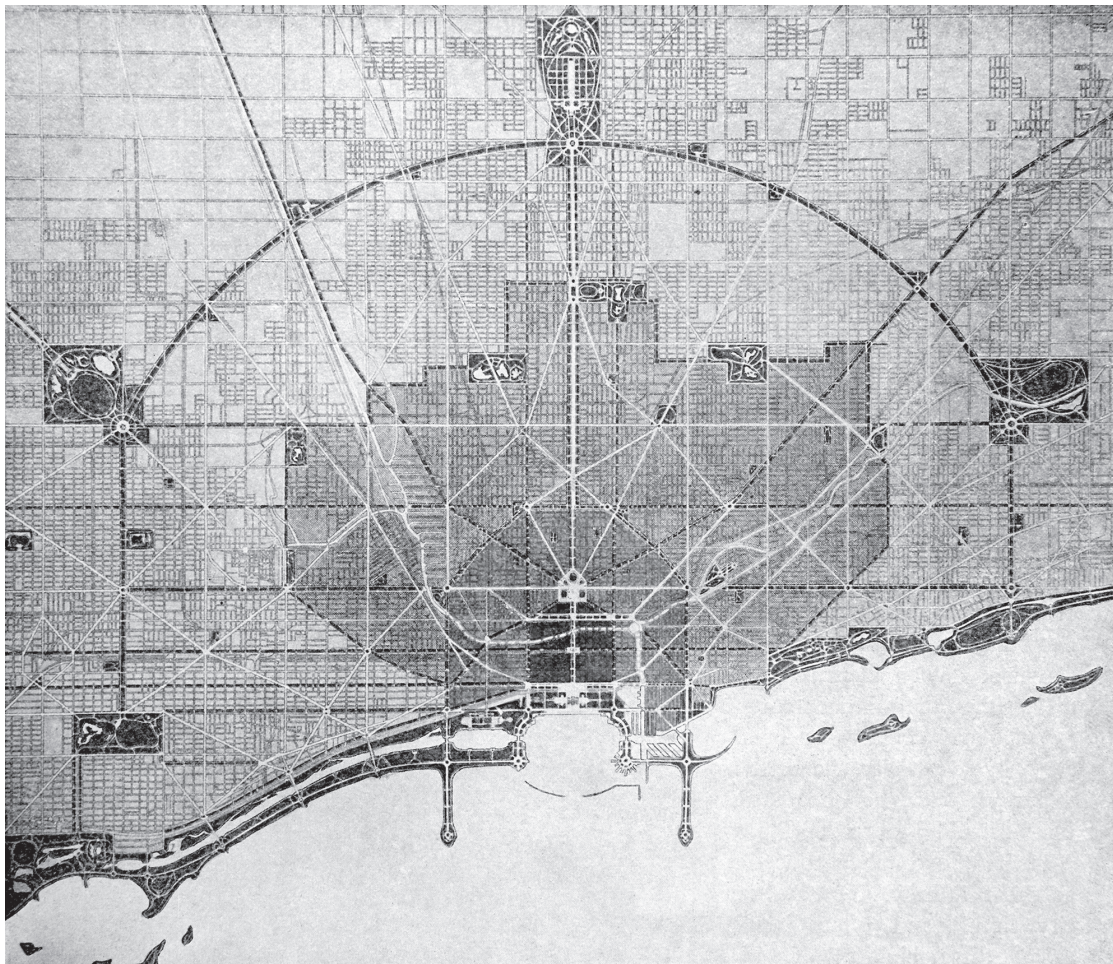


Fig. 4 - Plan of the City of Chicago, showing the system of parks and boulevards, both existing and proposed, with colors showing the concentric areas [*Plan of Chicago*, fig. C.III, Chicago]

the functions of [one's] employments, and the duties of [one's] office, and to make [oneself] in all things useful to society."⁴⁶ Swedenborg did not discourage success. On the contrary, success was valued because the successful person had more to contribute to the welfare of others. However, success had to be pursued in the right frame of mind, balanced by a sense of duty to community and neighbor.⁴⁷

Uses are a "spiritual function." They have been characterized as "loving kindness in action." Swedenborg believed that "God designed the universe as a use and even a series within series of uses." With these two statements – that uses are "loving kindness in action" and that "God designed the universe as a use" – the concept of "uses" links the individual's acts of loving kindness to the essence of God's design.⁴⁸ The individual is linked to God's creation through uses, or loving kindness in action.

Uses can also be related to the provision of material goods. Swedenborg explains that good uses are "providing the necessities of life for oneself and one's dependents" as well as to appropriate aspirations, such as "wanting a great deal for the sake of the nation and the sake of the neighbor, whom a wealthy person can benefit in far more ways than a poor one can." Such aspirations draw the mind away "from an idle life, which is a destructive life."⁴⁹ He further explains:

By uses not only the necessities of life are meant, such as food, raiment and habitation for oneself and one's own, but also the good of one's country, community and fellow-citizens.

Business is such a good when it is the end-love and money is a mediate, subservient love ... [and] when the businessman shuns and is adverse to fraud and bad practices ... [O]therwise when money is the end-love ... this is avarice, which is a root of evils.⁵⁰

Swedenborg identified things "derived from the human ego" as "actually a hell ..."⁵¹

Swedenborg, like other Christians, speaks about charity, faith, and good works, and forges an essential relationship among them. He explains "all elements of faith and charity dwell in good work,"⁵² and goes on to say that what people have not realized is that good works is the "aggregate and containment" of faith and charity.⁵³

Swedenborg said simply and clearly: "there is no happiness in life apart from activity,"⁵⁴ and Burnham agreed. In the context of a discussion of family matters, he wrote to his wife Margaret that:

Work is the one thing that tells in this world, isn't it dear? We both know the real good of it, do we not? Without it life would be nothing.⁵⁵

Useful work is "the simplest and most powerful method for personal spiritual

growth."⁵⁶ And one pursues one's work as "a way of reaching out and learning." If one focuses attention on the small works and uses, one will gain insight into the larger design.⁵⁷ In one of his youthful letters to his mother, Burnham wrote that he believed that "everything will come right if I only put in my best strokes and do all I can to forward the good of those around me."⁵⁸

Burnham's city planning work was his uses. He did it (with one exception) without remuneration.⁵⁹ Burnham would get no payment for his work on the Plan of Chicago, but did it for the good of the community. It was his act of loving kindness that linked him to God's design. It fostered his own personal spiritual growth, as he believed he was contributing to neighbor and community. His Swedenborgian religious beliefs were the source of his commitment to public service, to donating his time to the planning projects that he saw as having a public good. And the donation of time was not insubstantial. The development of the plan of Chicago occupied Burnham for almost three years.

It was not just Burnham's donation of his time that constituted his use. Burnham hoped that his city planning work would improve the lives of his fellow citizens. If we can see past the lush rendered perspectives in the *Plan of Chicago*, we can hear Burnham's concern in the text. For instance, in the *Plan*, Burnham declares that:

The slum exists to-day only because of the failure of the city to protect itself against gross evils and known perils ... Chicago has not yet reached the point where it will be necessary for the municipality to provide at its own expense ... for the rehousing of persons forced out of congested quarters; but unless the matter should be taken in hand at once, such a course will be required in common justice to men and women so degraded by long life in the slums that they have lost all power of caring for themselves.⁶⁰ [emphasis mine]

We also see Burnham's concern in the few photographs of the neighborhood parks, fieldhouses, and the activities (Fig. 5) they supported in some of the city's poorest neighborhoods.

The manuscript draft of the *Plan* argues more persuasively for Burnham's social concerns. That draft includes, sometimes almost verbatim, what was published; but more to the point, it includes a great deal that was not published, including a plan for social and public services.⁶¹

The Manuscript Draft Of The Plan Of Chicago

Burnham's draft of roughly 300 pages of notes, outlines, and text was completed by 1908. The first half of the draft contains almost all the major elements to be found in the published *Plan* and in approximately



Fig. 5 - Mark White Square, now called McGuane Park, Chicago [Plan of Chicago, fig. LXV]

that order. In the second half of the draft Burnham discusses issues that do not find full expression in the published document, as well as topics that have no representation at all: power plants and public utilities; manufacturing and business districts; schools, hospitals, and orphanages; cemeteries, pollution, and the security of municipal utility bonds as investments.⁶² Almost all of Burnham's more overt social mission was excised from the published version.

Among the city services that Burnham

proposes in the draft, child care for working mothers is perhaps the most unexpected. He sees it as urgent, important, and says that it "has intimately to do with the self respect of great numbers of women, women who are willing to and do work, and who cannot do it and take care of young children at the same time."⁶³ Burnham argues that it is important to "preserve [the] self respect of these working citizens, and help keep them from dependence" for "[d]esperair and hopelessness in the citizen is a danger to the public."⁶⁴ Throughout the draft, Burnham

maintains that the relationship between the individual and the larger community is an essential one, and that improvements in the individual condition will result in improvements to the larger society.

In the draft Burnham developed his argument about the importance of school playgrounds, and the opportunity they give teachers to observe the social development of their charges.⁶⁵ Similarly, neighborhood parks could benefit both adults and children by providing a public place, which would

*bring not only the children and the youth but the adults also into the open. They conduce to association, discussion, good manners and moderation on the part of all. In short they have a profound effect on good citizenship; there cannot be too many of these neighborhood parks. The more there are the safer and sounder our democracy will grow because they tend to cultivate those qualities which are the most important for a citizen to possess.*⁶⁶

Burnham argues we are at our best when we are with and are seen by others, and that “the safety of the community is enhanced by keeping the activities of the citizens open to the public gaze.”⁶⁷

Burnham applies this idea to the police as well when he concerns himself with the redesign of stations so that “the policeman

can do nothing to any prisoner while hidden from view.” He argues that “it would be beneficial to good police service, to open up the stations to observation” because “where men are hidden from public gaze they do not exercise the same control over themselves as when their actions can be seen.”⁶⁸ Here, observation is intended to prevent the misuse of power by representatives of the state. By exposing all to public view, both the citizens and the authorities would be at their best in Burnham’s city.

When writing about the Lakefront Parks Burnham thinks not only at the grand scale of the entire park for a greater public, but he also considers those of limited means. He explicitly calls for free bathhouses, and for restaurants with a variety of prices so that all classes can afford refreshments.⁶⁹ He directs that mass transit service should be convenient to the recreational piers so that “at very little cost” the piers will be “within the reach of even the poorest men and of their families.”⁷⁰ This direct and compassionate statement in the draft is reduced in the published *Plan to*: “provision is made for transit lines reaching to the ends of the piers, so as to make these places parks of decided value.”⁷¹ Thus, even when the topic of equality in public access to the lake front is addressed in the final version, the overt empathetic social content has been emptied.

Burnham envisioned a mutually advantageous relationship between the city and the citizen, a social ideal in which both society and the individual would benefit.⁷² Burnham’s attitude can be summarized by his criticism of those who have made colossal fortunes “as the result of undue advantage,” and who use it “in ways that increase the inequalities of life instead of mitigating them.”⁷³

Why would Burnham want to mitigate “the inequalities of life?” It is because of Swedenborgian religious beliefs. City planning and his design and concern for public parks and places was his uses. It was Burnham’s contribution to the creation of a physical realm to better correspond to that of the heavenly; not only in configuration but in kind.

Conclusion

The teachings of Swedenborg proffered a belief in the relationship between the physical and spiritual worlds, and Swedenborgians endeavored to make this world more in accordance with the spiritual. If the physical surroundings exhibit spiritual order and manifest divine goodness, this environment will influence this world’s inhabitants for the better. When people live according to heavenly doctrine, and the world more closely resembles the spiritual one, then the holy city, the New

Jerusalem, will come down to earth.⁷⁴

Frank Sewall, a Swedenborgian minister and friend, wrote a remembrance of Burnham. It concerned a trip Sewall had taken to Chicago. Burnham had guided Sewall around the city and through the parks and fieldhouses (Fig. 6) of the South Park District. Burnham showed the most pleasure when Sewall expressed his appreciation of “the finely conceived district playgrounds and assembly halls and of every provision which had for its aim the pleasure and the good of the whole citizenship without any possible distinction between rich and poor.” Sewall wrote that Burnham kept this point “ever uppermost” in all his work.⁷⁵

Sewall wrote that no one in his time but Burnham:

conceived on so large and grand a scale and in so humane a spirit of the function of the art of building as one of the great humanizing and ... edifying ... instrumentalities in human advancement ... For Mr. Burnham was a builder of cities pre-eminently, and this in all the highest and spiritual meaning that can be attached to this term. Whatever he built ... was ... conceived in a certain large civic spirit, which means the spirit of a citizen who loves his neighbor and delights in making his neighborhood a healthful, beautiful and happy one ... [T]his trait of building for the people's delight and uplift ... [of] building for use and

beauty ... was the distinguishing mark in Mr. Burnham's genius ... his whole life was so truly consecrated [to the cause of] ennobling, beautifying and humanizing our public monumental and building art.

Sewall saw in their Church's “conception of Charity ... as the love of the neighbor” the inspiration for Burnham's professional life and work. He said Burnham conceived his “art as a function of true charity in the civic sense.”⁷⁶

A life of good works and continuous service, of making oneself useful and the world a better place,⁷⁷ was a way of facilitating the coming of the New Jerusalem. Burnham, as an architect, could also facilitate this by inscribing the physical world with designs of heavenly correspondence. Through both uses and correspondence, Burnham endeavored to make this physical world more in accordance with that of the spiritual. Burnham's professional work, both as a service and a design, was a sacralizing of space, a way of bringing spiritual order to the socio-economic free-for-all of early twentieth-century Chicago. It was his act of loving kindness that linked him to God's design. In the overall good design of the city he saw the material expression of the spiritual. For Burnham, his Plan of Chicago was an imprint of heaven on earth. “Make no little plans.”

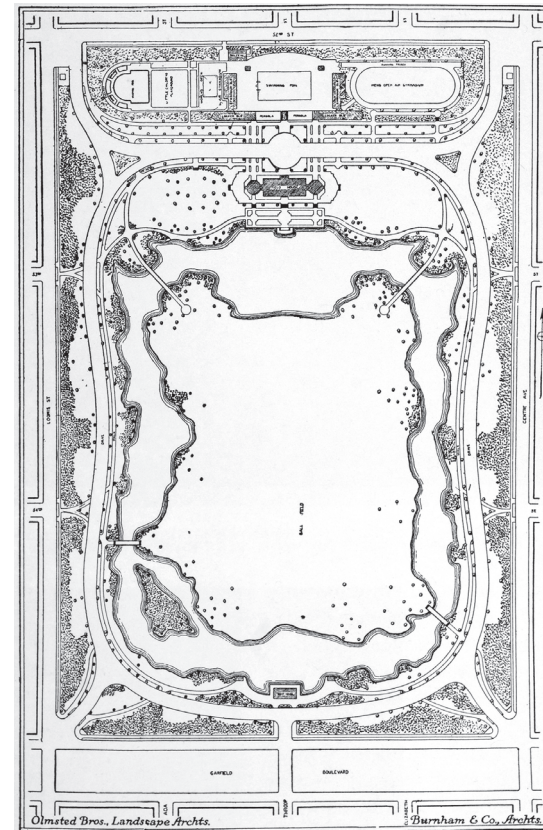


Fig. 6 - Plan of Sherman Park, Chicago. [Plan of Chicago, fig. LXIV]

Endnotes:

1. I would like to thank Tom Barrie for his close reading of this text and especially for his encouragement, patience, and support; Karen DeWitt and her staff at the Design Library of North Carolina State University, especially Barbara Brenny for her help with the images that illustrate this article; and Karen Feil and her former colleague Lily Gaines at the Swedenborg Library, Chicago, for their generous enthusiasm.
2. Still the essential works on Burnham are Charles Moore, *Daniel H. Burnham, Architect, Planner of Cities*, DaCapo Press, New York [1921] 1968, and Thomas S. Hines, *Burnham of Chicago: Architect and Planner* The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1974. See also my *Daniel H. Burnham: Visionary Architect and Planner*, photographs by Paul Rocheleau, introduction by Scott Tilden, Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., New York, 2003, and my introduction to the facsimile reprint of the *Plan of Chicago*, "Fabric of City Life: The Social Agenda in Burnham's Draft of the Plan of Chicago," in *Plan of Chicago* by Daniel H. Burnham & Edward H. Bennett, edited by Charles Moore Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1993 [1909], pp. iv-xvi. The quotation is attributed to Burnham by Moore, vol. II, p. 147, although its first known appearance is on a card made by Willis Polk, a former Burnham employee.
3. See my "The Beautiful and Useful Laws of God: Burnham's Swedenborgianism and the Plan of Chicago" in *Planning Perspectives: An International Journal of History, Planning and the Environment* (U.K.) April 2010, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 243-252. This article is an expansion of that earlier one.
4. I have relied heavily on a number of sources: Emanuel Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, George F. Dole, trans., Swedenborg Foundation, West Chester, Pennsylvania, 1979, and his *The Path of Life*, John C. Ager, compiler, J.B. Lippincott Co., 1913; Sig Synnestvedt, ed., *The Essential Swedenborg*, Swedenborg Foundation, West Chester, Pennsylvania, 1977; Brian Kingslake, *Swedenborg Explores the Spiritual Dimension*, Seminar Books, London, 1981; and George Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, rev. by Richard H. Tafel, Sr. & Richard H. Tafel, Jr., The Swedenborg Foundation, New York, 1992 [1907]. See also Wilson Van Dusen, *Usefulness: A Way of Personal and Spiritual Growth*, Swedenborg Foundation, West Chester, Pennsylvania, n.d.
5. William Ross Woofenden compiler, "Glossary of Swedenborgian Terms" in *Emanuel Swedenborg: A Continuing Vision*, Robin Larsen, ed., Swedenborg Foundation, Inc., New York, 1988, pp. 515.
6. Louis H. Sullivan, *The Autobiography of an Idea*, Dover

- Publications, Inc., New York, 1956 [1924], pp. 285-286. For Sullivan's own interest in Swedenborg, see Narciso G. Menocal, *Architecture as Nature: The Transcendentalist Idea of Louis Sullivan*, The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1981, pp. 24-34.
7. Sullivan, p. 314.
8. William E. Parsons, "Burnham as a Pioneer in City Planning," *The Architectural Record*, July 1915, XXXVIII, p. 14.
9. Hines, pp. 10-11.
10. Burnham to his mother, Elizabeth Burnham, 24 November 1867 & 1 December 1867, Burnham Papers, Art Institute of Chicago (AIC). Burnham had some doubts about entering the ministry, but about what he does not say. He tried 'trade', or business, but when he later discovered architecture, he had no doubts: "I am perfectly in love with my profession. And for the first time in my life I feel perfectly certain that I have found my vocation. I don't feel the most secret doubt now that it is the place for me ... For my whole heart is for the first time I ever remember in my work ..." And in architecture, he was not surrounded by the "evil and deceit" as he had been when in trade land "there is a great deal of evil there," he says, for "there can be none [of that, no evil, no deceit] in a man's striving after the beautiful and useful laws God has created to govern his material universe."
11. Burnham to Elizabeth Burnham, n.d., Burnham Papers. The letter concerns his intention to move to Evanston and his hopes for organizing a church there. Therefore the letter must date from c.1886.
12. Hines, pp. 135, 265.
13. See Joan E. Draper, Edward H. Bennett: *Architect & City Planner*, 1874-1954, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, 1982. Burnham and Bennett worked together from 1902, when Burnham hired him to work on a competition, and Burnham's death in 1912. It seems that the two become quite close, in part because of their spiritual beliefs.
14. Edward H. Bennett, recollection, pp. 1-2. Bennett Papers, AIC
15. Edward H. Bennett, recollection, p. 2.
16. Bennett Diary entry for Wednesday, 26 February, 1908. Bennett Diaries, AIC.
17. Bennett, "Statement on Daniel H. Burnham," n.d., Bennett Papers, AIC; also reproduced in Moore, II, p. 170. Hines, p. 326. Bennett Diaries, Thurs. 5 March 1908. Bennett's signature over Burnham's name, letter to Carrie G. McKnight, 2 November 1907, Bennett Papers.
18. Robert Avens, "The Subtle Realm: Corbin, Sufism, and Swedenborg," excerpted and compiled by Kate Davis, in Robin

- Larsen, et al., eds., *Emanuel Swedenborg: A Continuing Vision*, Swedenborg Foundation, Inc., New York, 1988, p. 385.
19. Trobridge, p. 83.
20. Swedenborg, *Path of Life*, p. 124.
21. Kingslake, pp. 39-41; Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, pp. 43-45 §29-33.
22. Swedenborg, *Path of Life*, pp. 27, 39-40, 125-126; and *Heaven and Hell*, p. 98 §116-117.
23. Richard Silver, "Spirit in American Art: The Image as Hieroglyph," in Larson et al., pp. 64-67.
24. Swedenborg, *Path Of Life*, pp. 125-126; Kingslake, p. 39.
25. Burnham, "'The Court of Honor,'" p. 1, n.d., typescript. Burnham Papers.
26. Moore, II, pp. 164-65.
27. David F. Burg, *Chicago's White City of 1893* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976) pp. 113 & 290-294.
28. Burg, pp. 290-291.
29. Quoted in Burg, p. 113, from James W. Shepp and Daniel B. Shepp, *Shepp's World's Fair Photographed*, 1893.
30. Quoted in Burg, p. 293, from Clara Louise Burnham, *Sweet Clover: A Romance of the White City*, 1896.
31. Quote in Moore, I, p. 88, from Norton's lecture manuscript "Art in America." The great city that Norton refers to is Babylon, in Rev. 19:12.
32. James Gilbert, *Perfect Cities* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991) p. 100.
33. Burnham, "The Court of Honor" but referred to as the "Sermon," n.d., typescript. Burnham Papers. The work seems to date from about the time of the Fair's closing. Burnham simply refers to Rev. c. 4 and v. 1 to v. 11.
34. Burnham, "The Court of Honor," p. 1.
35. Burnham, "The Court of Honor," pp. 2-3.
36. Burnham, "The Court of Honor," pp. 4-5. At the end, there is added a paragraph that deals with the preservation of the Fair buildings from a more pragmatic point of view.
37. Burnham, "Uses of Expositions," pp. 47-48.
38. John J. Ingalls, "Lessons of the Fair," *The Cosmopolitan Magazine*, December 1893, XVI, p. 143.
39. Arthur Sherburne Hardy, "Last Impressions," *The Cosmopolitan Magazine*, December 1893, XVI, p. 198. Author of *Wealth versus Commonwealth*, Lloyd's remarks are quoted by Burnham in his "Uses of Expositions," p. 28, a speech given to the Literary Club, 15 April 1895, Burnham Papers, AIC. John J. Ingalls, "Lessons of the Fair," *The Cosmopolitan Magazine*, December 1893, XVI, p.

143. Henry Van Brunt, "The Columbian Exposition and American Civilization," *The Atlantic Monthly Magazine*, May 1893, LXXI, but cited here in its reprinted source, William A. Coles, *Architecture and Society: Selected Essays of Henry Van Brunt*, The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1969, pp. 309-310. Thomas A. Janvier, "The Chicago Legacy," *The Cosmopolitan Magazine*, December 1893, XVI, pp. 248-249.
40. Bennett, "Statement on Daniel H. Burnham," n.d., Bennett Papers, AIC; also reproduced in Moore, II, p. 170. Hines, p. 326. Bennett Diaries, Thurs. 5 March 1908. Bennett's signature over Burnham's name, letter to Carrie G. McKnight, 2 November 1907, Bennett Papers.
41. The scholar Irving Fischer has also argued that the divine order of heaven is represented in these plans. Fisher, based on his reading, developed his own diagrams to posit the limits of the heaven. While I agree with his basic supposition, I disagree with his diagrams. Given the scale at which Burnham liked to work, and since he offers what I understand to be his own diagram, I see no need to offer an alternative. Irving D. Fisher, "An Iconology of City Planning--The Plan of Chicago," in Erland J. Brock et al., eds., *Swedenborg and his Influence*, The Academy of the New Church, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, p. 1988, pp. 449-464. A much expanded version of that article was published as "An Iconography of City Planning: The Chicago City Plan" in Larsen et al., pp. 245-262. For Burnham's description of this divine order, see the Plan, pp. 95-96; and Burnham, Manuscript Draft, pp. 51-59.
42. Daniel H. Burnham & Edward H. Bennett, *Plan of Chicago*, The Commercial Club, Chicago, 1909, pp. 89-91, plate CIII.
43. *Plan of Chicago*, p. 89.
44. For this discussion I have relied on the work of Wilson Van Dusen especially *Usefulness: A Way of Personal and Spiritual Growth*, Swedenborg Foundation, West Chester, Pennsylvania, n.d., pp. 2, 5 & 4. Van Dusen's small pamphlet is an excellent introduction to the topic of uses, but his citations often do not match other published versions of *Divine Love and Wisdom*, for example.
45. Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, chap. 39 para. 361.
46. Synnestvedt, p. 52. "Rules for Life From the manuscript of Emanuel Swedenborg," para. 4. Burnham Papers.
47. Swedenborg, *Divine Providence*, William Frederic Wunsch, trans., Swedenborg Foundation, New York, 1986, para. 11. Also see his *Divine Love and Wisdom*, George F. Dole, trans., Swedenborg Foundation, West Chester, Pennsylvania, 1985, paras. 214-215, 297, 230.
48. Van Dusen, pp. 2, 5 & 4.
49. Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, para. 361.
50. Emanuel Swedenborg, *Divine Providence*, William Frederic Wunsch, trans., Swedenborg Foundation, New York, 1986, para. 11.
51. Emanuel Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, George F. Dole, trans., Swedenborg Foundation, West Chester, Pennsylvania, 1985, para. 298.
52. *Divine Love & Wisdom*, para. 214.
53. *Divine Love & Wisdom*, para. 215 & 214.
54. Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, para. 403.
55. Burnham to his wife Margaret, n.d., fragment. Burnham Papers, AIC.
56. Van Dusen, p. 1.
57. Van Dusen, p. 1. This is Van Dusen's explanation.
58. Burnham to Elizabeth Burnham, 1 December 1867.
59. Burnham took compensation for his work on the Cleveland Group Plan of 1903 so as not to embarrass co-planners Arnold W. Brunner and John M. Carrere. Hines, p. 162.
60. *Plan* 108-109.
61. See my "Fabric of City Life: The Social Agenda in Burnham's Draft of the *Plan of Chicago*," introduction to the facsimile reprint of the *Plan of Chicago* by Daniel H. Burnham & Edward H. Bennett (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1993 [1909]).
62. Draft, pp. 199-211; *Plan*, p. 68.
63. Draft, pp. 172-174.
64. Draft, pp. 172-174.
65. Draft, pp. 156, 150 & 159-162.
66. Draft, pp. 108 & 110. There is no 109.
67. Draft, pp. 163-165.
68. Draft, pp. 163-165.
69. Draft, p. 141.
70. Draft, p. 140.
71. Draft, pp. 139-40; *Plan*, p. 111.
72. Draft, p. 174.
73. Typescript draft for a "Chapter I," Bennett Papers.
74. Swedenborg, *Path Of Life*, pp. 125-126; Kingslake, p. 39.
75. Frank Sewall, "Daniel Hudson Burnham, A.M., LL.D.," *New-Church Messenger*, 3 July 1912, pp. 12-13.
76. Sewall, pp. 12-13.
77. Synnestvedt, p. 52.