



AN ARCHITECTURAL PROPOSAL

©2001 Stan Tenen, Meru Foundation, September 2001

[This proposal was originally written as an informal outline, sent to members of our community in a local e-list. The informality of the original is retained here.]

I'd like to ask the Sharon e-list to consider the following rough outline of a proposal for a Peace Plaza in New York, at the disaster site. We need to rebuild the site in a way that tells the destroyers they didn't succeed, and that both replaces the business and commercial facilities, and creates some sort of inspirational center that roundly and simply trumps the terrorism in every way.

Some of the details of this design have been on my mind for a number of years. I've always thought of them in terms of a sculpture garden in Jerusalem.

If there are professional architects in the community who might want to help me create a formal proposal, that would be very helpful. I have no experience writing an architectural proposal, and if these ideas are going to be taken seriously, that's definitely what's required.

The devastated area is more or less rectangular. So, what I'm proposing has a rectangular, or possibly square, outline of several city blocks on each side.

There would be four commercial buildings offering office space, shopping, dining, tourist facilities, and other commercial activities, one at each corner of the square. Total capacity of the four buildings combined (including parking garages and underground promenades) would exceed the space that was lost. Each building might be a block long on each outer side. But on the inside, facing the center, each of the four office buildings would taper back from a large central circle. So, each of the buildings would actually be more or less triangular, with the two outside walls vertical and full-height (about 50-stories), and the one triangular face on the inside tapered back from the large central circle to the apex of the building, perhaps in a series of terraces.

Because of the design of the corner-buildings, at the center of each edge of the square there would appear to be a V-shaped valley between the buildings on the corners. Thus, the center of each edge of the square would be open to the street, and the city (or, on the west side, to the West Side Highway and Hudson River waterfront).

The central circle within the square would be the Peace Plaza itself. The circle would actually be the rim of a fairly shallow double-crater. In other words, the Peace Plaza would actually taper down funnel-like to a double-center. More on the center below.

There would be a transition from the commercial, business-like atmosphere outside of the circle, to a quiet, respectful space, somewhat below street level, in the double-center area.

There would be concentric circles of increasing calm, tapering from the outer circle to the double-center.

First, there would be a park area, with trees and benches, and places for people to sit or stand quietly, but also to go about their business.

Within the park area, there would be a circle of vertical posts that would hold large, transparent panes, maybe starting 10 feet up. The panes would actually be large holograms. When a person looks through them from the ground just in front and below, they would see images -- ghostly holographic images, that is -- of the towers, as they once stood. In a sense, they'd still be there. And of course, because they're from holograms, their images would be indestructible. If a person didn't want to see these images, they would simply not look through the panes. There would be plenty of space between them, so that would be very easy, and yet it would also be easy for those who wanted the view.

Within this circle, there would be a sculpture garden, which would consist of statues of men and women of all ages, all races, and all cultures, each making gestures including Tai Chi gestures, meditational gestures (mudras, etc.), and including, intertwined with each other, a walk showing statue-people making gestures that produced all of the letters of the Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic alphabets (as presented in the research of the Meru Foundation, <www.meru.org>). This Gesture-Garden would teach by look-see demonstration the intertwinedness of all peoples and cultures, and a universal hand-gesture alphabet-language that could be used world-wide.



DRAFT



AN ARCHITECTURAL PROPOSAL

©2001 Stan Tenen, Meru Foundation, September 2001

DRAFT

 **HEBREW ALPHABET HAND GESTURES™**

The Letter Blocks in this chart are arranged in AT-Bash (traditional front-back) pairs.

| | |
|--|---|
|  A "Ox," "Master" ALL ALEF |  תתתת TOV "Sign" ITSELF T |
|  B "House" BREAK OUT BET |  שששש SHIN "Tooth" SHINE S |
|  C "Camel" COME and GO GIMEL |  רררר RESH "Head" REACHING R |
|  D "Door" DIVIDE DALET |  קקקק QOF "Monkey" COPY Q |
|  E "Window" "THE" (GOD) HE |  זזזז ZADI "Righteous" RIGHTEDOUS Z |
|  F "Pin" MULTIPLY VOV |  פפפפ PE "Mouth" FULLNESS P |
|  G "Spear" GO OUT ZAYIN |  עעעע AYIN "Eye" GO IN O |
|  H "Fenced Field" SURROUND CHET |  סססס SAMEK "Support" SUPPORT S |
|  J "Snake" COMPLETE TET |  ננננ NUN "Fish" CONNECT N |
|  I "Hand" HAND YOD |  ממממ MEM "Water" SOURCE M |
|  K "Palm" HOLD KAF |  לללל LAMED "Learn" LEARN L |

Body gestures courtesy of Sami Gery.
This is a working prototype containing errors.
may suggest different gestures to some users.

Historical Samples on left are Kado-Bash versions.
Sample on right is from Bophasine, ca. 300 B.C.E.

SHADOW/BASH of MERU
MODEL HAND
Hebrew name

HISTORICAL SAMPLES
"Name-Appearing"
Operational meaning

RIGHT HAND
CLOSE-UP
GESTURE

English
Operational
Equivalent

LEFT HAND
LEFT

AT-BASH CHART 4 © Stan Tenen / MERU Foundation, POB 503, Sharon, MA 02067
Voice: 781 784-8902 FAX: 781 784-2955 Email: meru1@well.com Internet: <http://www.meru.org>



AN ARCHITECTURAL PROPOSAL

3

©2001 Stan Tenen, Meru Foundation, September 2001

The idea of this part of the sculpture garden would be to show that we all are human, and that we all communicate by our gestures, which we all hold in common. What I'm proposing is a graphic demonstration of a reversal (a redemption, if you like) of the story of the Tower of Babel. I'm suggesting a parallel. The story of the Tower of Babel is about the loss of universal language due to an arrogant attempt to "storm the gates of heaven". I'm suggesting that this is parallel to the attack on the twin Towers, because the terrorists were also arrogantly attempting to "storm the gates of heaven". So why not reverse the process, and use this response to the terror to re-introduce the use of hand-gestures as a universal language, and at the same time, to demonstrate that this has been the basis of the alphabets of the Abrahamic traditions all along?

This sculpture garden would have intertwining paths that would take people on tours through the meaningful gestures of various cultures and traditions. It would be self-demonstrating, and its meaning would be immediately obvious: Our lives and cultures are intertwined.

Within this spiraling circle of movement in stone would a double-centered crater, the contemplative heart of the Plaza. There is a spiral walkway that comes down into the crater and around one center, and then across a "vesica piscis" area, and around the other center, and then back up the crater. Looking down on these spiral paths they appear to be a "valentines' heart." At the very base of the crater, there would be a terraced wall that took the shape of the Sri Yantra, the creation-mandala from the Eastern tradition. From the side walls of the crater, two arms would emerge, each carrying a symbolic "torch", in the style of the Statue of Liberty. The heart-shaped pathway would encircle the two "torches". But they wouldn't be ordinary torches.

These "torches" are inversions of the same "model hand-shape" that makes the letter-gestures of Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic in the sculpture garden (as pictured in the "Continuous Creation" poster at <www.meru.org/contin.html>) Each of the downward-pointing model hands is grasped by the sculptured anatomical hand extending from one of the arms that emerge from the sides of the "crater". Holding the model hands this way makes them into hilts of two swords, pointing vertically upward, signifying ceasing from battle.

And these "swords" are actually towers of light. Thus, there would be twin columns of light to act as "eternal flames" representing the two lost towers.

Note: For a clearer image of the hand-hilt/"Plato's Cave", go to the "Continuous Creation" poster at <www.meru.org/contin.html>. On this poster, the hand is held on the hand, like a glove, instead of outside of the hand, like a sword-hilt as pictured above. But the shape is the same. This is also the same shape that generates all of the Hebrew, Greek and Arabic letters as 2-dimensional "shadowgrams" of particular hand-gestures.

One of the two hand-hilt light-swords at the double-center
(c)2001 SNT/Meru

This is a crude first sketch. In the Peace Plaza, there would be two hand-hilt light-swords, held in the hands of two arms, extended from the sides of the "crater".

The names of those lost would be inscribed on the inside surface of each hilt, and people would walk between the hand holding the light-sword and the inside of each hilt. It would be as if each of the names were gathered into the vortex, and then to ascend in its tower of light.

DRAFT





AN ARCHITECTURAL PROPOSAL

4

©2001 Stan Tenen, Meru Foundation, September 2001

As the arms that become the hands that hold the center part of the vortex hilt-swords erupt from the ground, they become more and more tenuous. At the ground, they are sculpted as fully "plastered" cross-section arms, but as they extend towards the wrists and hands, the "plaster" breaks away to expose an underwire/"skeleton" of the hands (not a real skeleton design, rather an outline of hands and fingers), so that the fingers that actually hold the vortex hilts are just open wire-frame, essentially transparent.

This is getting a bit complicated to describe, so let me just simply list some of the remaining details. The idea is to include abstract symbols that are meaningful to many different traditions and cultures. For example, the geometry of the double-center area could easily and quite naturally include the "vesica piscis" that's important in Christian teachings. It would also include universal mathematical and geometric representations that are known in the West through Plato and Pythagoras. There could be some Eastern mandalas, and Moslem/Persian rug designs. The idea is to represent as wide a range as possible in an abstract way, where each element can be appreciated by a different cultural group, and yet presented in a way that is not offensive to any other cultural group.

The upside-down "model hand" shape (on the chart on page 2) is also viewable on the "Continuous Creation" poster at www.meru.org/contin.html. It not only represents a model hand, it's also a universal model (known for example in Greek tradition as "Plato's Cave"). Each "wing" of each hand -- the "hilt" of each "light-sword" -- would shelter the people walking through the hand (on the "earth-plane"). Inscribed on the inside surface (the inside of "Plato's Cave") would be the names of all of those lost in each of the buildings. This is a solemn memorial area. People could linger, and look up at the towers of light, or look down towards the pit of creation/annihilation at the double-center. Towering over them would be these giant sword-hilt/hands/caves.

Obviously this is very much a draft. The essential elements -- the hands and the gestures, and the universal gesture language they represent -- come from my research into the origins of the Hebrew letters and the letter-text of Genesis, and they point to the intertwinedness and interconnectedness of all peoples.

I believe that the tragedy demands a bigger, better, and brighter response than a war on terrorism only. We need to really take the high ground. It's by our demonstration that we know more about peace, and more about the universality of human needs and human longings, than terrorists could ever understand about their own hatred, that makes the case for good over evil.

Comments? If anyone would like to talk about this, please call Cynthia or me at 781-784-8902.

Best,
Stan



DRAFT

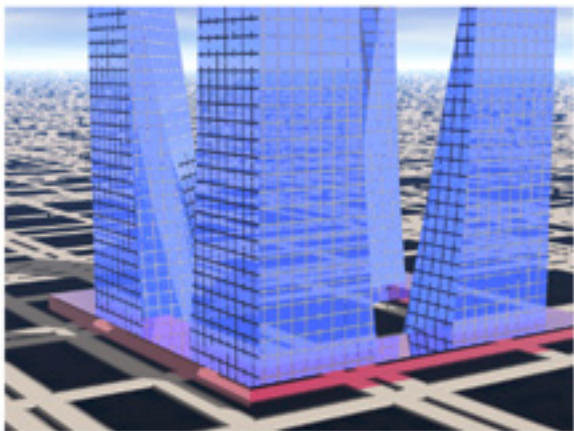
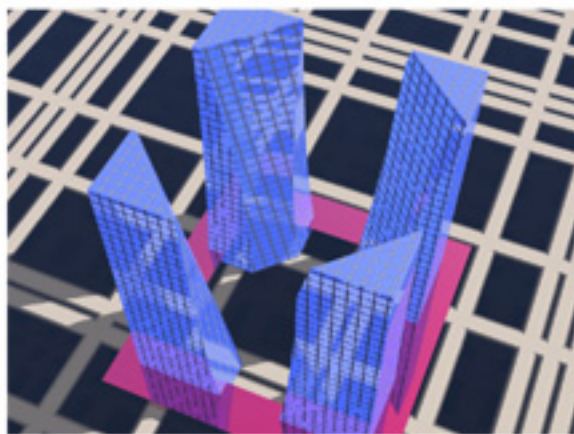
New York Twin Trade Towers Memorial Peace Plaza Proposal



These photographs of a paper model are intended to illustrate two hands holding turned-up, peaceful, "light-swords" by their hilts. The inside of these twin "light-swords" is also analogous to "Plato's Cave" with the names of the fallen inscribed on the wall(s).

The holding-hands are intended to be made of an open wire frame that holds a "path of peace and reverence" walkway through and around the two hands.

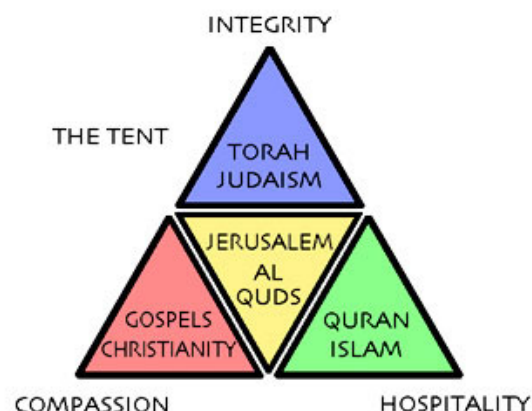
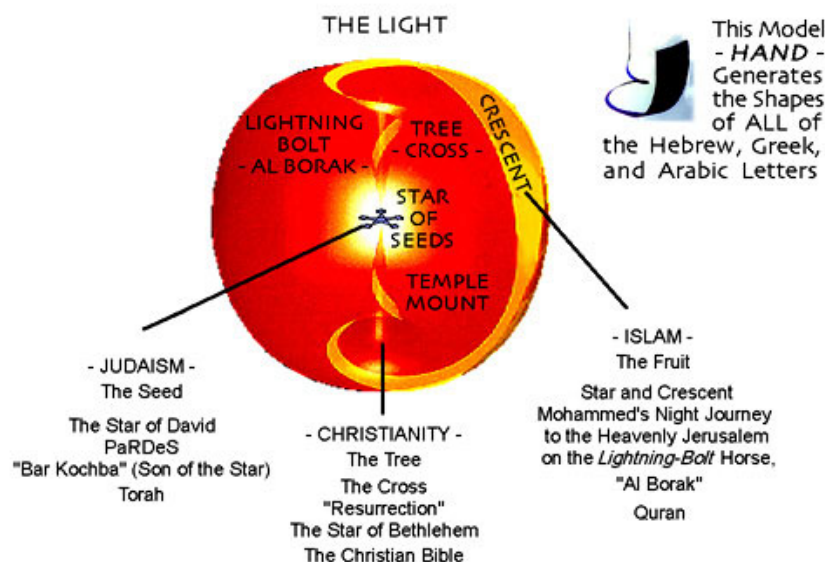
Preliminary Renderings of Corner Buildings
by Harlowe Rowe, Jan. 2002



The *LIGHT* in the *MEETING TENT*

JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM IN JERUSALEM

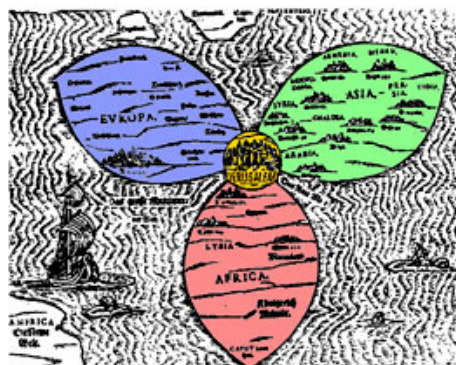
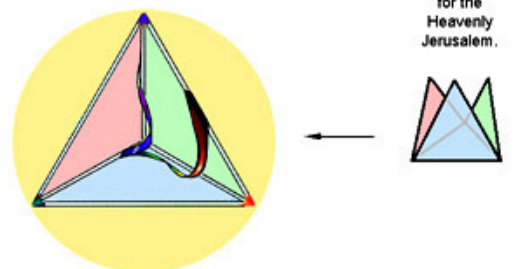
Modeling the Future for those whose God is Big Enough for All



The 3-Abrahamic Organs of Peace
in the Body Politic of the *City-of-Peace*
- The **HEAVENLY JERUSALEM** -

Genesis 1, 11: [The Abrahamic Tradition is a]
"...Fruit *Tree* (Christianity), yielding *Fruit* (Islam)
whose *Seed* (Judaism) is in itself."

THE LIGHT IN THE MEETING TENT
THE TRINITY
THE GREEN FLAME OF ISLAM



MAP OF THE WORLD WITH JERUSALEM AT THE CENTER
Woodcut, 1581, Osher Map Library, University of Southern Maine
(4-Colors and minor re-lettering added.)

THREE ABRAHAMIC COVENANTS - THREE PILLARS OF LOVE

All three pillars are essential teachings in each of the three Abrahamic Covenants

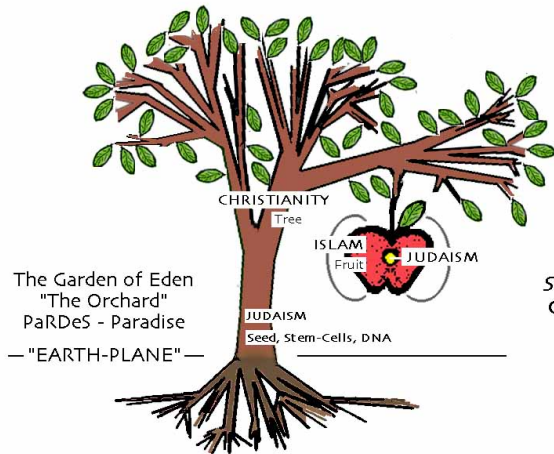
| | JUDAISM | CHRISTIANITY | ISLAM |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| | TRUTHFULNESS | LOVINGKINDNESS | HUMILITY |
| OUTER TEACHINGS | TORAH TALMUD | GOSPELS BIBLE | QURAN BIBLE |
| INNER TEACHINGS | KABBALAH | GNOSTICISM | SUFISM |
| PRIMARY ASPECT OF LOVE EMPHASIZED | TRUTH LAW INTEGRITY REASON | GOOD WORKS LABOR; DHARMA COMPASSION EMOTION | SELF-SACRIFICE SUBMISSION HOSPITALITY ACTION |
| SYMBOLS | LIGHT Menorah | CROSS Star | STAR & CRESCENT Green Flame |
| EMBRYOLOGY LIFE CYCLE ORGAN | SEED CONCEPTION HEAD | TREE GESTATION HEART | FRUIT BIRTH BODY |
| MANIFESTING PRINCIPLE | CLEAR THINKING | HARD WORK | LETTING GO |

An Organic Model of Western Civilization

THE TREE OF ABRAHAM

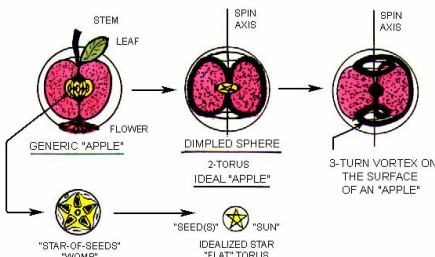
THE MANIFESTING PRINCIPLE: SEED - TREE - FRUIT;

CONCEPTION - GESTATION - BIRTH; THINKING - WORKING - LETTING GO

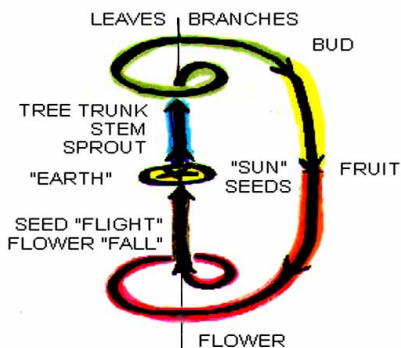


SIMULTANEOUS CYCLES in TIME

DNA: Eternal
TREE: Millenia
FRUIT: Seasonal

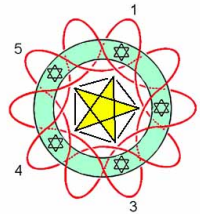


- The Self-Embedded FRUIT-TREE -

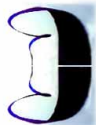


WOMB

5 - Books of Moses
5 - Star Womb Chambers
With 6 - Tetrahedral Seeds per Chamber
 $5 \times 6 = 30$ Days / Monthly Cycle

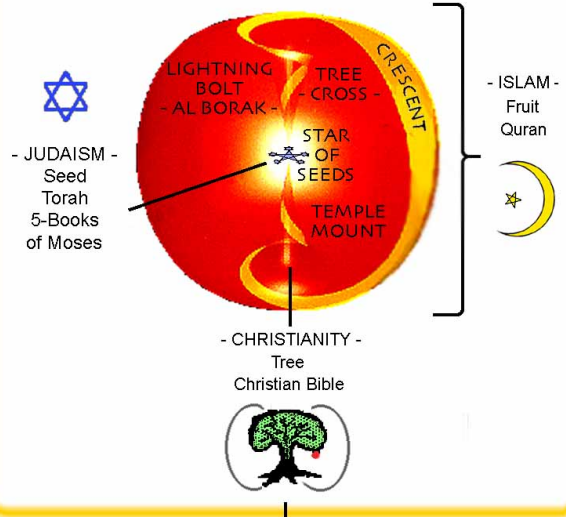


This Pair of Model
- FIRST HANDS™ -
Generates
the Shapes
of ALL of
the Hebrew,
Greek, and
Arabic Letters

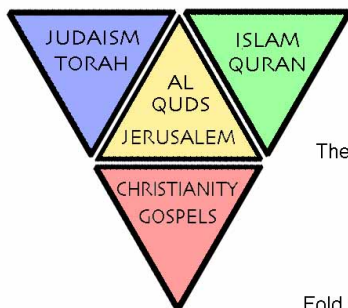


FIRST HAND™

Genesis 1, 11: [The Abrahamic Tradition is a]
"...Fruit Tree (Christianity). yielding Fruit (Islam)
whose Seed (Judaism) is in itself."

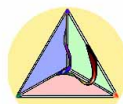


"TORAH is a
TREE-of-LIFE
For Those
Who Grasp It."

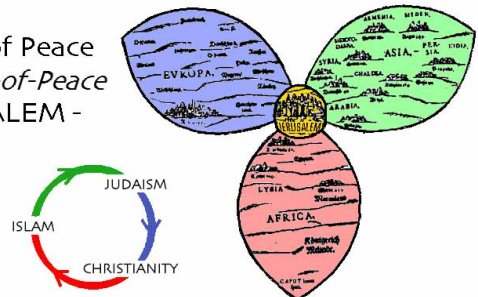


The 3-Abrahamic Organs of Peace
in the Body Politic of the City-of-Peace
- The HEAVENLY JERUSALEM -

The 3 - Covenants and the FRUIT-TREE



Fold into the LIGHT in the MEETING TENT
for the Heavenly Jerusalem.



MAP OF THE WORLD WITH JERUSALEM AT THE CENTER
Woodcut, 1581, Osher Map Library, University of Southern Maine
(Edited, Re-Lettered, and Colors added.)

