The Tower of Voices is a year-round accurate Islamic prayer-time sundial

You can see the overt similarity just by looking:

On the left is a traditional Islamic sundial. The gnomon’s shadow is just reaching the outer curved vertical, indicating time for Islamic afternoon prayers. On the right is the minaret-like Tower of Voices from the Flight 93 Memorial. Shadow calculations confirm that on any day of the year, when the Tower’s shadow reaches the inner arc of trees, it will be time for Islamic afternoon prayers. The Tower of Voices IS a year-round accurate Islamic prayer-time sundial.

This is a very exacting structure that could simply never occur by accident

Islamic prayer times are determined by shadow length. Afternoon prayers commence when an object’s shadow is equal to the length of its noon shadow, plus its height. Thus the prayer line must be engraved (or planted as the case may be) a particular distance away from the gnomon, and it must follow a particular arc. This construct has fewer degrees of freedom than a western sundial, which only looks at shadow angle (15° for each hour). This construct has fewer degrees of freedom than a western sundial, which only looks at shadow angle (15° for each hour).

The heavy curved red line superimposed on the image below is the Islamic afternoon prayer-line for the Washington Monument. To use the Washington Monument as an Islamic sundial you would have to build a wall along this red line, or plant an arc of trees along it, or in some other way make it substantive to people on the ground:

The Washington Monument’s afternoon prayer line

The heavy curved red line superimposed on the image below is the Islamic afternoon prayer-line for the Washington Monument. To use the Washington Monument as an Islamic sundial you would have to build a wall along this red line, or plant an arc of trees along it, or in some other way make it substantive to people on the ground:

From November to February the prayer-time shadows are blocked by the Commerce Department building at the upper right, so even if you did build a prayer-line marker up 14th street, your Monument-sundial would still be unusable during these months.

This is why Islamic sundials are usually small — Muslims don’t have to walk 500 yards to see if the gnomon’s shadow has reached the prayer-line yet. Murdoch’s Tower-sundial will be the largest Islamic sundial ever built. There Muslims will still have to walk 70 yards to see whether prayer-time has arrived, but no worry. Other Muslims will be there to sing out the Islamic call to prayer (“Allahu akbar,” etcetera) when the Tower’s shadow reaches the inner arc of trees. After all, that is what Islamic sundials are for.

A traditional minaret is a literal tower of voices

The central part of the Flight 93 memorial, originally called Crescent of Embrace, is a giant Islamic-shaped crescent. That giant crescent (they call it a broken circle now) points to Mecca. Geometrically, that makes it a mihrab: the Mecca-direction indicator around which every mosque is built.

Mosque design is based on a dozen typical mosque features, every one of which is manifest in architect Paul Murdoch’s memorial design, all on the same epic scale as his giant mihrab. The Tower of Voices IS his epic minaret. A mosque’s minaret is used to issue the call to prayer. It is a literal “tower of voices.” Murdoch’s Tower-sundial is a figurative tower of voices, calling out the time to prayer by shadow position.

It’s physical kinship with more traditional minarets is overt. Across most of the Islamic world, minarets are topped with an Islamic-shaped crescent (having a circular inner arc and a circular outer arc and usually covering about 2/3rds of a circle of arc, just like Murdoch’s giant central crescent). The Tower of Voices is formed in the shape of an extruded Islamic crescent and is cut at an angle at the top so that its crescent arms reach up into the sky:

Visitors looking up at the Tower of Voices will see this symbol of the Islamic heavens soaring in the sky above the symbolic lives of the forty heroes, which literally dangle down below, gorging interminably, never to rest in peace. Is the Park Service trying to start a riot?

This insult is intentional on Murdoch’s part. In fact it goes to the very heart his mosque design. In order for his mosque to be legitimate, it cannot honor infidels. Thus every place where our 40 heroes are represented in Murdoch’s design, they are depicted as symbolically damned.

This is why his design drawings only show 38 Memorial Groves. These groves are attached to the giant central crescent, which makes them part of the symbolic Islamic heavens. That means they have to represent Murdoch’s heroes, not ours. So how do 38 Memorial Groves represent 19 Islamic terrorists? Answer tomorrow.

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