

Metapontum peace chess, Oss The Netherlands

“Make honey, not war”

He is Hindu philosopher, but convinced catholic. Hans Theo Frenkel from Oss designed Metapontum. A peace chess with no hostile armies facing each other, but allies. Whereby the pieces do not beat, but pass each other. Whereby it doesn't revolve around winning, but redeeming the other. That special chess game is inspired by three visions of Christ. “The Prince of Peace himself tells us with this game how we must live together in peace”. Metapontum literally means: bridge to the other side.

Hans Theo [1938] was born from a Jewish-American father and a Dutch mother. His father forsakes the family and Hans Theo grows up with his mother in Indonesia, and later in the Netherlands. His stepfather is freemason, his mother atheist; he has nothing with Christianity in his youth, but if you look well at his home in Oss, it is all about catholic art. Inside are statues of Jesus and St. Anthony. St. Francis and Mary stand in the garden. “Now I know that the catholic faith is the only true one”. In 1991 I was baptised at last.

He clearly is a teacher. For years he taught at the State University in Albany New York. He taught Hindu philosophy. English comes in between his Dutch words. With a pointer in his hand he guides you through his inspiring story. His life story is intertwined with the game of chess. “This Metapontum”, he begins, “ This game is only the concrete, visible version. A much deeper spiritual world precedes this chess game”.

The Metapontum room

We are in the Metapontum room at the home. A room with Metapontum banners. But also pictures of Christ, rows of catholic encyclopaedias, a printout of the infinite number pi. There stands a dried honeycomb of bees. He, who is unfamiliar, knows not what he sees. Two Metapontum peace games are exhibited. One for two players and one for six players. We sit down behind the board for two players.

Before we can play, Hans Theo tells his story. “I received three mystic visions. This game is not just an idea. This idea comes from a metaphysical dimension. People think that this peace chess is a solution of an interesting chess problem. But, it is not just a little game. This is how our dear Lord wants us to live together. In real life. This is blood serious”.

The first vision he receives in Canada at age 19. Hans Theo is present at a baptism and then he suddenly sees the face of Christ appearing. “He wears a crown of thorns with finger long thorns and He looks at me. Then He cries blood tears. In my heart I know, I feel, these tears are for me. He cries for me, not for himself. I was so astounded, I did not remember anything from it, and how I got home, that is a mystery for me”.

The experience makes him hungry for spiritual life. He plunges, advised by a fellow student, into Oriental philosophy and goes to an American Hindu seminary to study intensively. “Meditation, yoga, the soul, the *atman*. I was deeply interested. Through this meditation my spirit opened itself for the metaphysical and I received even more spiritual experiences”.

And then comes the second vision. “ I walk through my apartment from one room to the other room and then suddenly, unexpectedly: I see again the face of Christ. This time a very majestic face. He

looks at me. At about 9 feet distance from where I stand. And His face radiates; light issues from it literally. Between these light rays formulae come. Math formulae. Letters and numbers come slowly floating to me. It rains formulae. I don't understand anything of it and suddenly, it is gone again".

Atom bomb

And then in April 1977 Hans Theo Frenkel stands before a chess problem. He often plays chess with his colleagues at the university, especially with his friend Jim McClellan, a convinced communist and professor of philosophy of Marxism and Leninism. A special post during the years of the cold war. On the day that he is to drive him to the airport for a journey to China, they even play a game of chess and discuss world politics. "But we have put the board askew and the pieces aren't put right. With chess you must have always black in the left corner. With us it was white, and then the game is illegal. A normal man would wipe all the pieces from the board; turn the board round and put all of them right again. But not me. I suddenly looked through the problem with chess. The chessboard, that is our world. The chess pieces, those are the people. And the rules of the game, that is politics. Just wiping off all the pieces from the board, that is the atom bomb. Complete destruction. I thought, I go try to put all the pieces to their correct place via legal moves. Thus having black and white swap place from their begin position. To mirror the parties without wasting one piece. Shanti. Peace. Pax. But, it cannot. You can't manage it on a chessboard. Chess is all about murder and carnage. It revolves around beating enemies".

The chess problem preoccupies Hans Theo. He consults chess masters, friends, and mathematicians. It doesn't work. What he wants, doesn't exist. Until he sees, during a walk in the garden, a honeycomb with on and off flying bees in a hollow of a tree. In me speaks a voice that says: "*Are bees more intelligent than man? They make honey not war!*" And then comes the eureka-moment. The chessboard must have a honeycomb structure. So that the pieces can pass. Pawns needn't threaten each other, nose against nose, any more. People are stuck in a political system of thought and that's why there is no peace in the world".

Resurrection

Following is a phase in which the new peace chess emerges. With hexagons instead of squares. With three colours instead of two. With regents instead of kings, with ministers instead of bishops, with templar's instead of castles. And, with a whole new strategy. All the chess rules are turned up side down. Not waging war, but 'waging peace' and becoming friends. Not beating the other, but swapping place and helping the other. "The goal is to stand on the position of the other. Literally and also figuratively. It does not revolve around you, but around us together. It does not revolve around death. It revolves around resurrection".

Jesus shows himself that year once more in a vision. Life size this time. He stands in a white dress with bare feet behind two pickets with barbed wire in tall waving grass. His hands are extended. He looks at me. I do not see his lips moving, but He says in my heart: '*Come, play with me*'. I am so happy and jump over the barbed wire, and suddenly He is gone again. But this time I know what I have to do. I must develop the Metapontum peace chess game and stop lecturing Hindu philosophy".

Mathematics

Much is hidden behind the peace chess. Each piece represents a special religious tradition. It overflows with references to numbers and mathematics. But also with the literature of Hermann Hesse [The Glass Bead game] and Thomas More [Utopia], the Greek philosophy of Plato.

Important is Pythagoras' number-teachings from his mystery school in Metapontum [528 BC]. 'The game has always existed, only not in this form', Hans Theo wants to say; 'Queen Nefertari in Egypt already played it, look at this picture. But I want to prove so very much that this game, my version, originates in the vision of Christ himself'.

And then comes a mathematical discourse on the number pi. The infinite transcendental number. About the circular movement on the peace chessboard. About the 2x 33 moves that are needed minimally to succeed in the mission of Metapontum. About that Jesus was 33 years. That Pi stands for 3,14 especially in chapters 3, verses 14 in the Bible that announce the light and peace of Jesus. For me it is certain, that this game shows in everything how Christ wants that we people live. Christ is the foundation and that I can prove“.

The game is over. We shake hands. We have redeemed each other. No winner, no loser, only friendship. Friendship amongst people, but much rather worldwide. The hexagonal Metapontum table for six players represents the whole world. With six peoples that must help each other. "This is the New Eden. The Paradise. Here Europe, Africa, Asia, Oceania, the Mid-East and the America's have to solve it with each other. Peace peace peace. Just now in this time. The cold war is over, but the world is still afire. Peace. The peace of Christ is needed more than ever“.

[www. Metapontum.nl](http://www.Metapontum.nl)