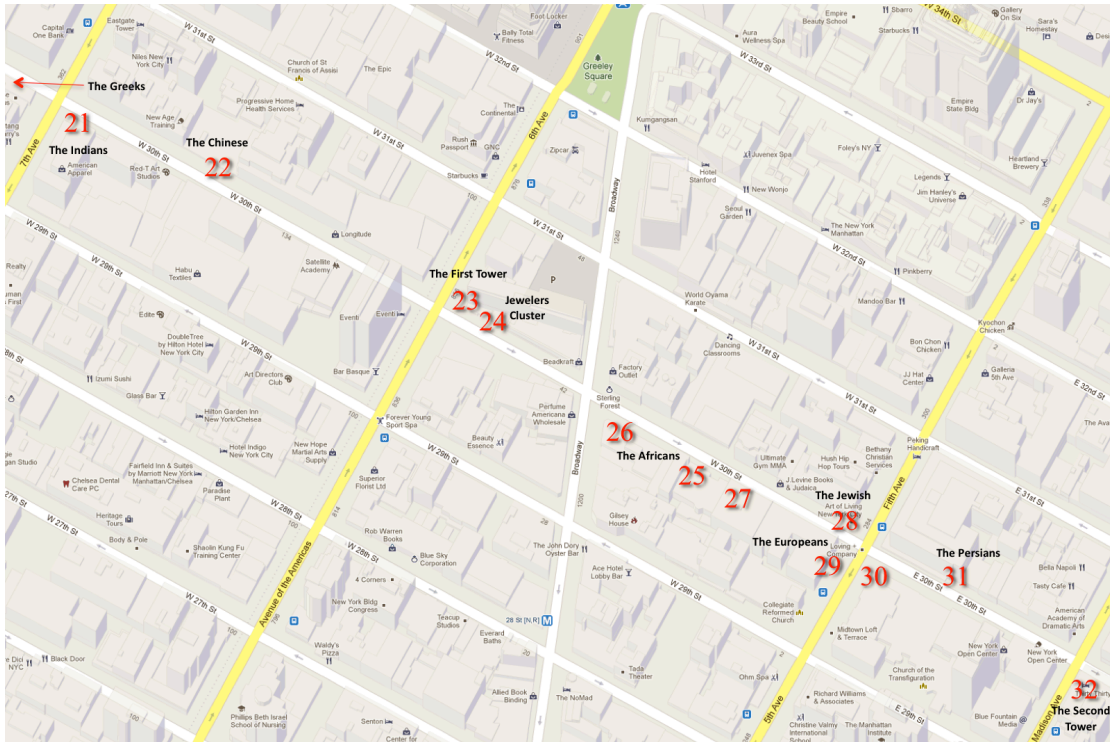


Babel, 600 B.C. (6th to Madison)



In the *Book of Genesis*, Babel plays host to the infamous tower that was built by the city's inhabitants to challenge the might of Jehovah. For their presumption, the deity confounded the language of all peoples on earth.

Here in this micro-world between 6th Avenue and Madison, cross-hatched with the former, a dozen different races co-exist alongside each other, trading their wares in mother-tongue clusters at the feet of towering, monolithic skyscrapers, like in a latter-day Babel.

This used to be the notorious Tenderloin District, an entertainment and red-light district in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Today, it has been repopulated by émigrés old and new from all around the Old World, assembled here to do business in import-export and wholesale of ethnic and religious products and services.

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21 – Non-denominational, multi-religious fashion – Black-tie, Indian, Catholic, Jewish.



22 – No. 137 W 30th St: *G. J. Fuerth & Co.* building, now a Mainland Chinese wholesaler of cheap handbags and accessories.



23 – Channeling the Tower of Babel.



24 – Mexico, Thai, Bali, Italy: the jewellery cluster.



25 – The African Village



26 – African gold: fabled, possibly Solomonic.



27 – No. 30 E 30th St: *Mac Swed Inc. Wholesale Novelties.*



28 – No. 284 5th Avenue: *Shalom Brothers Oriental Rug Gallery.*



29 – No. 276 5th Avenue: *The Holland Building* (1891), one of the most luxurious hotels in the world when it was built.



30 – More Babel-like towers towering over a derelict French Gourmet deli.



31 – The Persian Village, selling rugs and fine Persian cuisine.



32 – Gorgeous cast-iron clad skyscraper marks the eastern limits of Babel.