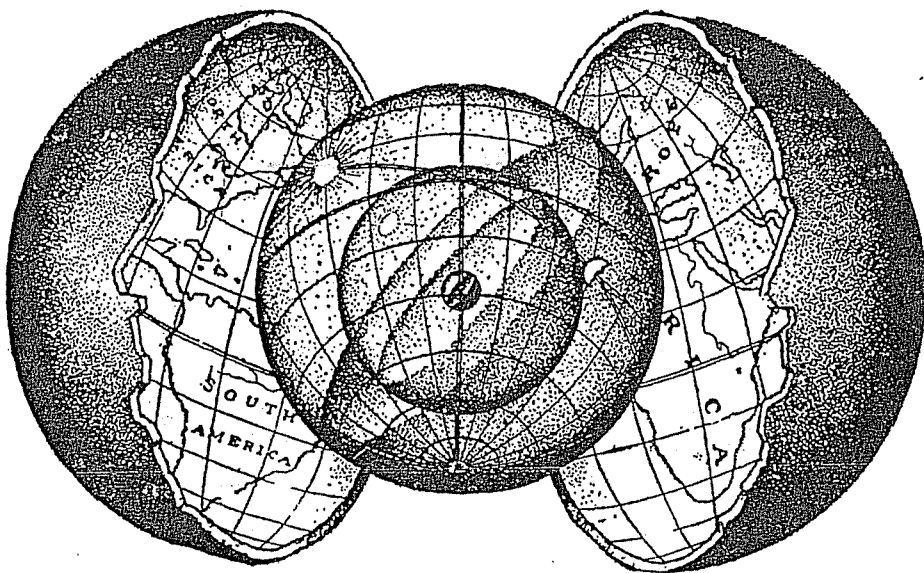


MUNN
action
icago.
em.⁴⁰
e. But
own,
e. He
idavit
otcy in
reme
is, the
house
al and
public
ctrine
ortant
r been

hal his-
unts of
graphy,
When
mother
aried in
do not
fferent
cinctly,
days as

The Koreshan Unity The Chicago Years of a Utopian Community

HOWARD D. FINE



This diagram, published by the Koreshan Unity, illustrates the Koreshan Integral Cosmogony, consisting of "the Great Cosmic Shell divided into hemispheres."

The Koreshan Unity of Estero, Florida, is the vestige of a nineteenth-century communistic millennial community, founded by Cyrus Read Teed in New York State in 1880 and nurtured in Chicago from 1886 to 1903. Teed was born October 18, 1839,¹ to Sarah and Jesse Teed in a small settlement called Teedsville, the site of present Trout Creek, in Delaware County, New York. Cyrus Teed grew up in Utica in Upper New

(New York:
(New York:

1. The middle name of Cyrus Teed may be Read, which is used by the Koreshan Unity; Reed, which is used by the Library of Congress; or Romulus, which occurs in early sources, such as Tuttle. His birth date is also in question. It is given as July 3, 1839, in George F. Tuttle, *The Descendants of William and Elizabeth Tuttle* (Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle & Co., 1883), p. 256, and as Oct. 13, 1839, in the *Syracuse* (N.Y.) *Standard*, Aug. 10, 1884, p. 1, col. 4.

FROM:
ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY JOURNAL #48
JUNE 1975



Cyrus R. Teed

York State, an area seared by the flames of revivalism. In 1859 he married Delia M. Rowe,² and in 1860 they had a son, Douglas Arthur. Cyrus served in the Civil War and was discharged for "disability" in 1863.³ In 1868 he graduated from the Eclectic Medical College of the City of New York and returned to Utica to practice.⁴

In the winter of 1869-1870 Teed claimed to have had a most unusual and mysterious experience, which he called an "illumination." Writing some twenty years later, he described what happened. As he sat in his electro-alchemical laboratory, a beautiful Goddess appeared and addressed him:

I have brought thee to this birth to sacrifice thee upon the altar of all human hopes, that through thy quickening of me, thy Mother and Bride, the Sons of God shall spring into visible creation. . . .

Look there, my Son! In that surging mass of human woe, thou seest one into whom I shall

2. Tuttle, pp. 256-57.

3. *Annual Report of the Adjutant-General of the State of New York for the Year 1903* (Albany, N.Y.: State of New York, 1904), III, 1144.

4. *Register of Graduates, 1867-1908* (New York: Eclectic Medical College of the City of New York, 1908); Joseph Arnett, comp., *Arnett's Utica City Directory, 1869-70* (Utica, N.Y.: Roberts, 1869), p. 399; also see John H. Francis, comp., *Utica City Directory, 1869-70* (Utica, N.Y.: White & Floyd, 1869), p. 319.

in time descend in my sensory ultimates, and for a time in the future—not now—shall walk with thee. In this, thy going, the divine hand shall lead thee lest thy feet stumble.⁵

This illumination was to become the central justification for Teed's work and view of life, although he also justified his mission with biblical reference—Isaiah 11:10, "In that day the root of Jesse shall stand as an ensign to the peoples; him shall the nations seek, and his dwellings shall be glorious." Isaiah 44:28, "I am the Lord . . . who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purpose.'" Cyrus in later life changed his name to Koresh, the Hebrew transliteration of the Persian translation of Cyrus, as mentioned in the Book of Isaiah.

During the next ten years Teed lived in various places in New York and Pennsylvania before settling with his family in Moravia, New York. Shortly thereafter, Delia Teed moved with their son Douglas to the home of her sister in Binghamton, New York, where she died in 1885.⁶ In Moravia, Teed established his first small celibate community in 1880,⁷ but he alienated the residents of the town, and moved his community to Syracuse. There he established the Syracuse Institute of Progressive Medicine.⁸ In circumstances similar to those of his earlier move, he and his followers left Syracuse for New York City in the mid-1880's.⁹

In 1886 Teed and some of his followers moved to Chicago after attending the convention of Mental Scientists there. The sessions were held at the old Church of the Redeemer on Washington Boulevard from Tuesday, September 8, through Sunday, September 13.¹⁰ The session on Saturday afternoon was attended by about fifty people who wished to be cured and by "a still larger number brought by curiosity to see what the metaphysical

5. Cyrus R. Teed, *The Illumination of Koresh: Marvelous Experience of the Great Alchemist at Utica, New York* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 9, 13. (No report of Teed's experience was found in Utica newspapers for the years 1869 and 1870.)

6. *Census 1880, Cayuga County*, North Portion of the Town of Moravia, p. 81. *Moravia Valley* (N.Y.) *Register*, Jan. 28, 1878, quoted in a letter to the author from Leslie L. Luther of Moravia, N.Y., Dec. 28, 1967. Luther recounted the following remembrance of the Teed family and of Cyrus's brother Wilson. "There evidently was a strain of unbalance in the family. Our electric lighting plant, two miles from the village on a stream in a gorge was started in 1891; and Wilson Teed was its first operator. One night the village lights kept getting brighter and brighter, and there was no answer to the primitive telephone in the plant. Teed was found on a hill above the plant waving his arms and talking with the spirits on the wires! (I ran this plant, 1904-1908)."

7. *New York Times*, Aug. 10, 1884, p. 1, col. 5.

8. *Syracuse City Directory, 1884* (Syracuse, N.Y.: n.p., 1884), p. 371.

9. *Syracuse* (N.Y.) *Standard*, Aug. 10, 1884, p. 4, col. 4. There are no listings in New York City directories of the 1880's that would appear to belie or confirm his residence in that city. Furthermore, there is no record of Dr. Cyrus Teed in the Physicians and Surgeons Records of the New York County Clerk's Office, which is a register of "all" physicians and surgeons who formerly or currently practiced in the county.

10. *Chicago Herald*, Sept. 4 (p. 2, col. 2), 13 (p. 2, col. 4), 1886.

believers were like and what they could do. For over an hour before the meeting opened a steady stream of ladies was entering the church, filling it to its utmost capacity. Chairs were placed in the aisles, and many availed themselves of the steps leading to the platform to use them as seats." The session was presided over by a Mr. Swarts, who attempted through metaphysical power and prayer to cure those who sought his help. He failed. Later an appeal was made for contributions. "The hint of the contribution cleared the church in quick time."¹¹

The next afternoon, the last day of the convention, Teed delivered a lecture titled "The Brain." That time the room was only about half-filled, primarily by women. The *Chicago Herald* reported that after ten minutes of silent prayer Teed took his place at the front of the room "between two buxom matrons."

Taking up a Bible, Dr. Teed held it out in full view of the audience. This book, he said, is sometimes called the word of God, but nowhere in the book itself is it stated that it is God's word. In his opinion there was but one God's word, and that was God himself. As a book, the Bible was the greatest scientific work extant. . . . An exposition of metaphysical theory followed, in which the lecturer was assisted by a chart, showing "the longitudinal division of the brain and its left hemisphere." The scientific features of the subject were dwelt upon technically and the lecturer attempted to illustrate the battery which generates the brain forces and how it can be applied in restoring invalids to health. . . . It was for the metaphysician to rid the world not only of suffering, but of death itself. Religion and science must be married and the result will be the wedding of heaven and earth.¹²

The reception given Teed must have prompted him to make Chicago his home. His views, as expressed at the convention, had not changed significantly from the time he was in Syracuse. He still emphasized the scientific and the possibility of eliminating death, but he had added a new force—the battery that generated the brain forces. As time passed, Teed's view of the world and life evolved according to his understanding of his illumination.

Teed immediately capitalized on whatever popularity he had won at the convention. In October he chartered the World's College of Life, with headquarters in Chicago, and by December he was proprietor of the Guiding Star Publishing House and editor of a monthly periodical, the *Guiding Star*, which he called "A Magazine Devoted to the Science of Being" with "Spiritual Healing an Essential Department."¹³ The World's

11. *Ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1886, p. 3, col. 7.

12. *Ibid.*, Sept. 13, 1886, p. 2, col. 4.

13. From the front page of Vol. 1, No. 1, according to a letter to the author from Hedwig Michel, president of the Koreshan Unity, May 12, 1968.

Howard L.
Bay, Onto
degree in
study of t
Elmhurst

College of Life
shows that Te
basic division
Society Arch-
Theology" an
as "Koresh."¹⁴

Teed move
his College o
Koreshan Un
stopped publ
appeared in
ing material
Koresh.¹⁶

During the
become his
L'Amoreaux
tions of the
Wheaton Co
his having be
who became
capacities as
ing House;¹⁷
house;¹⁸ and
of Shorthan

14. World's C

15. Reuben
(Chicago: Chicap

16. See, for e
House, 1889), 45

17. Donnelle

18. Donnelle

Howard D. Fine is a native of Toronto, Ontario, and now lives in Thunder Bay, Ontario. He graduated from Elmhurst College and received the M.A. degree in American studies from the University of Notre Dame in 1974. His study of the Koreshan Unity was the outgrowth of an interdisciplinary course at Elmhurst College.

College of Life published a throwaway sheet called "Metaphysics," which shows that Teed had begun to establish a following of believers with three basic divisions: the College of Life, the Church Triumphant, and the Society Arch-Triumphant. By that time Teed used such terms as "Koreshan Theology" and "Koreshan School" but did not yet refer to himself in print as "Koresh."¹⁴

Teed moved several times in the Chicago area before finally establishing his College of Life in a house on College Place.¹⁵ In that location the Koreshan Unity was to grow and blossom. The monthly *Guiding Star* stopped publication in May, 1889; in its place the monthly *Flaming Sword* appeared in December, 1889, with Teed as editor. Teed was still publishing material under the name Cyrus; not until 1891 did he call himself Koresh.¹⁶

During the years 1886-1891 Teed met the men and women who were to become his most ardent supporters. One was Professor O. F. L'Amoreaux, who wrote pamphlets and endless articles for the publications of the Koreshans; L'Amoreaux identified himself as a professor at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, but that institution has no record of his having been there. Other supporters included Dr. A. W. K. Andrews, who became vice-president of the College of Life and served in many other capacities as well; James H. Bubbett, secretary of the *Guiding Star* Publishing House;¹⁷ Mrs. Evelyn Bubbett, later the manager of the publishing house;¹⁸ and Ulysses G. Morrow, former principal of the Corning School of Shorthand at Corning, Iowa, who had taught "the Isaac Pitman System

14. World's College of Life, *Metaphysics* (Chicago, hand dated June 11, 1887), 4 pp.

15. Reuben H. Donnelley, comp., *The Lakeside Annual Directory of the City of Chicago. 1889* (Chicago: Chicago Directory Co., 1888), p. 1660; *ibid.*, 1889 ed., p. 1754.

16. See, for example, Cyrus, *Koreshan Science and Its Application to Life* (Chicago: Guiding Star Pub. House, 1889), 43 pp., and Koresh, *Proclamation* (Chicago: Guiding Star Pub. House, 1891), 4 pp.

17. Donnelley, *Directory . . . 1889*, p. 732.

18. Donnelley, *Directory . . . 1891*, p. 939, and other years to 1898.

as improved or revised by Mr. Andrew J. Graham."¹⁹ After joining the Koreshans, Morrow collaborated on writings with Teed and in 1897 was instrumental in conducting the scientific experiments that "proved" (to the satisfaction of the Koreshans) that the world's surface was concave, that we live on the inside of a hollow sphere, and that the Copernican theory of the universe was in error.²⁰ A sixth early important member of the community was Mrs. Annie G. Ordway, also known as Victoria Gratia, who was to become Teed's co-leader.

Teed established three ascending levels of membership in the community: the investigative, marital, and celibate-communal. The investigative level, the most secular, included those who had some cooperative economic relation with the Koreshan community. The marital level included husbands and wives who believed in marriage for procreation only. The highest level was the celibate-communal order, to which all the church leaders and most members of the community belonged.

Teed traveled throughout the United States, slowly acquiring followers. In late 1890 he appeared before a small audience in "lower Metropolitan Hall" in San Francisco. He told that group ("ladies represented the bulk of his hearers") "that he was the re-incarnated Messiah who was promised to come for the final redemption of the race."²¹ At that time Koresh, as Teed henceforth was known, established a short-lived community in San Francisco.²² As his popularity increased, Teed proposed a confederation of celibate societies²³ and mergers with the Harmony Society,²⁴ the Brotherhood of the New Life,²⁵ and the Shakers.²⁶

19. Ulysses G. Morrow, *Phonography; or Phonetic Shorthand: What It Is and How to Learn It* (Corning, Iowa: Published by the author, 1888), pp. 2-3.

20. See *Fort Myers (Fla.) Press*, April 22 (p. 5, col. 1), June 24 (p. 5, col. 1), July 22 (p. 5, cols. 1-2), 1897. For a description of the experiment, conducted in Florida, see *ibid.*, March 25 (p. 4, col. 3), April 1 (p. 8, col. 2), April 22 (p. 1, col. 2), 1897.

21. *The Wave* (a periodical published in San Francisco), Nov. 14, 1891, p. 7, col. 1.

22. Back leaf of *Proclamation and Judgment*, printed as one pamphlet (Chicago: Guiding Star Pub. House, ca. 1892), and *San Francisco Morning Call*, Feb. 11, 1891, p. 7, col. 2.

23. *Pittsburgh Post*, Oct. 22, 1891, p. 1, col. 8; John S. Duss, *The Harmonists: A Personal History* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Pennsylvania Book Service, 1943), p. 286.

24. *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette*, Oct. 23, 1891, p. 2, col. 1.

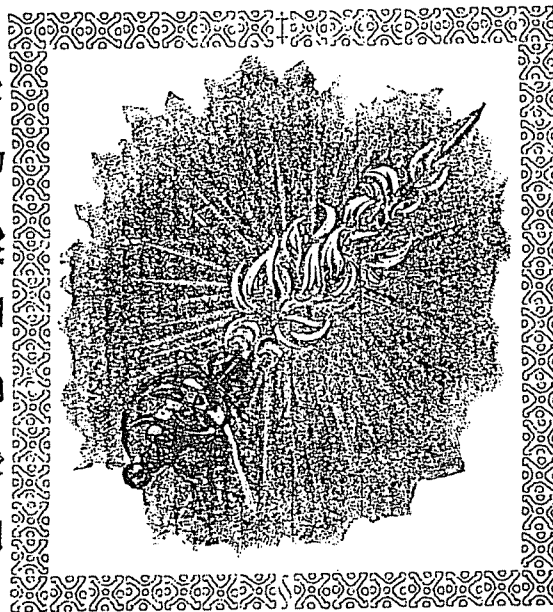
25. *San Francisco Chronicle*, Feb. 26, 1892, p. 5, col. 1.

26. Note by Catharine Allen, on the inside cover of bound Koreshan pamphlets in the Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio; Frederick W. Evans, *Shakers and Koreshans Uniting* (Mt. Lebanon, N.Y.: n.p., 1892), p. 1; and Daniel Offord and Koresh, *Letter from Daniel Offord with Reply by Koresh* (Chicago: Guiding Star Pub. House, 1892).

Opposite: Advertisement for the periodical Flaming Sword, from a Koreshan book, The Cellular Cosmogony. Pages 220-21: Diagrams from the same book illustrating the Koreshan theory of cellular cosmogony.

The Flaming Sword

the
only
Unique
Journal
in
the
World



Revo-
lutionary
in
all Lines
of
Human
Thought

THE MOST ADVANCED, ORIGINAL, AND DISTINCTIVE
RELIGIO-SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL IN EXISTENCE.

DEPARTS from the usual stiff impersonality of journalism, and adjusts itself to the level of sympathetic association with its readers. It is the clearest search-light on the drift of current events, and the truest prophetic index to the world's destiny.

For nine years it has made steady progress in its persistent and aggressive warfare against all modern shams, hypocrisies, evils, and fallacies. It is the fearless champion of the rights of the oppressed—woman, in her bondage, and the laboring man under the weight of false capitalism.

It is foremost in all lines of Science, Religion, and Social Reform. It discusses astronomy, alchemy, geology,

natural physics and phenomena, the problem of human life and destiny, the science of creation, theology, the science of history, the problem of social and economic reform, the impending revolution, and kindred subjects. It covers the ground of Universology.

THE ART OF CONVINCING involves the ingenuity of placing unmistakable evidences within reach of the view-point of the reader. With an able corps of writers educated on specific lines, THE FLAMING SWORD throws upon the screen of the rational faculties the Light of Truth, in brilliant, vigorous, original and attractive style of positive language. It is the journal you need above all others.

Published under the Auspices of KORESH, the Founder of Koreshanity; and VICTORIA GRATIA, Pre-Eminent of the Koreshan Unity.

Prof. U. G. Morrow, Editor. Evelyn Bubbett, Associate, Manager.

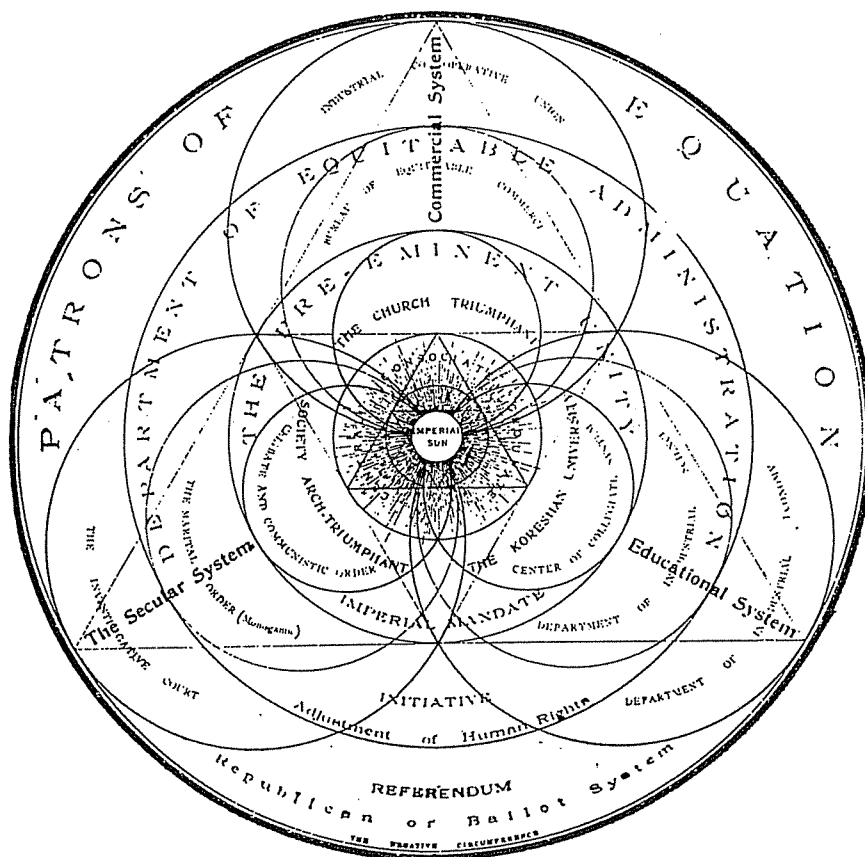
Weekly, sixteen pages. Covers in the highest style of the Engraver's Art, \$1.00 a Year. Sample for examination, FREE.

Guiding Star Publishing House, 6308 Wentworth ave., Chicago, Ill.

The Koreshan Unity.

The Cellular Universe is the Natural Basis and Pattern for the Construction of Human Government and Society.

Koreshanity is the Imperial System of Theocracy of the Golden Age.



The Language of the Physical Cosmos Scientifically Translated Into the Domain of Human Affairs, and Reduced to Diagram.

THE GREAT cellular world is the scientific pattern of the governmental, social, and economic structure of the Koreshan Unity. The universe is the language of organic unity; translated into the domain of human affairs, it reveals the laws of adjustment of all human relations. The universe itself is an imperial

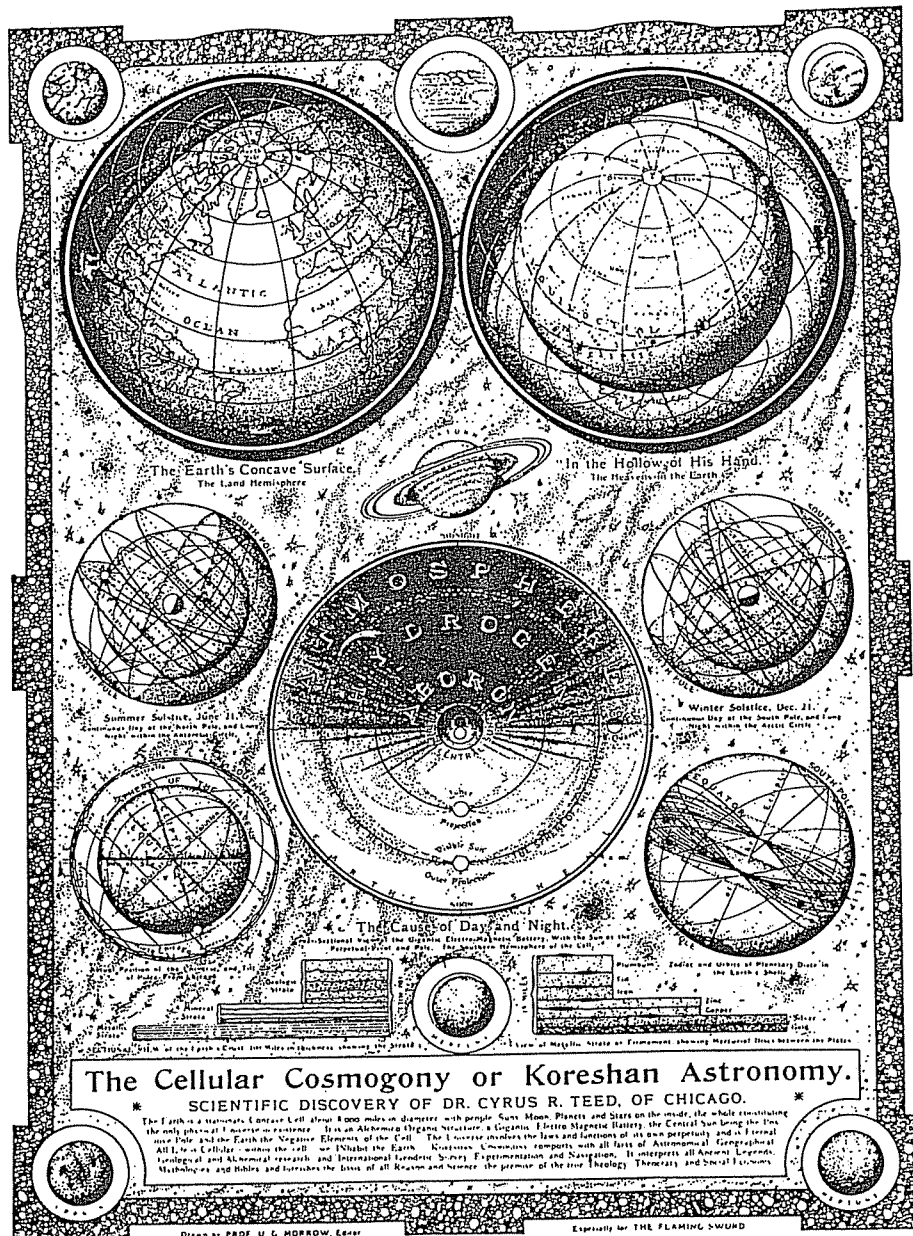


Chart of the Koreshan Cosmogony,
 Showing the Principal Astronomical Features, in Explanation of the
 Phenomena of the Heavens.
 Etching No. 8,

Throughout the 1890's Teed was faced with legal problems. On May 14, 1892, Sidney C. Miller,²⁷ president of the National Publishing Company, an independent Chicago firm, filed suit against Teed for alienation of affection.²⁸ Miller not only accused Teed of poisoning Mrs. Miller's mind and alienating her affection but also of fraudulently representing himself as Elijah the Prophet on his second advent on earth and of claiming miraculous powers, including "the power to give and take life, and . . . eventually [to] destroy the world." According to Miller's declaration, Teed had said further that he and "the wife of the said Plaintiff would on the 18th day of Oct. 1890, be translated and arise and that the wife of the said Plaintiff would be made Goddess—Manervia." Miller said that his wife had been persuaded by Teed to believe "that a woman's body was her own," that marriage and "sex and sexual love" should be abandoned, that she should "leave her husband and join the Koreshan Community," and that she should also turn over to Teed all her "earthly possessions" (which Miller valued at \$5,000). Miller contended that his wife was being harbored by Teed "for a vile, unlawfull and wicked purpose." As redress for all these wrongdoings, Miller asked Teed for damages in the sum of \$100,000.²⁹ When the case went to court on March 13, 1894, the suit was dismissed by Judge Elbridge Hanecy on motion of the defendant, since the attorney for the plaintiff was sick. The case was reinstated but again dismissed on April 28, 1896.³⁰ Though Miller's publishing company may have been a competitor of Teed's, it seems likely that the legal harassment of Teed was due in large part to his strong stand in favor of woman's rights.

Three days after Miller began action against Teed, a second Chicago husband took similar action.³¹ He was Thomas Cole, whose charges were substantially the same (even worded the same) as Miller's; both men retained the same attorney, William H. Hill.³² Cole charged that on many occasions before and after June 20, 1890, "the said Defendant committed the crime of adultery with Annie the wife of the said Plaintiff." Cole, like Miller, claimed \$100,000 in damages against Teed.³³ Teed, again represented by Charles W. Greenfield (in later years a Koreshan), denied the charges. The case was dismissed and reinstated a number of times.³⁴ It

27. *Miller v. Teed*, Case G. 103382, Circuit Court of Cook County, Ill.

28. *New York Times*, June 10, 1892, p. 6, col. 6; see also *Chicago Evening Journal*, June 9, 1892, p. 3, col. 5.

29. See Sydney C. Miller's Declaration in *Miller v. Teed*, pp. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

30. *Miller v. Teed*, *passim*.

31. *Chicago Evening Journal*, May 17 (p. 2, col. 1), June 8 (p. 7, col. 2), 1892.

32. *Cole v. Teed*, Case G. 103461, Circuit Court of Cook County, Ill.

33. Thomas Cole's Declaration, *Cole v. Teed*, pp. 3, 5.

34. *Cole v. Teed*, *passim*.

would app
plaintiff's l

On Febr
said that he
M. Cole, w
marriage. J
Teed said :

scarcely a wee
of which quar
and frequent
M. Cole, his
threatened to
never return,
remain, and .
those threats
left her.³⁵

The siste
furniture a
made repea
after becom
to stay the r
for the reas
she could le
completely
23, 1897, Ju
judgment o

A third m
specific grie
he was awa
appeal was
Herald who
believed his
nity was ind
adherents v
manner of

35. Notice a

36. *Ibid.*, 4-

37. *Cole v. T*

Fort Myers (Fla.)

38. *Exline v.*

39. *Chicago P*

would appear that the dismissals were the result of the absence of the plaintiff's lawyer from court.

On February 25, 1897, Teed signed an affidavit for continuance. He said that he had a material witness, Sarah Crosten Teed, the sister of Anne M. Cole, who had lived with the Coles during the eight years of their marriage. Basing his statement on the sworn accounts of the two sisters, Teed said that

scarcely a week passed without a quarrel between the Plaintiff and said Anne M. Cole, most of which quarrels grew out of the fact that said Anne M. Cole was continually in ill health, and frequently consulted Physicians, and that the Plaintiff was always accusing said Anne M. Cole, his wife, of sustaining improper relations with her Physicians; and often threatened to kill her. . . . Plaintiff several times declared that he would leave . . . and never return, and packed his goods and personal effects. . . . Anne M. Cole begged him to remain, and . . . said to the Plaintiff, that if he crossed the thresh-hold of their home with those threats on his lips, he should never return to her. . . . The Plaintiff then and there left her.³⁵

The sisters shortly afterward moved to another apartment, sold their furniture and belongings, and went to work to support themselves. Anne made repeated applications to join the Koreshans but was admitted only after becoming ill at the Koreshan home during a lecture. She was allowed to stay the night, and later "prevailed upon them to allow her to remain, for the reason that she was homeless, and seemed to have no one to whom she could look for home or shelter." Teed stated further that he could completely defend himself against all charges of Thomas Cole.³⁶ On June 23, 1897, Judge Edmund W. Burke, on motion of the plaintiff, granted a judgment of non suit, and thus the whole matter was dropped.³⁷

A third man, A. A. Exline, filed suit against Teed on May 25, 1892. The specific grievance is not recorded, but Exline asked for damages of \$200; he was awarded \$59 and costs. The judgment was appealed, and the appeal was dismissed on May 28, 1894.³⁸ The reporter for the *Chicago Herald* who interviewed Teed in 1894 had no doubt that he sincerely believed his own claims; the reporter was convinced also that the community was indeed a celibate one, and that the hold Teed had over his women adherents was due directly to his claims of divinity and his "flowery manner of speech."³⁹

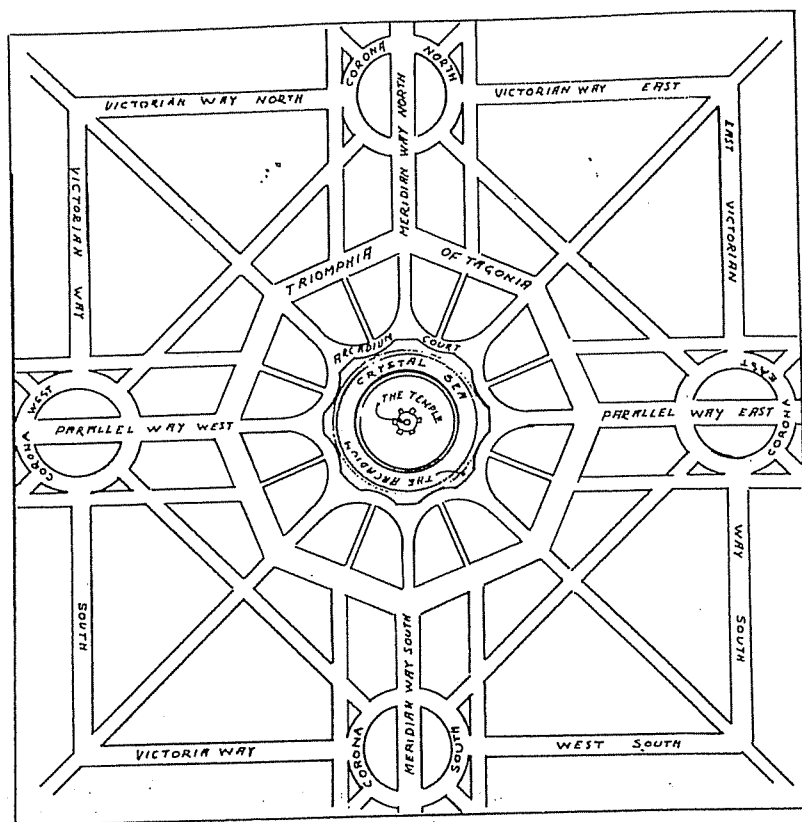
35. Notice and Affidavit for Continuance, *Cole v. Teed*, pp. 1, 5, 2.

36. *Ibid.*, 4-5.

37. *Cole v. Teed*, *passim*. Cole's "affections have been transferred since . . . to a second helpmeet." *Fort Myers (Fla.) Press*, July 1, 1897, p. 1, col. 6.

38. *Exline v. Teed*, Case G. 104606, Circuit Court of Cook County, Ill.

39. *Chicago Herald*, April 8, 1894, p. 30, cols. 1, 4.



Street plan of Cyrus Teed's New Jerusalem in Estero, Florida (from the Chicago Herald, April 8, 1894).

The year 1893 appears to have been quiet for Koresh—apart from the usual harassments of society, including a rumor that he would be lynched.⁴⁰

By early 1894 Teed had acquired land from William T. Dodd in Lee County, Florida, near Estero and about sixteen miles southwest of Fort Myers.⁴¹ The property, together with later acquisitions, was to become the

40. *Utica (N.Y.) Herald-Dispatch*, Dec. 26, 1908, p. 8, col. 2.

41. Lee County, Florida, Closed Index to Deeds, L-Z, Grantee from 1887 to July 1, 1922, p. 334. Another account of how Teed acquired Florida land is that he met Gustav F. Damkohler at Punta Rassa on Jan. 4, 1894. In the ensuing days he persuaded Damkohler to become a Koreshan and give his holding of 320 acres at Estero to the Koreshans for the site of their New Jerusalem. See Elwin E. Damkohler, *Estero, Fla., 1882: Memoirs of a First Settler* (Fort Myers Beach, Fla.: Island Press, 1967), pp. 22-23. The *Chicago Herald* (April 8, 1894, p. 30, col. 4) reported that an elderly German and recent convert, Gustav Damkoehler (so spelled), ceded 340 acres in Lee County to the Koreshan Unity, and the sect then bought adjacent land for a total of 1,000 acres. See also *Fort Myers (Fla.) Press*, Aug. 5, 1897, p. 4, col. 2. For a third different account, see Karl A. Bickel, *The Mangrove Coast: The Story of the West Coast of Florida* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1942), p. 269.

HOWARD

center of population for the N
Herald re
planned i

Membo
1894. Th
1895 two

When we c
warfare of
not object t
us to stem t
dailies of C
the orthodo
in the grea

In the
West 99
Koresha
6:11).⁴⁴

Mansion
property
grounds
and flow
the prom
member
formerl

Public
on joini
thereby
prosely
magazin

42. *Ch*

43. *Fr*
Gathering o
Jackson la
Debar. See
Koreshans
"The Sha

44. *Do*

45. *Le*
1962.

46. *Ch*

center of the world, thirty-six square miles of land with an expected population of eight million faithful Koreshans. When Teed's great plans for the New Jerusalem became public, he was interviewed by a *Chicago Herald* reporter, who described both the Chicago community and the one planned in Florida.⁴²

Members of the Chicago community began to move, a few at a time, in 1894. Those who remained were finding life increasingly unpleasant. In 1895 two members wrote:

When we opened our work in Chicago nine years ago, the press of Chicago opened a warfare of slander which it has pursued almost uninterrupted till the present time. We do not object to being called cranks, visionaries, impracticable, etc.; but it has been difficult for us to stem the tide of the lying slanders of a vituperous and monopolistic press like the great dailies of Chicago. Despite the efforts of the press of Chicago and the country, abetted by the orthodox clergy, we have made some progress. We have held our community together in the great Babylon of modern church and court.⁴³

In the early 1890's the community had moved from 2-4 College Place to West 99th and Oak streets, in what was then Washington Heights. The Koreshan home there was called Beth Ophrah, or home of Gideon (Judges 6:11).⁴⁴ Large and luxurious, the home was also known as the Hilliard Mansion, after a former owner.⁴⁵ It was described in 1894 as "a fine property . . . surrounded by broad, shady verandas and magnificent grounds thickly studded with old trees and made attractive by grass plats and flower beds. With . . . [Teed] in the same fine building live some of the prominent angels. There are seven cottages besides in which other members of the Koreshan community live, and an office building—formerly a huge barn—in which is the printing office."⁴⁶

Publications were the primary means of acquiring new members, who on joining turned over all of their material assets to the Koreshans and thereby kept the community solvent. The Koreshans continually proselytized in and around Chicago, distributing their leaflets and magazines and holding street-corner meetings. Between 1890 and 1895

42. *Chicago Herald*, April 8, 1894, p. 30, cols. 4, 1.

43. Frank D. Jackson and Mary Everts Daniels, *Koreshan Unity. Communistic and Co-operative Gathering of the People: Bureau of Equitable Commerce* (Chicago: Guiding Star Pub. House, 1895), p. 7. Jackson later left and married the notorious confidence woman (convicted on several counts) Dis Debar. See *Fort Myers (Fla.) Press*, Jan. 5, 1899, p. 1, col. 6. Daniels, after moving to Estero, left the Koreshans and joined Olive Branch, the Florida community of the Shakers. See Russell H. Anderson, "The Shaker Community in Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 38 (1959-1960), 37.

44. Donnelley, *Directory . . . 1895*, p. 1708.

45. Letter from the Chicago Historical Society to Mrs. F. M. McConnell of Tampa, Fla., Sept. 14, 1962.

46. *Chicago Herald*, April 8, 1894, p. 30, cols. 2, 3.

the number of Koreshans was reported to be 160 in Illinois, 15 in California, and 15 each in Massachusetts and Oregon.⁴⁷

In 1897 Teed was once more faced with a number of lawsuits, in both Estero and Chicago.⁴⁸ In Cook County, Illinois, in December, 1897, Vienna A. Parsons sued Teed (and fellow Koreshans Annie G. Ordway, Virginia K. Andrews, Bertha Boomer, Mary Maycomber, Henry G. Silverfriend, Evelyn Bubbett, and James H. Bubbett)⁴⁹ for \$3,500, which she claimed the community owed her.⁵⁰ Teed, she said, had signed a promissory note for the sum, which had been delivered in two payments, on July 13 and November 21, 1895, at Estero, apparently for the use of the Koreshan Unity. Teed answered the charge by pleading that he had been "unlawfully imprisoned and detained by the plaintiff (and others in collusion with her) . . . until by the force and duress of imprisonment, he made the said notes and delivered the same to the plaintiff . . . and this he is ready to verify."⁵¹ Vienna Parsons denied that Teed had signed the note while imprisoned or under duress, and on May 23, 1900, she was awarded \$2,244.11 and costs. But when the sheriff attempted, on April 23, 1901, to raise the judgment from the assets of the defendants, Teed was the only one he found in Cook County, and Teed had no assets to be liquidated. He listed his property to the sheriff as follows: "Necessary wearing apparel. One share of the capital stock of the Daily Englewood Company, a corporation. Membership in Koreshan Unity." Teed had no cash on hand, and no debts were due or owing to him. There were no further proceedings in this case.⁵²

Teed continued to write books, pamphlets, and articles, which were published first by his Guiding Star Publishing House and from 1898 to 1902 by his Englewood Publishing House in Chicago.⁵³ He was president of both concerns.⁵⁴

Teed moved from Beth Ophrah to a smaller house in 1902,⁵⁵ and by 1903 the Koreshans had disposed of most of the community's assets in

47. H. K. Carroll, *The Religious Forces of the United States*, rev. ed. (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1896), p. 118.

48. General Index to Civil Cases—Defendants—Lee County, Florida [to April 1, 1968], K sheets, p. 39.

49. *Parsons v. Teed*, Case G. 179040, Circuit Court of Cook County, Ill.

50. Praecipe, *ibid.*

51. Cyrus R. Teed's Plea, *ibid.*

52. Parsons's Replication and the Execution and Debtor's Schedule, *ibid.*

53. Donnelley, *Directory* . . . 1901, p. 624, and *Directory* . . . 1902, p. 643. See also the different addresses in the directories for 1898, p. 1764; 1899, p. 585; and 1900, p. 604. The Englewood Publishing House was also known as the Daily Englewood Company.

54. Donnelley, *Directory* . . . 1898, p. 740, and *Directory* . . . 1903, p. 870.

55. Donnelley, *Directory* . . . 1903, p. 2086.

Chicago. . .
on Novem

In Flori
they ente
establish
The com
newspape
in Fort M
22, 1908.

The Ko
nineteent
was a cor
With his
Koresha
tional sit
Hedwig
odical; is
Resource
Nature C
Koresha
restorati

56. Clau
p. 7.

57. *For*

58. *Ibid*

59. *The*

System).

60. *For*

61. *Ibid*

62. Ro

63. Go

Socialisms (

United Sta

and Co-oper

Present (N

munities in

"An Analy

Location,"

munities, P

Utopian,

AUTHO

Miss Hed

informati

the Esterc

invaluabl

Chicago. The last Koreshans seem to have moved from Chicago to Estero on November 17, 1903.⁵⁶

In Florida the number of Koreshans increased to about two hundred; they entered politics,⁵⁷ opened a printing plant,⁵⁸ and worked for the establishment of a university⁵⁹ and the incorporation of Estero as a town.⁶⁰ The community also began to publish the *American Eagle* as a local political newspaper. In the election of 1906, Teed became involved in a street fight in Fort Myers.⁶¹ He sustained injuries that led to his death on December 22, 1908.⁶² Since that time the community has steadily dwindled in size.

The Koreshan Unity has, nevertheless, had a relatively long life for a nineteenth-century utopian community.⁶³ While its founder lived, there was a continuing creative development of the community and its beliefs. With his death, the community lost its momentum and faltered. The Koreshan property, however, is now a recreational, historical, and educational site. In May, 1965, the *American Eagle*, under the editorship of Hedwig Michel, resumed publication as a horticultural conservation periodical, issued monthly with the byline "For the Wise Use of Natural Resources." In 1965 also, the Koreshan Unity deeded eighty acres to the Nature Conservancy for a nature preserve, and there, in April, 1967, the Koreshan State Park was opened after the state of Florida had commenced restoration of historic buildings in the Koreshan community.

56. Claude J. Rahn, "Some Brief Phases of Koreshan Universology," *American Eagle*, March, 1967, p. 7.

57. *Fort Myers (Fla.) Press*, Sept. 27, 1906, p. 4, cols. 1-2.

58. *Ibid.*, Nov. 26, 1903, p. 1, col. 4.

59. *The Pioneer University of Koreshan Universology* (ca. 1904; rpt. Estero, Fla.: Koreshan University System).

60. *Fort Myers (Fla.) Press*, Sept. 8, 1904, p. 4, col. 1.

61. *Ibid.*, Oct. 18, 1906, 2nd ed., p. 3, col. 4.

62. Ross Wallace, "Cause of Dr. Teed's Tragic Death," *Flaming Sword*, Feb. 15, 1909, pp. 58-59.

63. Good surveys of utopian communities include John Humphrey Noyes, *History of American Socialisms* (1870; rpt. New York: Dover, 1966); Frederick A. Bushee, "Communitistic Societies in the United States," *Political Science Quarterly*, 20 (1905), 625-64; William A. Hinds, *American Communities and Co-operative Colonies*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Kerr, 1908); Ernest S. Wooster, *Communities of the Past and Present* (Newllano, La.: Llano Colonist, 1924); Ralph Albertson, "A Survey of Mutualistic Communities in America," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, 34 (1936), 375-440; Julia Elizabeth Williams, "An Analytical Tabulation of the North American Utopian Communities by Type, Longevity and Location," Thesis University of South Dakota 1939; *1967 Directory of Social Change; Intentional Communities, Psychedelic Churches, Scientific Mate-Matching, Social Change Agencies* (Medford, Mass.: Modern Utopian, 1967).

AUTHOR'S NOTE: The author wishes to thank Dr. Rudolph G. Schade of Elmhurst College; Miss Hedwig Michel, president of the Koreshan Unity in Estero, Fla., who graciously supplied information, advice, and documentary material, and who also made it possible for the author to visit the Estero community; and Dr. J. Philip Gleason of the University of Notre Dame, who provided invaluable criticism and guidance.