

Chapter 19

Reconciliatory Points

I come to you as a man selling air,
 And you will think twice at the offer and price,
 And you will argue that nothing is there,
 Although we know that it **is**—everywhere.
 I bring a formula largely untold,—
 Of forces, mixed with between and betwixt,
 And only seen when allowed to unfold,
 And better felt when the body is cold.
 I have a map to the home of the soul.
 Beyond the mind is a golden find,—
 The paradox is a guide to the goal,—
 Though doubt is sacred, each man is the Whole
 (Rose, 1988, p. 241).

With these words, Rose explains the nature of his gift to us, and his awareness of the necessary mystery to its discovery.

The material covered in this report has been diverse. Aspects from various teachings, although related like strands forming a rope, seem to conflict, as do some principles even within Rose's singular teaching. Discrimination has been employed to clarify the multiple factors and perspectives involved and their associative implications. As the paradox permeates all relative inquiry, an overview and summation is needed here now.

To begin this process of assessment, the matter of validation must again be addressed, specifically in regards to two aspects of the originally stated purposes of this dissertation: its accuracy in conveying and explicating Rose's teaching, and the verity of the Realization itself on which his system is based. As Rose's own evaluation is the only applicable standard of measure that can settle these two issues, following are his conclusive comments to me after his having read the foregoing material:

I found your manuscript exceptionally good—and carefully objective. I have nothing to change about it. The clod will not read much of it. Nor will the pill-poppers. If it

reaches the esoteric students, or the quasi-scientific professional critics, who are looking for something besides "love" or snake-pit propinquity...I feel certain it will hold their attention, and possibly inspire them to deeper enquiry.

My mirrored view in regard to my spiritual message is that it is unproven, but reasonable. It is unproven because my personal Experience or Samadhi was not witnessed...which science demands. It was reasonable because it employed deductive reasoning in its truest sense...by finding an algebraic curve, bending in reverse away from less probable possibilities (personal communications, 1989).

To clarify an important point: Rose's experience was proven and witnessed – by his *becoming one* with the ultimate Witness, which he realized as the Self...the very ground of validity. It was not witnessed nor provable by others outside of the experience because, in Truth, there were no "others," nor anything "outside". The algebraic curve of retreat from error and projection that he followed, which is the path, terminates in the final equation: **one** (the awareness of unity) **divided by zero** (death) **equals infinity**.

It has been explained how one major problem in presenting any esoteric teaching is that the point-of-reference for the material being taught varies according to the level or relative position on the path of the student receiving the instruction. The apparent conflicts between equally valid principles exist only when seen from these different vantage points in experience. Understanding the sequence of spiritual evolution helps to determine where and how a particular form of work applies.

In the form and direction of inquiry discussed in this study, four progressive categories of experience-as-identification (or major rungs of the ladder) can be delineated:

- (1) At first, one is totally identified with the picture-show projection of life (also known as "normalcy" or "sleep").
- (2) One considers oneself to be a distinct person who is being aware; a seeker who is practicing self-observation.
- (3) One's point-of-reference shifts to being identified as the awareness/witness of the person and this person's world, as things apart from the seer.
- (4) The realization: "I am the All" – all objects seen in consciousness are known to be aspects of Oneself.

This is not merely theory. Clear introspection reveals that, while still on the path, our "I" as an experiential reference point of identity is found to be in fact two "I's" simultaneously: that of the little person who is living and searching, and the observer or awareness of this person. This is not a reference to the principle of "the-self-as-many-I's" which Gurdjieff exposed, for those are all on the same level of experience and are interchangeable. The two centers of identity mentioned here are of entirely different dimensions or levels of being and exist concurrently. We are not just one "I." There is a subjective, personal viewer of life (from "inside" us) and an objective, impersonal viewer (from "outside" us). Furthermore, one can see these observations from both vantage points on experience happening at once. The little person's self-consciousness is contained within the larger awareness of this person. *What is seeing or containing them both?* Rose's assertion: "The tiny man and the observer are one, and the Final Observer is the Absolute" is what reconciles this last duality.

This crucial point also addresses the heretofore oft repeated seeming conflict between the "There's nothing to do" aspect of Advaita Vedanta and the "Work like hell" insistence in Rose's form of Zen. What happens on the path is that the proportions or ratios between these two above "I's" of

identity gradually shift from the former to the latter as its source, as categorized more specifically in the four phases mentioned earlier.

This is much like a rocket going from the Earth to the Moon. At first, it is difficult for the rocket to escape the Earth's gravity field, the same as it is for the ego-mind to become disassociated from strictly mundane attachments. Gradually, it reaches the mid-point between the gravity fields of the two bodies of influence. This is the stretch of the path where the seeker really does not have a home, either in the world or in Heaven. This is the transition between phases two and three listed above, and where the committed vector is all one has — or is. By this point, one no longer regards awareness as "my" awareness (like the egocentrically designated borders of a country's air space), but as impersonal, boundless awareness (like the atmosphere of the Earth). There is no "picture-frame" delineating the boundaries of aware selfhood. From here on, one begins to identify more and more with the Observer than with the observed (including the person-as-self), as the gravity of the higher Mind pulls one back into it, reversing the Fall.

The advantage of Rose's method of teaching is that he does not allow room for the seeker to cheat by pretending in imagination that one is really "the Self", and thus rationalize sitting idly in ignorance, when this "Moon landing" has not yet been accomplished in experience. He is advocating that work be done on both "I's" at once, until the All is attained and there is no longer any division.

Advaita tends to emphasize only the top end of this channel between the aware Self and the human self, with little attention paid to the consequential follow-through from the bottom or relative end. Zen works from both ends at the same time: the mind's making the effort to answer the mind and cultivating the detached comprehension of this dualistic effort, until the channel is cleared through and pure awareness permeates all in unity. This comparison also somewhat parallels the relationship between Raja and Jnana yogas. Raja can be likened to Advaita in its emphasis upon the direct approach to realization of transcendental Being. Jnana involves Zen's attending to the discernment between the real and the unreal and thereby backing into a truer quality of mind. Thus the latter (Jnana/Zen) can be considered to be a part of the methodology to implement the aim of the former (Raja/Advaita).

Furthermore, to tie some other previously discussed themes together, the ideal of Raja yoga can be realized through either of its two forms or routes: the path of mindfulness (which is of the masculine nature) and the path of devotion (the feminine nature). When properly manifested, both are non-dualistic. However, one must be very young or very old inside to take either road effectively: young enough to not yet have a ponderous ego of resistance or old enough that it is dead or dying. In addition, despite the critical comments in the introductory section of this report about the path of devotion contrasted with the path of mindfulness, in mature experience these become more the same the more we become whole.

The Fourth Way seeker works both ends of the channel at once by employing the Heart's way to wholeness through function and Mind's way to wholeness through comprehension simultaneously. In practice, honest devotion is the underside of being. Doubting inquiry is the underside of awareness. Together they are the prayer of the soul, which is the channel. Whether the core of one's path is to reside wholly in the Witness or to genuinely surrender to God (meaning: "what is"), the result is the same: becoming the Truth. Either way, the mental construct that regards itself as a seeker who is doing the witnessing or the surrendering is at last dissolved and reabsorbed into the Self. This is also where the comments in the section on sexuality and transmutation reach their fruition. Love is not sentiment or sensuality. **Love is the feeling of being; the awareness of unity.**

Taking all this into account, Rose's use of Zen in the Albigen System could be said to incorporate the purest meaning of Advaita — abiding in the stillness of the aware Self that contains all experi-

ence, while acknowledging the reality of our current reference point within the projected relative world and thus "using" it, by deliberately promoting the dynamic identification with the process of mental refinement that is necessary and which can only later be recognized as having happened by itself, with no one "doing" it. His insistent claim, however, is that one will not reach that state of no-action without first committing to great action. Two of Rose's metaphors about the path could thus be blended together: one sits quietly by the side of the Ganges watching the river flow, while swimming upstream with determination through the swift spaces.

Although from one perspective, this progressive, from-part-to-whole approach (e.g. Gurdjieff's Fourth Way) is a lesser or more elementary path than is the start-from-the-wholeness non-path (e.g. Klein's Advaitic teaching), from another angle, what is regarded as "work" could instead be seen as the outer manifestation or concomitant adjustments of "inquiry", but without the pretense of autonomous, willful doership about it. This dimension of emphasis is important because while it is true in principle that there is nothing for the Self (as totality) to "do" in order to become what it already is, Rose's insistence is that **we are not this Self now**, but are experientially still a small "s" ego-self stuck in some dead-end maze of illusion, and so must "do" the work of *becoming*; of remembering oneself and returning to the Truth. We do this by answering to the homing signal emanating from the Invisible Current passing through this self, from Reality. Intuition is the living presence in this ray, being both its voice on one end and our ear on the other. Although the self is suspected to be essentially nothing but a state of delusion that takes itself seriously, to work both ends of the channel means to work on dispelling the delusion from within one's state, as well as from outside it through recognition of what this blob of mind-stuff really is and not feeding it with continued belief.

In order to refine our discrimination in the strategic approach to self-definition, it is worth pausing here and more intently confronting the question of precisely WHO it is who is deluded and suffering (or indulging in non-existent happiness) and what that (our) status has to do with Realization. Is the Self deluded — or only the self? As the self is not fundamentally real, is its plight real or is that too of the delusion? What must change? What realizes the truth? Does the self discover — or does the self's seemingly autonomous existence end and What Is is revealed...to whom? This is the final relative paradox. What needs to be done? The seeker's task is to find that sole particle of the seeker that is real; that point being one end of a ray whose other end is already and always in Reality. "I" is the ray. It was in reference to the eventual discovery of this essential unity of oneself with reality that the mystic, John Davis, testified to one of Rose's students: "Your soul is the ultimate judge."

This key issue can be touched more readily in our personal experience in determining: what exactly changes when one becomes aware of something in consciousness of which one was not aware previously (some hidden psychological pattern, for example, or a forgotten dream)? The content of consciousness was existent all along, expressing itself and coloring one's perception even without one's being aware of it. Much of psychodynamic therapy in particular focuses on bringing such subconscious material to consciousness, to then be resolved. However, this becomes esoteric work when one comes to understand that in actuality there is no such thing as the subconscious as differentiated from the conscious; the terms being misnomers. There is only consciousness of which one's awareness is not yet aware. There is nothing that is not in awareness, yet the crucial issue is: where was awareness, or what was its quality, prior to such a shift in one's point-of-reference occurring — and what changed? There was awareness of consciousness during the period of unknowing too (otherwise it would be impossible to "see" the experience or gestalt later), even while "one" was not aware of, or in, awareness. Who is the one who is or is not aware and, as awareness does not change, what exactly is the difference?

The actual nature of experience is that **the observer** is what sees the on-going flux of consciousness. This is the mind watching the mind. *Awareness sees the observing.* The observer is a functional pivotal point at the highest edge of the mind and it is only when observation inverts upon itself that awareness becomes self-aware. This is our only difference from a pinball. This is the meaning of Jacob's Ladder. With this in mind: what would happen if seeing were to invert upon seeing, inverting upon seeing, interminably?

Nothing actually changes in any of this. The only thing that seems to change is the location and definition of the "I." We go from being a state of delusion that identifies with itself, to the anonymous observation of this state, to the aware-Beingness that contains this seeing.

Continuing with the previous theme, the spiritual depth psychology of Jim Burns and Roy Masters, the Gurdjieffian Work of becoming a capable seeker, the deliberation to purify and sublimate the sex desire, the attention strengthening practice of Vipassana, the exercise of triangulation involved in reconciling polarities, seeing the relationship between causes and effects in one's life, and overseeing all egos and states-of-mind so they are not in conflict, and all the rest are forms of effort meant to bring the human self into alignment with the Truth, which in the end is found to have been the real source of the impetus for this inner refinement all along, and not the stumbling ego; this false self originally being the root cause of all deviations from truth, until its becoming transformed into a philosophic vector. With this perspective on the paradox, "the serenity to accept what I cannot change" – which really means everything – is finally found to include that sub-category of factors which one can (meaning: is compelled to) change. Thus, the first step on the path is to surrender all egos but the one desiring Truth. The other steps take themselves. This entire debate is only another, though major, example of how the mundane mind sees reality in duality. This issue does not exist when totality is realized. The seeker, the path, and "arrival" are one.

A way of tying in all this with the Albigen System is in recalling Rose's statement: "You are what you do, until you realize you do nothing – that you are the Observer." In this sequence of spiritual maturation, "You are what you do" is the bottom end of the channel and "You are the Observer" is the top end. Regarding all of Jacob's Ladder as one large triangle of existence, the two lower poles of relative interaction could be considered the bottom end of the channel, and the summit "point" of comprehension (which is not a point) is the top end.

Despite the majesty of pure Advaita Vedanta, Rose is being realistic in declaring that it is impossible to start from the wholeness, however splendid this sounds in principle. We must admit this is not the exclusive reality of "where" we experience ourselves to be right now (depending upon how far one has been able to pull back from the picture-screen of life), and so the ultimate aware-Beingness can only be a concept at the outset. Faith is dualistic, whether the object of the faith be a postulated God or a Self, and the one maintaining the faith is separate and undefined. Becoming the Unknowing, and thereby becoming the Truth, is non-dualistic. Thus, the path is not a process of developing powers or choosing philosophies, but of dispelling false categories. To unbecome what one is not is the way of the Albigen System. One backs into Reality. This is Rose's brilliant contribution to transpersonal psychology. One big difference between his recommendations about the path and that of too many other teachers is he does not overestimate people, nor underestimate adversity.

Yet, even in this praise there is a paradox. One justifiable criticism of Rose's manner of presenting his views is that, in his efforts to compensate for the student's known weaknesses and the treachery of the adverse forces, he tends to reach down too low on the ladder in much of his discourse (ironically violating one of his own principles), and does not attend as much as he could to the finer distinctions in validity between partially valid teachings, or the subtler aspects of the work on the top two triangles of Jacob's Ladder. Many of the comments throughout this paper have been an attempt

to combine and reconcile the various relevant doctrines discussed, and indicate how they all tie in with the total system devised by Rose.

Rose provides much of this summary function himself in his assessment of the basic trap of narcissistic self-deception into which most human beings fall – many seekers included – and his perspective on what the honest manner of living and searching should be that would lead to spiritual growth. He presented this overview in the context of his feedback to me about how his teaching was interpreted in this paper. He focuses in particular on the key principle of “point-of-reference,” explaining how he deals with it differently than I did, though not negating the emphasis or angle as already described. In this outline he addresses the task of establishing validity more from the “objective” mode of inquiry than through the “subjective” end as I did. In doing so, he is ironically approaching the issue the way I had originally done (as mentioned in the previous chapter), before I had encountered Rose's teaching and shifted my orientation! Regardless, here he offers his supplementary comments:

Our (man's) point-of-reference is the Earth – and our body (feet) that rests upon it ever precariously. The only thing that keeps us from drifting out into space is a magnetic draw to this abysmal stage and grave. But mankind does not accept even the Earth for a point-of-reference. He creates other points-of-reference. One of these is God [meaning: our vain imagining of “God”]. If he actually used the EARTH as a point-of-reference – he would drift toward a clearer understanding of the laws of Nature. But in choosing [this created] God, he subordinates Earth – having the ecclesiastical edict that God created the Earth as a playhouse for those important micro-organisms (people). Man's only way to change or exalt his Point-of-Reference is to somehow transcend the earth by seeking its (and our) source and by relentlessly peering into our essence – or peering into the self to see if it has an essence. 2) The next point-of-reference is MIND. Not our synaptic toy, but the MIND (BEING or DIMENSION). 3) The final Point-of-Reference cannot be named, except that it is our definite Being. However, once that Being is reached – it becomes a Point-of-Reference that gives embodied man a clearer view (definition) of our self and destiny. (personal communication, 1989).

In these three stages he is succinctly describing the summit of each triangle in Jacob's Ladder. He is also indicating how our mental interpretation of life experience – whether conceived in religious or psychological terms – is upside-down: we unknowingly rearrange the view and live as if we were already at the top of the Ladder, regally subduing and consuming the world around us, when in fact we are generally hopelessly struggling along the baseline of the bottom triangle, denying our own meaninglessness in ever more insidious ways. Our only hope is to humbly note our real position and obediently follow the dotted line back up.

There is one common issue running throughout all the parallel teachings discussed in this paper, though defined and addressed in different ways: what ends the ego of “me” that obscures the real “I”? While on one level it is true that the “me” cannot ultimately end itself, as all its very efforts to do so also perpetuate its existence, Rose's recommendation to answer this predicament is a paradoxical, Chinese finger-trap toy method of strategic suicide; progressively narrowing the gap in duality up the ladder, until some shock from beyond or outside or inside the seeker abruptly shatters one's rooted identification in relativity and brings about this non-finite leap of being into unicity.

“Who am I?” is finally found to have been a trick question; a koan. There is no answer. The silence is the answer. “I” am the silence. The essence of the path is the pure witnessing of the life of the mind, while this mind attempts to answer itself, until the gestaltic thought-ego called “me” dis-

solves, ending the inquiry into the root of this self. It is discovered at the end that no one was ever really there—the thought-self has no core to it. This flimsy shell floats in Mind substance more real and alive than this imagined entity ever was. The “me”-ego is actually the crude reflection in the mind of the “I”-Self. This human self is found to be a conglomerate of nearly infinite factors, like a complex, multi-dimensional connect-the-dots figure, that believes in its own conceptualized sovereignty. However, when this is clearly seen, the real Self is realized to be the space between the dots.

This space is aware and one’s progressively realizing this awareness—which is the “going within”—is the common thread running through this entire process of inquiry. This is why the path to reality has been said to go through the self and why self-knowledge must be a prelude to Self-Realization. One must correctly individuate before being able to justly obliterate individuality. The channel repeatedly referred to is really the aware ray of “I-ness” originating from the Source; the common “eye” between Man and God of which Meister Eckart spoke.

This treatise has been vast and complex; the labor of sorting through and evaluating its myriad elements has been nearly overwhelming. Much like the homeopathic principle of exponentially progressive concentrations and purifications of essences, we arrive here at a summary of this path of self-definition:

The Albigen System brings one to this open “eye” through a process of refining one’s point-of-reference of selfhood along the reverse vector, motivated by curiosity and desire, powered by transmuted energy, maintained in betweenness by polarized tension, and guided by intuition. This is the becoming. This state of betweenness held in tension as one pulls back out of the projection is like masterfully balancing the world on the head of a pin, after it has stopped spinning. This is non-duality. The three-fold path of observation/becoming the truth (the Truth), self-inquiry/retroverting the projected ray (the Way), and chastity/ladder-work (the Life) is the vehicle that brings one to the goal.

By the end of the path, when one sees that the “me”-ego has no center to it, one has been reduced to nothing but a question mark, a conscious absence, a concern about the unknowing, steadfastly asking: “What is Truth?” There is also the awareness of this state. Awareness is behind the mind at this point, but this awareness does not fully know itself. To know that one does not know removes the final filter of mind and places oneself in a position to be claimed by the spirit of What Is. One can only wait openly in this stillness, dying into zero. The rest is Grace; its workings and reasons known only to God.

Although in Genesis it was related how the Lord had put Adam to sleep in order to create humanity, there is no evidence Adam ever woke up. In his troubled sleep, he dreams of having fallen. He dreams of serpents and demons, and sees visions of make-believe glory. The Tree of Life is forgotten, yet ever waits. This is the great task of the esoteric path: to wake up and reclaim our rightful place on the throne. The task is not easy. However, it is Rose’s living testimony that the prize can be won and is not only the privileged domain of Messiahs and Avatars. He tells us what this quest demands and how it unfolds:

The path to Truth, or Reality or Essence is very simple: It requires a Selfish man, an individualist not afraid of the annihilation of individualism, a fearless man not afraid of powers within him that are much greater than himself, and a man of suicidal relentlessness once his commitment is given. All that is necessary to find the Truth is an unconditional commitment—not putting a time upon the commitment nor a greater value on any other desires or fears. If a person sincerely makes a commitment, he automatically becomes a vector in a sure direction. But if we wish to see the commitment

become an Absolute result in this lifetime, we must be conscious of our limited time, and of ways and means to expedite the realization. All energies must give priority to the vector. Every hour must be used in a way to expedite the success. So that as soon as the general commitment is made, we should immediately commit our energies which are generally used for anger or pleasure so that transmutation will bring Intuition. The voice of Intuition will be our most valuable teacher. It will furnish all future planning for the campaign. But do not rest. Make violent efforts, but do not disturb the sleepers. (Rose, 1985, p. 315).

The final statement in every mature spiritual teaching is: **All is One and I AM THAT**. The basic guidelines of the road map to this discovery which Rose has left behind are now before us. He can do no more. The rest is up to each one of us, everyday, for the rest of our lives. He had foretold his students years ago that the TAT group is a functional entity whose larger significance is as yet unknown to us. The full story is yet to be completed, collectively and individually. This consideration holds equally true in the circumstances of every person's life-drama. Will we carve out our own destiny towards Self-Realization – or be consumed by *the illusion*?

Rose leaves us with these final words of portent (written on plaque in TAT ashram):

The secret of all relations between man and the infinite is to be found in the Self. The secret of eternal life requires a knowledge of death. The secret of death is found only by dying. To be a witness to this secret, one must die and return. Those who do not enter the Self, know nothing of the infinite. Those who do not die, know nothing about a greater reality called death. Those who teach disciplines, unless the disciplines are for introspection or for dying, are teachers of systems of orderly leisure, autohypnosis, or self-deceit. Let us convert our fears and emotions into energy, our doubts into substance and facts, our faith into a belief in our Self – and life into Reality.

Peace to the Wanderer.