

## Chapter 1

# Psychology of the Observer: Origins and Purpose

*I am a mirror that madness looks upon and sees a hope surmounting foolishness. (Rose, 1982, p. 95)*

This book will present a system of transpersonal psychology called the Albigen System. This teaching is claimed by its creator, Richard Rose, to lead one to the direct realization of the Absolute state of being, or in religious terms: union with God. Rose considers this experience to be the ultimate meaning of Selfdefinition; the final answer to the question, "Who am I?" His work is devoted to fulfilling the Delphic Oracle's maxim: "Know thyself, and all the gods and universe shall be known to you as well." Selfknowledge is the cornerstone of the temple.

### **Richard Rose: The Man And His Search**

Rose devised the Albigen System to be a comprehensive transpersonal map to the Self. His purpose has been to lead the seeker as quickly as possible to a personal realization of the final goal pointed to by the highest spiritual teachings throughout history.

One might justifiably wonder at this point how Rose came to know about spiritual matters and by what right he claims to be an authority on the subject. After all, if a student of truth encounters a teaching that purports to guide one towards Godhood, at the expense of much time, energy, and commitment, one should have some tentative confidence that the teacher's convictions have been validated by experience and are not based on mere conjecture or salesmanship.

This very question was once posed to Rose at a lecture in which he was making critical comments of evaluation about assorted religious doctrines and Godconcepts. The questioner may have been religiousminded and was offended by Rose's opinions, or perhaps himself had reason to be wary of possibly one more fraudulent religious teacher. Whatever the motive, this skeptical person asked a legitimate question; one which Rose too would have asked had the positions been reversed.

The fellow asked: "You're talking a lot about God but what makes you such an authority on God?" Rose faced him and unflinchingly replied: "I am God." There was a tense, deadstill hush in the room at this seemingly blasphemous, grandiose claim. Then, he added: "And so is each one of you. The big difference is: you don't know that. I do."

Rose's assertion is that he has experienced the final goalstate of the spiritual quest, and thus is able to offer commentary and advice to fellow seekers from that vantage point of realization. His stated desire has been to save people time and unnecessary hardship by describing what he considers to be the most direct path through the long maze of duality and delusion.

His own search had been largely a blend of intuition, experimentation, struggle, and luck. From this process, and the answer with which he claims it culminated, he was able to define the essential principles of inner work that he feels every serious seeker needs to know, as well as point out the common traps and tangents that may seduce or divert the unwary traveler (Rose, 1986b).

Referring to the factors that make for success and the destiny that seemed to shape his own life, Rose admitted that he had always felt himself to have been born under a "lucky star." In retrospect, he considered himself to have been guided through different phases of search, by an unseen Intelligence, towards an answer he did not anticipate nor would have desired.

Rose entered a Catholic seminary as a teenager to study the traditional church doctrines. He found that the personal search for God was not encouraged there, and was even actively thwarted. His desire for honest answers to questions about religious issues was not satisfied. He was instructed to believe that knowledge of theological dogma and devotion to the church was all to which one could-or shouldaspire, as God was forever unknowable to the human being, and accessible only indirectly through religious symbolism or faith in a designated intermediary.

Rose was not willing to accept this as a conclusion to his spiritual search, and left the seminary after a few years. In college, he turned towards science, working on the possibility that if he could come to fully know the composition of matter and the workings of the physical world, he might be able to take an inferential step from there and discover the nature of the metaphysical reality beyond its boundaries, and perhaps even the Creator of the universe.

After a few years of such study, he realized that this external, materialistic domain of search would never lead to the comprehensive answer for which he was searching, but could only result in further fragmentation and complexity without end. He did not think it was possible in one lifetime to ever know all the factors and their interrelationships that make up the physical dimension, and that even if it was, there was no guarantee that such knowledge would result in the spiritual understanding he really wanted.

By this point in his early 20's, his intuition had developed to the point where he realized more clearly what he was after and what it might take to find it. The existential doubt about the value of life, while the nature and meaning of that life was unknown, grew. He had the conviction that life was not worth living if he did not know who was living and why, and that he must do everything he could to find out.

Having exhausted his hopes of finding philosophical truth through materialistic science alone, and with his religious upbringing still fresh within him, he began to suspect that much of the answer to his questions about life could only be found from an objective vantage point outside of life; in other words: in death. He thought that possibly in the realm of death, the illusions and limitations of life would be dispelled, and the true perspective on existence, as well as one's relationship with God, would be found. At this point, he was still expecting the spiritual quest to culminate in the encounter with an objective, benevolent, personal God, separate from himself.

Rose would also later admit that much of his philosophical desire was motivated by fear: the fear of death, the fear of dying in ignorance, and the fear of oblivion. So, with this as an additional motive, his curiosity led him to wonder how he could come to know about the reality of death. The

obvious answer that occurred to him was: if one wants to know what death is like—find a dead person and ask him.

This took Rose's search into the domain of spiritualism. Although well aware of the dangers of desire-motivated hallucination, as well as outright fraud, his studies led him to believe it might be possible to witness genuine materializations of the souls of the departed, and inquire into their knowledge and experience of the other side. But, in this too, Rose was to be disappointed.

After studying the psychic/occult world for awhile and going down numerous dead ends in spiritualist exploration, Rose claims to have finally experienced at least one genuine encounter with the astral remains of some deceased persons in a séance. But, the answers he received from them to his questions about the nature of the deathstate, the larger significance of life, and their knowledge about God or Christ were all vague, and their quality or presence of mind was mediocre. Realizing now that people do not automatically become wise just because they become dead, Rose was forced to conclude that they knew no more about Reality than he did, and that indeed, as Christ stated: "The dead know nothing".

At this point, Rose arrived at a major insight about the nature of his path; one he was to repeatedly emphasize throughout his subsequent teaching. He realized that he would never be able to find the truth, as a condition or state apart from himself. He also intuited that the truth was not something that could be learned or acquired, in the sense of one's looking for the ultimate philosophical concept-structure or belief-system to embrace and maintain. The answer would have to be somewhere inside himself, not out in the world of things and thoughts.

His intuition told him that, whatever the final answer might be that he hoped to eventually find, he would have to experience it personally and directly. He also sensed that for such an interior realization to occur he would have to undergo some process of personal refinement, so that he would be able to more meticulously search for the truth, as well as "receive" it, should the truth be found. He would have to know and perfect himself as a seeker.

There was another significant implication to this need for accurate self-definition. As the fear of death strengthened his urge for survival, and there was little hope of the body's becoming immortal, Rose realized he would have to more precisely know who it was who was faced with death, and exactly what aspect of himself might realistically hope for immortality.

It was at this point that he made the commitment to himself that he would dedicate the rest of his life to doing everything he could to find "God," or the final answer that incorporates all of life and death. He felt certain that this would be the most important thing he could do with his life, and that life itself would have no justification if this effort was not earnestly made. And, while knowing that there was no guarantee of success, he consoled himself with the thought that, at the end of his life, should he still not have found what he was after, he would know that he had not wasted his life chasing shadows, and could face death with self-respect.

Faced with the task of self-transformation, Rose wholeheartedly embarked on a multilevel manner of search. From age 21 to 28, he followed a strict yogic lifestyle: vegetarian diet, yoga exercises, celibacy, and long periods of isolation. He studied every available religious, philosophical, and psychological teaching. He experimented with different forms of meditation. He traveled to find groups, teachers, coworkers, and systems of inner work. He isolated the principles and techniques from each source that seemed meaningful and applied them to himself. He studied himself, intensely, from all angles. He did everything he could do to find wisdom and "God."

Rose was rewarded with peace of mind and emotional contentment. He had tremendous vitality and mental clarity. He could see the beauty, wholeness, and perfection of the natural world.

He was in harmony with himself and walked in balance with the flow of life. He experienced mystical bliss. He was free of all external concern, all temptation, all fear. He was his own master and felt that, in a sense, he had conquered the world. He imagined God was smiling down upon him from Heaven.

But yet, after seven years of this, Rose knew this was not the final answer he was seeking. A part of him was still seriously unsatisfied. He saw the grandeur of the world, but did not know what the world was, or Who created it. He felt the joy of life, but did not know what life was, or for. He believed himself to be blessed by God, but did not know this God or His purposes. He became a free man, but he still did not know who he was ultimately. And he knew he was not free of death.

Rose became acutely aware of the passage of time and that the reflection in the mirror was becoming less flattering. He was forced to admit to himself that this long period of tranquility, punctuated by moments of ecstasy, did not really answer his core concerns about the real nature of existence. Furthermore, he was aware that death was always waiting in the wings to finally negate his experience of paradise.

Rose began to feel that his quest for spiritual verity was hopeless and wondered if he had not been kidding himself all along with a massive exercise in egotism. There no longer seemed any justification for him to assume that God was around the next corner, ready to reveal Himself. He had lived in expectation that at any moment, the heavens would part, the bugles would blow, and the angels would descend in their golden chariots to greet him and whisk him away to glory. But, as Rose wryly noted, "They never came."

With his reclusive, ascetic lifestyle, he also felt that perhaps the life and simple joys of an ordinary human being were passing him by. He had exhausted every form of inquiry and discipline he could think of and it had not worked. He did not know what else to do. So, he quit.

Or rather: he tried to quit. He made motions to reenter social life and pursue the more conventional goals of family and career. Yet, despite the conviction of seeming futility, he continued to find himself in libraries, studying philosophy, doing his yoga exercises, and relentlessly examining the subjective issues that obsessed him.

He became more frustrated. One reason for this was his being able to find little reliable information and experienced guidance during his years of eager search. Rose did admit to going through much philosophical material during this period that was thoughtprovoking and served to bring up personal issues which he needed to examine; Blavatsky's Theosophy and Paul Brunton's works in particular.

Still, Rose considered much of the spiritual teachings available to him to be either too shallow and simplistic or lacking in practical methodology to be of much help in leading him to valid answers. He found most of the existent groups that he investigated to be filled with sham and pretension, rather than a mature, sensible approach to philosophical inquiry. But, most infuriating to him was his discovering that too many of the spiritual teachers he encountered were phony. He realized that they not only did not have the real "goods," but often had motives with their students that were mercenary, predatory or sexual.

These experiences had a strong impact on Rose, and would influence much of his own later teaching. One result during this period was his making the vow that should he ever find anything of value at the end of his search, he would make it readily available to whoever was interested, plainly and without a fee. He was later to explain that he believed this vow to have been an important part of the formula leading up to his Realization. He suspected that it might not have occurred had he not first made this commitment to pass along whatever might be "given" to him.

These experiences of frustration and disappointment in his search, while proving to be grist for the mill of self study, had a second, significant effect on Rose: one that may be reflected even in the tone of this report. This attitude is best summed up in his insistence that doubt should be the chief mode of inquiry, rather than belief.

Rose learned the value of discrimination and rejection of the false or less essential throughout his years of philosophical investigation. He intuitively followed the path of negation, and did not hesitate to criticize what he considered to be inadequate, or altogether absurd. His aim was to arrive at a state of mind that was free of all impurity, and not be misled into the complacency of an unproven and possibly unworthy faith.

This combination of anger and discernment resulted in a style of teaching that stresses judgment, not acceptance. His views have sometimes been criticized as being "negative", but to this he routinely responds, "Negative to what?". By this, he means that the negation of negativity (the false) is true positivity, as versus the indulgence in the affirmation of rationalizations, born of laziness, desire, or fear that this term often really means.

This seemingly irreverent attitude likewise manifests throughout this report in the attention paid to Rose's critical evaluations of the numerous philosophical and psychological issues that must be examined. In addition, his tendency to encourage turmoil and confusion in the seeker or rather, to provoke one to see that this really is one's usual state in the process towards genuine knowing, will also be much in evidence. He explains:

If I can create a hypodermic, it has not been intended for any sensitive posterior, but is rather aimed at the heart and head. I feel that time is short and that honest men will appreciate honesty in the long run. I wish to reach those who prefer to encourage wakefulness... (Rose, 1978, p. 70).

Rose continued to walk his path, not quite knowing what he should do, yet "playing the drama of life with one face and looking eagerly to heaven with the other" (Rose, 1973, p. 224). The tension between dual desires, and the apparent impossibility of satisfying either, tore him apart at the seams.

Then, what he refers to as "the accident" occurred. Whatever finally precipitated the crisis and transformation—whether a crack in the pavement or an errant thought, Rose would recall: "...once the catalyst started the change of mind, absolutely nothing mattered. I had no attachments beyond myself...once I became...more deeply" (Rose, 1978, p. 225).

It would be indiscreet at this point, as well as create confusion, to describe the full nature and implications of that experience. The realization, and the knowledge that derived from it, will be much further referred to in Chapter 17, in its proper context.

It is sufficient at this point to state that Rose claimed to have had undergone a profound and traumatic change in being that resulted in his discovering Essence, or the Self. He had arrived at the final form of existence, beyond (or prior to) life and death. He had witnessed the entire universe, along with Richard Rose in it, disappear yet, his "I," as the nameless observer, remained. He realized himself to be one with the Absolute. In this experience, Rose found his answer, once and for all (Rose, 1978, p. 229-236). This realization of Truth was not what he had been led to expect, however. The experience was not one of cosmic rapture or communion with the Divine. Rose elaborates:

You pick up a book on Zen and you read about satori, which is the 'wow' experience. A fellow says, "I went to such and such ashram, I stayed there so many months or years, and one day wow, I know it! And I had a beer with the head master and we went away laughing together we got it!" This is not Enlightenment. Because if this man had

experienced Enlightenment, they would have carried him out on a stretcher's that drastic. You don't die and then laugh and say "wow!" Death is more final than that. (Rose 1985, p. 86).

The experience showed Rose who "he" was, forever. He realized the identity of the ultimate Self. From this vantage point on the other side of death, he was able to correctly view the real nature of life, and the relationship of the realms of life and death to the Self.

Who did Rose discover himself to be? I recall once hearing, the possibly apocryphal, account of the Buddha being asked by several followers who he was. They asked him: "Are you a God? Are you an avatar? A saint? A magician? A prophet? Who are you?" Supposedly, the Buddha bluntly replied: "I am awake." According to his testimony, this is who Rose is. The same One is awake in them both.

Not only did Rose believe that his previously mentioned commitment helped provide the critical momentum necessary to propel him into that experience, he felt it was also responsible for his being returned into the world what he now recognized as a dream dimension in order to share his discovery with whoever could hear him. He presents his offering this way:

For those who are somewhere in between the folly of youthful hedonism and the indifference of old age, some system needs to be salvaged from the experience of those who managed to make a grand assault upon definition, and who admittedly found an answer. (Rose, 1979c, p. 73).

This intention resulted in Rose's beginning to talk about what happened to him, and attempting to make contact with those of a like mind. Gradually, people gathered around him and an esoteric school was formed to further the work.

Rose called the group: T.A.T., standing for Truth and Transmission. He chose this name to signify that Truth is the ideal, the unknown goal which is sought, as well as the primary means truthfulness in all ways by which the end is attained. Transmission refers to the ability of the fully Enlightened teacher to convey a profound spiritual realization to a student who is ready to experience it, as well as to the efforts of the people within the school to help others on their own level of work, towards this end. By this, the commitment is maintained and perpetuated. This dissertation too is a part of this chain.

Also, it may not be a coincidence that the word "Tat," in the Hindu religion, refers to Reality, Brahman, or That Which Is.

(Preceding section compiled from: Rose, 1978; 1985; plus numerous lectures and personal communications).

Still, given all this information, how is an honest seeker, who does not wish to be deceived or misled, to know for certain whether or not a teacher's testimony can be trusted? In a domain as abstract as spiritual research and discovery, one's "credentials" to verify authenticity can finally only be of a nonmaterial, nonrelative dimension. A higher level of reality cannot be measured or validated by the tools and standards of a lower one. Yet, this very principle can be used by a false teacher as a ruse to deceive the naive, much like the humbug Wizard of Oz.

Admittedly, anyone wellversed in mystical literature, with a talent for communication, and a charismatic or authoritarian manner may profess to be a guru and concoct and promote a teaching for some selfish, rather than benevolent, purpose. Other individuals may have a useful, though incomplete, teaching, yet claim their meditation technique or psychological principal, for example,

constitutes the entire path to Godhood. Some may be sincere in their intentions, although erroneous in their convictions, especially if the convictions came from drug use or excessive emotionalism. Others may even be mentally ill and not know it, yet seduce the unwary or susceptible.

Seekers find themselves in an awkward position. Without knowing in advance what Enlightenment is, or even that such a state really exists, one must still have some reliable way of judging the worth of a teacher's offering before trading valuable years for the expected ticket to eternity.

No exhibition of powers or expression of profundities alone is proof positive of an individual's spiritual state of being, as magicians and scholars can provide the same display, yet without their having arrived at the Source of all power and knowledge. God seemingly awards no doctorates, black belts, or gold medals as indicators of attainment. The Enlightened person brings back no such souvenirs from the Absolute to substantiate the claim of visitation.

Rose admits that a person cannot know for certain the level of spiritual realization of another, nor can the latter claimant prove the reality of his state to the former inquirer through words or deeds alone: "We cannot hope to know, by relative mentation, that which another has come to know or realize by a direct mind experience" (Rose, 1979c, p. 60). The only way the teacher's veracity could be determined would be for the student to apply himself to following the recommended map out to its finish and experiencing that goal state personally. Also, in the special instance of transmission, the student's mind, when readied by such preparation, can become one with that of the teacher, whose mind is an everpresent, direct channel to Reality (Rose, 1975, p. 55). Still, how is a seeker, who is looking for a reliable teaching with which to work, to decide if the commitment to a particular path is worth making? Finally, a student has no choice but to go with whatever appeals to his intuition. One has to follow the course that best suits one's own nature and capacity, once the person knows himself well enough to maturely judge this and not be swayed by lesser desires or rationalizations for weakness (Rose, 1986b).

Other criteria for judging will be further discussed in the main body of this book. The most basic measure, however, is that of knowing the goodness of the tree by its fruits. A valid teaching will prove its worth to the student as each step is taken, with or without the teacher's personal involvement. As this category of spiritual work discussed here is aimed towards selfdefinition and "becoming," seekers can realize as they go along the extent to which the practice is resulting in greater selfknowledge, mental clarity, and mature being.

Above all, Rose fully endorses Christ's declaration: "Seek and you will find." His own individualistic, and at times uncertain, manner of exploration suggests that how one seeks is almost less critical to success than the sincerity and determination with which one seeks.

Also, Rose does not claim that his teaching is for everyone or is the only valid path:

If I have a system, it is simply a system by which Truth is reached by the continual analysis (not breakage) of various transcendental poses, and by a constant vigil over the many factors within the self. I make this statement because it worked for me, and in my lifetime. The system is not new nor mine alone. I only hope to clarify things a bit. (Rose, 1978, p. 193).

His teaching is meant simply for those who recognize that it speaks to them. The Voice calling the seeker home speaks different words through different mouths, in order to be heard by different ears, but it is the same One speaking. And perhaps listening.

In its original form, the manuscript was a PhD. dissertation, hence its somewhat scholastic tone, for which I apologize to the non-academic reader.

## **Historical Antecedents**

The focus of this book is the description of and elaboration upon Rose's system of inner work. However, as original as Rose's thinking will be seen to be and individualistic was his own search, his teaching is really a modern reformulation of principles found in several rich spiritual traditions.

The systems of thought most aligned with Rose's own include: Advaita Vedanta, Zen, Gurdjieff Ouspensky's Fourth Way psychology, Kundalini, Jnana, and Raja yogas, Vipassana Buddhist meditation, and the collection of mystical writings generally referred to as the Perennial Philosophy. A brief description of these teachings here will provide some contextual reference for Rose's work. These and other pertinent sources of wisdom will be further elaborated upon in Chapter 2.

Advaita Vedanta teaches the essential unity of the human soul (Atman) and God (Brahman). The objective of the quest, according to this teaching, is the direct realization of the Self. This "Overself" (Brunton, 1970) refers to both the ultimate identity of oneself and the spiritual source of the universe, which are found to be the same.

Advaita Vedanta describes a path of nonduality towards this goal. This has several aspects:

1. All phenomena – sensations, perceptions, thoughts, feelings, "things" (including the body), etc. – are recognized to be apart from the spiritual "eye" or awareness that is witnessing them.
2. All such varied phenomena are really an undivided whole, as their existence is grounded in the single, unbroken field of consciousness that experiences them;
3. As the view cannot be the viewer (this view including one's human self), one ceases to identify with what is seen on this videoscreen of consciousness and one's "Iness" retreats further back into the observing Self; and
4. Only the absolute, anterior Self is real and is found to be the true source of all phenomena, which are a projection from this Self (Balsekar, 1982).

Philosophically, nonduality refers to the Self's existing in totality and unicity within itself (the "I am that I am" of the Bible) as well as with the Creation which it contains. There is no division between the seeker and the "God" that is sought; there is only the Self. All seekers and gods are within this Self.

This principle has a key psychological significance. The process of search is not conceived of in dualistic terms, as in many religious teachings, i.e. one's going from "here" to a better "there", performing some technique or practice of self-discipline to achieve a desired result, or looking for an answer or experience apart from oneself to satisfy oneself. Rather, one is guided towards the maturing recognition that one is not so much on a path to somewhere else, but is the path into greater being. The real transformation consists of one's going back more deeply into the source of awareness behind the mind until fully merging into the final Self. The goal is not conceived of as the seeker's finally being in communion with God, but rather the transcendental experience of absolute Isness, with no "I" or "Thou."

To realize this, it is recommended that through the development of proper discernment one learn to perceive all phenomena inner and outer directly as a whole, undivided experience in consciousness, and to identify with this sole anterior perceiver or "experiencer" of this consciousness that one really is. In this way, one is extricated from identification with the complexity and delusions of this projected experience and attains freedom from duality.

There is a paradox in this teaching, as in most spiritual philosophies. All perceptions arise and all experiences occur within the Self. There is nothing “other” or “outside” all is Brahman. However, the Self transcends this phenomena, and in this sense is considered separate from the content of the consciousness perceived (Godman, 1985; Maharaj, 1982; Wei Wu Wei, 1964). As Ken Wilber puts it, God is both the top rung of the ladder and the very wood from which the ladder is made (Wilber, 1983).

While Advaita Vedanta is the core psychological component of the Hindu religion, originating in ancient India, Zen may be considered the intuitive essence of Buddhism, which was transplanted from India to China, and then to Japan.

The aspects of Zen that correspond to Rose’s teaching are similar to the Advaita Vedanta principles described above. These include: 1) reconciling all forms of duality so that the unity of all experience is recognized, 2) pure mental apperception uncontaminated by ego, concepts, or beliefs, 3) using the mind to overcome the mind, and 4) looking into the origin of the “who” that one is as an idea in consciousness, getting behind this mental self, penetrating into the state prior to its inception, and directly observing this impersonal reality (Chang, 1959). Once this seeming void is entered and the essence of mind, or “suchness,” is realized, one may then come to understand its relationship to the world that is perceived.

The experience of a nonverbal, mindtomind transmission between teacher and student of spiritual realization is also a key principle in Zen.

Zen also involves an existential attitude of one’s focusing on the immediate, naked reality of experience, without buffers, interpretations, or dichotomies in mentation. This allows the intuitive sense to unfold, freed of egocontamination, thereby clarifying one’s attention and guiding one’s understanding. One can then see the world as being new for the first time (Benoit, 1959; Blofeld, 1958).

The teaching of Gurdjieff, a Russian mystic and philosopher, shares Rose’s attention to the workings of the human mind and how its failings prevent one from attaining the higher spiritual ideal to which Advaita Vedanta and Zen point.

The purpose of this teaching is largely to transform the individual from a confused, hypnotized automaton into a dynamic, clearminded seeker. Gurdjieff accused mankind of being asleep and taught that the mechanical and frequently negative qualities of human nature prevent one from awakening to objective consciousness.

He developed a system of psychology that helped the individual seeker to do “the Work” in several ways:

1. To become more aware of the complexity of one’s experience, thereby correcting the errors, waste, and delusions inherent in mechanical, unconscious living;
2. To unify and harmoniously develop the diverse aspects of oneself into a mature, masterful individual who has the capacity to “do” something that is meaningful; and
3. Through prolonged selfobservation and the raising of energy to higher centers, to nourish the soul or being behind the cluster of egos and experiences called the person, in preparation for a final transformation in consciousness to the real Self (De Ropp 1968; Gurdjieff, 1975; Ouspensky 1949).

Each of the three yoga systems referred to previously—kundalini, jnana, and raja—emphasize a major aspect of these above processes that relate to Rose's own teaching.

Kundalini yoga is designed to awaken the dormant power residing at the base of the spine through various mental and physical means and raise it to its terminal apex at the crown of the head. This results in the experiencing of a transcendental state of consciousness in which the individual's mind merges into the spiritual mind pervading the cosmos. This psychic and neurological evolution is the reversal of the "Fall of Man" (Krishna, 1975).

This practice of sublimating and transmuting human energy from its expenditure on the baser functions and desires is also for the purpose of fueling the more subtle work of self-development, for nourishing the faculty of intuition, and for redirecting one's attention from the physical world to the inner workings of the mind (White, 1969). This is where Kundalini yoga blends into jnana and raja yogas.

Jnana yoga is the path of intellectual discrimination in the analysis of the real nature of phenomena. This involves the psychological work of sorting through the complexities of mental functioning and experience, and finding Brahman through a process of elimination of the transient, apparent, and superficial (Patanjali, 1969).

Jnana yoga also involves the formal study of teachings of wisdom by those who have attained spiritual Realization and learning to apply these philosophical insights towards self-understanding. This mental understanding may then, with increasing maturity and persistence of purpose, result in the transformation into Being-understanding (Balsekar, 1982).

Raja yoga is said to be the highest yoga, incorporating aspects of all the other forms of yoga. Specific techniques of meditation are practiced for the purpose of controlling the mind and turning one's attention away from the fruitless distractions of thought and sensation. To do this, various methods of concentration are employed, such as devotional prayer, repeating of a mantra, watching the breath, focusing on different chakras or psychic centers, or contemplation of images of divinity. The self-enquiry into the root of the "I am" is the Advaitic form of Raja yoga (Rama, 1976).

These exercises develop one's power of clear observation and result in detachment from the conceptual content of the mind. As this is gradually accomplished, the identification with the objects of consciousness ceases and this observation is free to turn back in on itself. It then focuses on the pure awareness behind all mental processes, leading to the interior source of the self. Direct, intuitive insight into one's essence is thus achieved (Sadhu, 1976).

Vipassana Buddhist meditation emphasizes the common theme running throughout these teachings: the pure watching of all mental processes—thoughts, sensations, emotions, memories, reactions, etc.—without identification, judgment, or reaction. This serves to bring about more thorough self-knowledge, nonvolitional correction of error, a perfected ability of observation, a mind that is still, quiet, and receptive, and greater awareness of one's essential condition (Goldstein, 1983).

In Chapter 2, this will be seen to tie in with ideas in modern Phenomenological/Existential psychology as well as the form of meditation taught by Roy Masters.

The Perennial Philosophy is a collective term for a body of spiritual teachings that can be considered the mystical end of religion, on the other side from theology. The main points in this philosophy are:

1. All religious teachings have a common, underlying unity of direction and meaning;
2. The human soul is an extension of God, in which all souls are found to be one, and not separate from God; and

3. The reality of this ultimate Self can be directly experienced and not only maintained as a concept of faith (Huxley, 1970).

In addition, the field of transpersonal psychology has developed in recent years to more specifically implement the aims of these traditional spiritual teachings. Its intent has been to translate these perennial philosophical principles into personal, psychological terms, so that the nature of the work on oneself towards Self-Realization can be more clearly understood by the individual. Researchers, such as Ken Wilber, have worked to devise accurate inner “maps” of consciousness that can serve as useful guidelines in subjective exploration (Wilber, 1981; Tart, 1975).

### **Reasons For Presenting This Study**

1) The initial reason is that, after 20 years of studying the fields of psychology, religion, philosophy, and metaphysics, searching for skillful guidance towards crucial answers about existence, Rose’s teaching has been the most thorough and workable one I have yet found. Rose has a skill for identifying the primary points of relevance in other, diverse teachings and synthesizing them into a more comprehensive system.

For example, he draws out the key aspects of the different schools of yoga—the transmutation of energy, mental refinement, and purification of observation—and shows how they interrelate. Another example is his explaining the significance of various meditation techniques, principles of mind science, occult doctrines, etc. and how they fit together into a hierarchy of practical value in working towards Self-Realization (Rose, 1981). He anticipated the work of later transpersonal psychologists, especially Ken Wilber, in specifically defining the essential factors involved in this work and outlining a realistic “map” of the territory to be covered.

2) In working towards this end, Rose has not been satisfied to provide scholarly analysis alone of all available theories. Likewise, he has not pretended to “prove” the validity of his claims by describing a concept-structure or belief-system that is of such logical symmetry or inspirational value that one should be made to feel safe in inferring its likely truthfulness.

Rose’s intention has been to describe a process that he claims leads and led him to direct, personal (so to speak) experience of the Absolute. As such, his ideas stress an attitude of boldness and urgency in defining a shortcut towards the goal-state, unencumbered by excessive dogma, conceptualizations, or mechanistic ritual.

3) Related to reason number two is Rose’s emphasis on presenting a practical, self-oriented system of ways and means aimed specifically at inquiring into and identifying the source of the seeker, rather than exploring any number of tangential and derivative, although admittedly fascinating, paths that he claims do not lead to the essence of the matter, but only to further diffusion, fragmentation, and externalization.

When Rose refers to a teaching or procedure as being tangential, he does not mean that it is necessarily false. His assessment of the worth of a philosophical principle is always in relation to its usefulness in helping one to achieve one’s desired objective, and not as an absolute value in itself. Different goals will require different means of attainment. The path to power will be somewhat different from the path to peace of mind, for example, which in turn will be different from the path to knowledge, and so on. The path to truth has its own stringent criteria.

Rose insists that the central issue in the spiritual search is that of selfdefinition; the answer to the question: "Who am I?," all other concerns being extensions of that. As such, his evaluations about various areas of study, techniques, etc., and his own recommendations for further work on the self, are always based upon how directly and completely they address the answering of this question.

For example, the study and practice of divination, psychic phenomena, healing methods, religious ceremony, or secular psychotherapy, may all be quite helpful in their respective domains. One may become healthier, more intuitive, or more efficient through these disciplines. Rose only suggests that there is a line of inquiry that goes directly to the core of the matter and incorporates the most pertinent aspects of all these and other teachings. This serves to save the seeker time and energy, as well as works at satisfying the real desire found to underlie all forms of seeking: the wanting to find one's essence (Rose, 1984).

4) It is a formidable task for a teacher to communicate clearly and unambiguously about abstract, subjective matters, of a dimension that is at first largely unknown to the seeker, yet without paying the price of oversimplification. Likewise, it is important for students to find information to which they can relate as readily as possible, given the inherent difficulty of this entire line of work, even under the best of circumstances.

Many traditional religious and philosophical systems convey their messages in terminology and a style that can make their inner meaning and relevance hard to grasp. The numerous diverse, and sometimes conflicting, interpretations of Biblical scripture, for example, indicate how uncertain the real significance can be of teachings that originated in a time and culture much different from our own.

Not only this, but the very nature of mystical experience, the inadequacy of language to describe it, and the apparent nonrationaleven nonvolitionalmeans of attaining it, lend themselves to a strong tendency towards metaphor and symbolism in order to convey the message. Unfortunately, this mode can also prove to be frustrating in one's efforts to decipher the elusive, intended meaning with precision.

In addition, the recorded information about Christ's relationships with his disciples, as well as the history of Zen Buddhism and Raja Yoga, indicate that the real inner meaning of these teachings could only be transmitted in some direct manner from Master to student; the full reality of which could not be translated into words for the benefit of a third party (Blofeld, 1958; Meyer, 1986; Rose, 1975).

One more hindering factor is that many of these ancient spiritual doctrines were formulated to appeal to a largely unsophisticated, uneducated, and even illiterate population. This necessitated the guru's message being communicated in a way that would be more generally inspirational, than specifically instructional, as the average person could not appreciate the subtleties of mental processes and philosophical discernment that such advanced teaching would require.

As a welcome contrast to the above obstacles to communication, Rose's reference points, cultural background, and language style are contemporary and Western. The path he forged for himself, which he refined into the path described in the Albigen System, is very much a product of 20th century American culture. This is evidenced by his attitude of irreverence towards all authority, his selfreliance in defining his own values, and the existential discontent that propelled his search.

There is also a refreshing candor and realism in his commentary. Rose speaks to the concerns of the common person, in plaineven blunterms, and his emphasis is always on actual human experience, not theory.

He considers the perspective in many spiritual teachings to be pragmatically misleading to the seeker, however accurate they may prove to be as philosophical concepts. The basic assumption in them is generally that the human soul is inherently divine, that we have forgotten our true status as children of God, and we merely need to be gently reminded of this in order to bring about the necessary correction in understanding.

Rose reorients the seeker's direction of search from the beginning and insists there is serious work ahead to be faced. He claims the honest person needs to start by admitting that one is really ignorant about what is Real and knows nothing about one's soul, much less about divinity or that either even exist. When scrupulously examined, one's actual status is recognized to be primarily one of delusion, rationalization, and probable suffering, or fictional joy. The only facts that are certain are the inevitability of death and the hunger for something more...something as yet unknown. Rose claims that when this is acknowledged, one can then begin to search for the Truth in earnest: "If by some method I can lead your mind into the realization that things are not what they seem to be, it may give you some impetus to look further" (Rose, 1985, p. 69).

Compared to religious teachings that provide assurance of one's automatic spiritual destiny, once one accepts this belief, Rose's emphasis is instead upon doubt, cosmic uncertainty, and the awareness of the passage of time relentlessly moving one towards the grave. In this, Rose blends existentialism and Zen, and takes them to the limit. His motive here is not to promote morbidity, but honesty with oneself and a warrior's intensity in preparing for the battle ahead. (Rose, 1982, p. 134136).

True to his self-admitted role as gadfly, Rose delights in repeatedly pointing out that our core condition is not as comfortable and secure as it may seem, as long as our center and foundation remain unexamined. He asserts that some courageous, persistent effort will be required to face oneself and to arrive at a state of genuine knowing.

In accordance with the Gurdjieffian notion of mankind's being asleep, as well as Zen's use of tension to promote serious thought, Rose deliberately intends his words to be provocative and disturbing, yet with his own testimony of success being a promising goad for action.

5) Related to reason number four is that Rose is still alive and available for personal consultation and guidance. Most of the great mystics, sages, and philosophers throughout history who have left behind records of their findings are dead and unavailable for further questioning on the meaning and application of their teachings. It is invaluable to be able to have access to the source of such material in a living person, who can verify by his very presence that his commentary is indeed genuine and undistorted.

6) There is one, final motive for my focusing on the Albigen System in this study. It is simply that Rose's approach answers to my intuition about what is most sensible and realistic in this search for Truth, and that it would benefit from this expanded discourse. His convictions on the subject having been validated by his own experience add a quality of authoritativeness to his commentary, and makes them worthy of serious consideration.

One's personal sense of recognition about what is necessary in this work and what suits one's nature and capacity is the most fundamental form of conviction possible in choosing a path of inquiry. It may be the only criteria there is.

People enter the path from different angles, for different reasons, with different levels of understanding, and differing strengths and weaknesses. As the search is for the Self, one must start by

knowing oneself and becoming a seeker. One has no choice but to begin with one's condition as it is, with whatever personal "tools" are at hand, and take the next step from there, according to the requirements of truthfulness. This very process towards selfknowledge inherently involves knowing one's real motives, one's capacity, and one's nature. These, and the manner of one's search, may then change as the work towards selfknowledge progresses (Rose, 1986b).

Rose stresses that a perfected intuition is the most important faculty one can rely upon when journeying into the unknown. Yet, he cautions that one must refine this sense so that it does indeed perceive and guide truthfully, and is not contaminated by ego, wishful thinking, or emotionalism, which may slyly masquerade as intuition. As the genuine intuition emanates from the real Self, tracing this Voice back to its source is in itself a major part of the spiritual work.

7) And, finally, my recognition of the value and validity of Rose's testimony is based, in part, on a personal, spiritual experience that occurred several years before Rose's work was encountered (and thus was not "suggested" or influenced by it). This served, in retrospect, as direct "proof" to me that the direction in which he was pointing was indeed accurate, as I recognized that he had been to the same "place" tooand beyond, to the end of the road.

This statement is, of course, not intended here to imply verification of the teaching in a scientific sense, but simply to indicate the most personal reason for my appreciation of this material and recognition of its relevance.

### **Background of the Problem**

Humanity has perennially been lacking in sanity and wellbeing. The human condition is generally one of suffering and ignorance; the world a vale of tears (Jacobs, 1985).

The world religions developed as an attempt to remedy this chronic status quo, which has been defined in theological terms as our being separated from God. However, the evidence all around us—violence, disease, poverty, anguish, fear, and loneliness—indicates they have been inadequate to the task, even in uniting all religious people in a shared belief system (Mehta, 1978).

Modern psychologies developed as an attempt to resolve personal and interpersonal troubles within the psyche, yet the growing, widespread incidence of mental illness and social discord, as well as disagreement within the field of psychology itself about a valid definition of sanity, have proven them also to be woefully insufficient (Masters, 1978; Szasz, 1974).

The numerous schools of philosophy have attempted to define the meaning in and of life through reason, yet have resulted only in a Tower of Babel of confusion and pretense, rather than a unanimous understanding of truth (Krishnamurti, U.G., 1982; Rose, 1978, 1984).

There is still insufficient information available from all of these disciplines to help guide the individual to a satisfying answer to the deepest human need for meaning, validity, and identity (De Ropp, 1968; Klein, 1988; Ouspensky, 1949, 1974).

### Statement of the Problem

The great spiritual sages throughout history who have transcended our world have perennially proclaimed that the primary cause of our suffering and discontent is the ignorance of our true nature and source (Aurobindo, 1971; Maharaj, 1982; Osborne, 1959; Wei Wu Wei, 1964).

There has been a tremendous need for a system of inner (and outer) work that will lead the individual seeker to true selfdefinition, in both the human and transpersonal senses. This means that the truthseeker must first know precisely who he/she is, and then from there, the Absolute Self containing all persons, their worlds, and godsthe “I am that I am” may be realized (Brunton, 1970).

The processes of such work have been scattered throughout all spiritual and psychological teachings (Capps, 1978; Happold, 1970; Hixon, 1978; Huxley, 1970; O'Brien, 1964; Reinhold, 1973; Stace, 1960; White, 1984), yet are too often vague and confusing in their illdefined complexity, for reasons mentioned previously.

The field of transpersonal psychology has evolved in recent years to answer this need by blending all relevant teachings into a more focused and comprehensive system of inner work, and translating them into modern terms (Ferrucci, 1982; Kent, 1972; Wilber, 1981). The translation of traditional religious principles into that of personal psychology has been emphasized so that their essential unity can be understood, and the teachings more effectively implemented. There is an urgent need to formulate a set of principles along these lines that are as specific, accurate, and complete as possible (Jacobs, 1985).

Richard Rose has made a major contribution to this work in his Albigen System (Rose, 1975, 1978, 1979a, 1979b, 1979c, 1981, 1982, 1984, 1985, 1986a, 1986b). Although, as was stated earlier in reason number four, Rose's language is modern and his reasoning is commonsensical, the complete scope and significance of his teaching have not been conveyed optimally in his own writings. Due to a combination of strategy and personality, his meaning has often been indirect and his style of writing idiosyncratic. What he teaches is plain. However, his manner of communicating it has somewhat obscured his intent.

Another complicating factor for someone encountering Rose's work for the first time is that the full range of his work has never been presented in detail in one comprehensive volume. His ideas have been spread out over several books and articles, as the components of his system have been further delineated over time, and much else of his message has never been written down, but only communicated in personal dialogues, lectures, and correspondence.

In addition, as so much of the Albigen System is an extension of Richard Rose as a person and a seeker, one derives a more distinct, holistic sense for the teaching by studying with him personally and getting to know his character. I have been privileged to have known the man and worked with him in his school for a number of years. I saw him as a walking alarm clock; his presence serving to constantly tell people what time it is: time to wake up. This sobering, galvanizing quality is irreplaceable and difficult to convey on paper, yet must be attempted.

### Purpose of the Study

The objective of this report is to organize, analyze, and explicate Rose's system of transpersonal psychology in as clear and concise a manner as possible, incorporating additional ideas and angles that have not already been published.

Readers of his books have often commented to him and to me that they sensed there was something meaningful and novel in what Rose was attempting to communicate, but they could not quite get a clear understanding of it. Many people have found his material, as presented, to be thought provoking and insightful. However, the comprehension of the complete system these diverse ideas and their practical implications comprise has been harder to achieve, as Rose has left this job of followthrough to the reader.

Rose had also commented to me that he thought a concise, streamlined presentation of his system would be useful in making his teaching more accessible to interested seekers (personal communication, 2/87). He had expressed disappointment that he had not gotten his message across to people as well as he would have liked, considering the profound importance of his teaching and the difficulty of effectively communicating subjective, subtle, abstract ideas to an anonymous audience, with differing capacities and biases, on paper.

Jim Burns is an acquaintance of Rose's and mine. He had arrived at the same experience of final Self-Realization as had Rose, although through his own means, after years of intense effort. Rose has the rare assessment about Burns: "He is a man who truly knows the answer" (personal communication, 1/88).

Burns had remarked to me that he too would like to better understand what Rose has been teaching the detailed principles of his "way" so that he could compare his ideas on higher psychological work to Rose's and offer commentary on it (personal communication, 3/87). Burns had expressed difficulty in picking up a balanced overview of the Albigen System from Rose's assorted writings and personal comments, and stated that a study such as this one would be most valuable, not only to him, but to all serious students of transpersonal psychology.

There are several reasons why this study can add to the value of the original writings although certainly never replace them. This is partially related to why Rose has written and taught as he has.

Rose's teaching has been based on his life, his search, and his experience. As such, his testimony has been a personal one which is the only source of validity possible in this field of inquiry and his message has been presented through a rich personality. This personality style can manifest in the form of anecdotal illustrations of character and principle or opinionated pronouncements about human failings directed at the reader. This style may be perceived by some as an excessive layer of colorization or ego-derived emphasis that inadvertently obscures the basic meaning of his points, while nonetheless adding to the passion and conviction generating them.

The Albigen System is a distillation of his lifetime of learning and realizing, as Rose explains:

Man, in his quest to find himself, has intuited the need for a catalyst. The catalyst takes on different forms because of the uncertainty of any human mind as to the type of catalyst it thinks it needs. The catalyst, if it is a system, bears the stamp of the originator because it worked for his type of personality, or was accidentally discovered by him. (Rose, 1978, p. 213214).

The student's ability to fully appreciate this material can thus be affected by the degree of rapport one feels with Rose as a person. This study attempts to distill his body of work one step further by partially filtering out this idiosyncratic style of communication, while leaving behind the essential, impersonal, universal principles in his message. This may help the reader to more readily grasp his meaning.

Paradoxically, the very personality that has, to some extent, been an obstacle to getting his points across has also been the "magical" catalyst that has conveyed his intent more directly to people when they have met him, and gotten to know the living statement made by his character, perspective, and attitude. This study will attempt to blend in this added dimension of inspiration, yet without its frequent effect of overpowering his message.

Another problem inherent in all psychological, philosophical, and spiritual teachings, however skillfully conceived and communicated and especially in Rose's is that the "system" described is largely subjective, abstract, and guided by intuition. Everything cannot be spelled out and quanti-

fied, although commonsense and consistency can and should be essential standards by which to work.

Also, partially due to Rose's having chosen to teach in the manner of Zen, as well as his particular personality style, many of his points have been made indirectly, through examples or some oblique comment in passing. His intention has been to convey his message through inference, as well as to provoke further thought in the reader by bringing up disturbing issues that have no easy answer.

Rose has fully admitted that his meaning is often "between the lines" and that the student needs to read with intuition, to get in rapport with his mental state, rather than reading words alone, with logic. This study will attempt to describe the actual structure of his system as lucidly and straightforwardly as possible, considering its nonlinear, nonmechanical nature.

Another aspect of Rose's somewhat indirect, informal, and slightly disjointed style of teaching has been that he often states a major point, bluntly and then drops it; moving on to something else. His comments about the parasitical and seemingly cruel symbiotic system of Nature in which we find ourselves is one disturbing example (Rose, 1975). He has left it up to readers to work out the implications and applications for themselves, to resolve the many troubling paradoxes in life which he forces us to confront, yet provides little elaboration upon the different levels of meaning in his ideas and how they tie in with other aspects of his system.

To a large extent, this strategy has been deliberate and functional. He intends to taunt us, to challenge us. What Rose is really offering is a guidebook for the student's own journey, rather than providing a prepackaged description of the road that is so vivid that readers may be carelessly lulled into believing they have made the inner trip themselves, vicariously, by riding on the author's shoulders. As such, Rose insists the individual think things through completely for oneself, and make the insights one's own. For this reason, the work of coming to thoroughly understand this teaching for oneself is itself a critical part of the seeker's process of personal inquiry.

Nonetheless, the tendency towards elusiveness and insufficient organization in his various offerings, despite his best intentions of strategy and execution, has been an obstacle to many students. By showing in clearer relief what his overall system actually is and drawing all the critical themes together into a cohesive whole, the separate pieces of Rose's map puzzle are assembled to make an at best incredibly difficult journey a little easier.

Another tendency of Rose's has been to give little attention to other teachings and systems of inner work, other than in the form of primarily critical assessments of their shortcomings. It should be noted in fairness, however, that his judgments were proven by his own experience to be valid, as this study will indicate.

Rose does refer to isolated quotations or principles from various spiritual and psychological schools of thought, to indicate precedents or corroboration for his own convictions. Still, this could be elaborated upon further and valuable information could be provided about what is considered valid in these other systems and traditions. Therefore, this study will add some contextual perspective on his teaching by describing the teachings of those individuals whose ideas either relate to his own or supplement them.

Finally, there is one major difference between Rose's original writings, lecture material, etc., and this study.

One of the central themes throughout Rose's system in regards the search for truth is that of "retreating from error," rather than advancing upon a postulated desired conclusion. As a teacher,

much of his emphasis towards this goal has been on providing detailed critical commentary on the numerous psychological, theological, philosophical, and social delusions that can hamper one's progress, and even become deadly traps if not avoided. He has likened this part of his presentation to first digging up the earth and clearing out the rocks, weeds, and underbrush, before planting some new, good seeds.

There is a step before even this can begin. Much of Rose's preliminary commentary consists of the insistent exhortation that this entire psycho philosophical inquiry is essential to begin with, for every serious, honest person. Concurrently, he mercilessly points out the many critical questions about existence that are unanswered and the invalidity of our lives and identities, as long as they remain unexamined and undefined. His aim has been to rouse people from sleep and irritate them into action, rather than soothe them into complacency.

However, for the purpose of this study, most although not all of this deliberately provocative, preparatory material will be omitted. More of the focus will be on presenting the core principles of the Albigen System itself, so that those individuals who are ready may begin to work on themselves. This will assume that any seeker looking into this level of inquiry is one who has already evolved to the realization that something must be done to end one's condition of recognized ignorance, and has some tentative, maturing intuition about what form and direction of work seems most worthwhile.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study falls into the category of transpersonal psychology. The main premise of this orientation that differentiates it from the Analytic, Behavioral, and even Humanistic schools is its emphasis upon defining the self as the totality of all consciousness and experience, rather than only the individual body/mind/ego, as is the assumption and baseline in most traditional psychologies (Deikman, 1982; Khan, 1981; Masters, 1978; Rama, 1976).

Likewise, wellbeing is considered to derive from the truthful relationship of the personal, human self to this larger "transpersonal" dimension and, finally, the identification with its source. This is in contrast to most conventional therapies that define mental health largely in terms of statistical "normalcy", in the form of adjustment and accommodation to the mundane status quo, in physical, emotional, and interpersonal terms (Jacobs, 1985; Rose, 1978, ch. 2).

Transpersonal, or spiritual, psychology is based on the principle that there is a point of study where religion, psychology, philosophy, and metaphysics overlap and become one direction of work, rather than remaining separate, barely compatible domains. This point is best called Self Enquiry (Godman, 1985), and moves at a right angle (so to speak) to experience, thought, belief, and personal identity into Becoming [term further defined in Chapter 6].

There is a body of literature, from diverse cultures and spiritual traditions, that has presented this direction of search in detail [see Chapter 2]. The core principle throughout all these teachings, and especially in Rose's system, is that of "Becoming the Truth". In mystical theology this is called "union with God", and in yoga is referred to as "Self Realization". The common denominator among them is the final experience of nonduality described earlier, in which the seeker does not "find" the answer as something apart from oneself, but awakens to the realization that the real Self is the answer, and contains both the individual seeker and all possible gods (Maharaj, 1982).

The Gurdjieffian system of esoteric psychology calls the form of inner work leading up to this, the Fourth Way (Ouspensky, 1971). This manner of search blends all the different paths of yoga into

one wholistic process and results in a transformation of being. This Work is the point where these diverse fields of study meet. Everything else is commentary.

Frankl, Jung, and Assagioli were early pioneers in this field, before the term “transpersonal psychology” was coined, and focused their work on the soul’s search for meaning and ultimate selfhood (Fabry, 1980; Jaffe, 1975; Ferrucci, 1982).

Principles from Phenomenological Existential Psychology and the philosophy of Solipsism (Puligandla, 1981; Strauch, 1983; Valle, 1981; Zaner, 1973) also relate to Rose’s system in their study of the psychology of perception, experience, and knowing.

The medieval alchemists claimed that the Philosopher’s Stone (meaning: the spiritual identity in the center of one’s being), when found, answers all questions and resolves all problems (De Ropp, 1968; Kerrick, 1976). The traditional myths about the hero’s quest for the Holy Grail, Golden Fleece, or some secret prize of the Gods, have the same meaning (Jaffe, 1975).

### **Research Goals**

This study will not attempt to prove a hypothesis, as is the case in standard research. This will instead be the description of a subjective yet scientific process towards a personal state of realization. The only form of “proof” that is meaningful in this form of work is the direct experience of this “becoming”, from having undertaken the process for oneself. Rose admits that he does not intend to prove the validity of his teaching to anyone. Neither can this report. The task here is to more accurately depict the map that is the Albigen System, from all available data. The validation, as such, that suggests this form of inquiry is worth the effort and may lead to the stated objective is the testimony of those individuals who have made of their bodies and minds a research laboratory, and their entire lives an experiment in philosophy, and then reported their unanimous findings. Even short of this, however, the partial validation for the student is in the occasional signposts of progress along the way: the increasing mental clarity, development of the intuition, refined sense of stable selfhood, improved vitality, effectiveness in daily living, and freedom from manifest foolishness.

The issues being examined in Rose’s work are thus: Is there a valid process towards both human and spiritual selfdefinition? Are there universal principles of the mind, the body, and of life that can be known, and will lead to personal evolution when heeded? Is there a genuine intuition that can be found and developed? Is there a direct, commonsense form of therapy that heals the mind and body, and serves as the necessary foundation for the transpersonal work? What are the common errors and traps that must be avoided along the way? This study will show how Rose has addressed these and many other points.

### **Importance of the Study**

The science of psychology is still far from being a complete system. Psychotherapy is still very much a blend of art and luck, with little agreement among clinicians as to what is valid therapy and what is not, nor is there a shared agreement on the fundamental nature of the pathology to be treated (Benoit, 1959; Jacobs, 1985; Krishnamurti, 1983; Nicoll, 1984).

Some of the most basic questions in psychology that are the profession’s duty to answer remain unanswered. This chronic lack of attention to the study of these issues, or the reductionism or ridicule to which they have sometimes been exposed, suggests that even the necessity for asking these questions has often been denied (Masters, 1978; Rose, 1979).

Questions such as: What is the mind? What is thought? What is awareness and where is its source? *Is awareness in us or of us?* What and where is the origin of the universe we experience? Is there an identity or essence apart from the bodymind; one that may survive death? Who or what is the Self? What are the factors that determine sanity and insanity? What is sanity? What is true, natural sexuality and how does misuse of the sex function affect the body and mind? What is the nature of the spiritual experiences reported by mystics throughout the ages: some form of delusion or dementia or an objective reality for which mainstream psychology cannot account, and which draws into serious question the entire paradigm in which modern psychology functions?

The answers to these questions and the other points mentioned previously would benefit the professional psychologist who wishes to offer the greatest help possible to confused clients, as all psychological and interpersonal problems are somehow related to faulty selfdefinition and misperceptions within an erroneous paradigm. Along these lines, such understanding would be of even greater benefit to the individual seeker who admits to being troubled by existing in ignorance and is willing to engage in the personal work necessary to arrive at a satisfying answer to the problems of life, and death.

Such knowledge also has broader social implications, as the turmoil and madness we witness about us on a global level is an extension of the individual's plight, and viceversa (Holroyd, 1980).

One aspect of Rose's system that makes it so valuable in regard to this is that it explains in detail how the domains of individual psychology (therapy) and transpersonal psychology (spirituality) relate. Although they are separate, but concurrent, phases of work, they are inseparable parts of one, whole process of inquiry. The personal psychological work of selfcorrection is a prerequisite preparation for spiritual realization, and the larger philosophical work towards this latter transpersonal goal inherently answers all mundane concerns along the way. This principle of "becoming the truth" is the common thread running through both aspects of work.

The need for further study and refinement along these lines has been previously stated by several psychologists.

Thomas Szasz has questioned the validity of the entire paradigm of psychology, and suggested that the true definition of mental illness and the process towards mental health have yet to be found (Szasz, 1974).

R.D. Laing has likewise challenged conventional psychiatric assumptions about the spectrum of sanity to insanity and has claimed that we need to seriously rethink our entire approach to the problem (Laing, 1967).

Charles Tart has devoted his career to exploring the unknown psychic territory beyond the fringe of mainstream psychology. He admits to still having more questions than answers, but claims that substantial evidence exists of phenomena and laws of an occult nature that are as yet unknown to us, and that radically alter our assumptions about the mental dimension (Tart, 1975).

Carl Jung described his understanding of the process towards genuine selfhood and spiritual awakening, but made it clear he did not pretend to have the final word on the subject for everyone and that the principles of this work could be further refined and personalized (Jaffe, 1975).

Viktor Frankl developed his system of Logotherapy to help people define a meaningful, realistic orientation to life and to establish a clear connection with their higher intuition or "unconscious God". He specifically exhorted his students and associates to take his basic observations and build upon them, as the work involved in this "pursuit of meaning" was far from completed (Fabry, 1980).

The Holocaust, perhaps more than any other major event in history, symbolized the total absence of meaning, justice, sanity, and Godhood in human affairs. From the individual's perspective, it was seemingly the experience of absolute negation of validity: personal, collective, terrestrial, and cosmic (Brenner, 1980; Kent, 1972).

Elie Wiesel has spent a lifetime searching for the ultimate spiritual answer to the crucial questions posed by this experience, as did Frankl. He has studied religious, philosophical, and psychological teachings for decades, as well as agonizingly inside himself, for a satisfying, comprehensive solution to this problem, and his voice speaks for millions more, alive and dead. He admits to not having yet found the truth of the matter, and has rejected all conventional explanations offered. He has displayed admirable integrity and courage in not settling for false answers to fill in the painful void, and in keeping his search open (Estess, 1980). In response to my personal testimony to him and further inquiry regarding these difficult issues, Wiesel wrote: "I wish I could say I have all the answers but I have none. All I have is a need to question. Will He answer? That too is a question" (personal communication, 3/87). The direction and manner of search described in this study is an attempt to find one possible way to that elusive answer.

### **Scope of the Study**

The primary content of this report will be the Albigen System, as described in the works of Richard Rose, as well as my personal contacts with him and practice of the teaching with his other students over a 15 year period.

Although other teachings and teachers of transpersonal psychology will also be discussed, this study will focus mainly on Rose's work for several reasons. This is in addition to the immediate, obvious reason that in this one dissertation it will be difficult enough to even do justice to the full scope of the Albigen System, much less to adequately cover every contribution of importance in the whole field of transpersonal psychology.

The primary reason is simply that I believe Rose's innovative contribution richly deserves this consideration, and a thorough study of it like this one has never before been written. Even in the whole field of transpersonal psychology, which is itself little known to either the general psychological community or to students of esotericism in particular, Rose is not well known. This is a terrible waste of a rare and invaluable reference source.

The singular system he has developed has been found to be extremely insightful and practical by those who have managed to encounter it by fate, reward, or accident. A scholarly discourse on it would be most helpful in making his findings more readily available to those who would appreciate them. I consider Rose to be a modern giant of spiritual psychology, and a serious overview of his findings can be considered as one grateful tribute to his offering.

While Rose does not claim to have invented something entirely new, the material he provides does have a functional advantage for the seeker of Enlightenment over many other existent spiritual teachings. Although various principles in the Albigen System are also found in other sources, often each teaching is either not a complete system in itself, but only focuses on certain issues, laws, or aspects of the path, or does not go into enough practical detail about the complete path it may be describing, leaving the teaching open to misinterpretation or misuse by the immature student. In addition, Rose does stress specific principles crucial to this level of search that have seldom, if ever, been presented in other esoteric teachings, such as pointofreference, becoming the truth, and retraversing the projected ray.

As an example of the hazards of implementing an incomplete teaching, Rose considers the techniques involved in mind science and hypnosis to be valid in themselves and that they parallel material in his own system. People can create things, adjust circumstances, heal bodies, empower themselves, and change their statesofmind through such psychological means. Yet, Rose believes each method or discipline to not be a complete path to SelfRealization in itself, but only one aspect of it.

A common example of the danger in misunderstanding a profound teaching is the material out of the Vedanta and Zen traditions. The teachers of the original works may well have been genuinely Enlightened and were indeed describing their perspective on existence from the vantage point of Reality. Yet their affirmations about the true Self or the BuddhaMind, and their exhortation for the student to awaken from the illusion of Maya require tremendous psychological insight on the part of the student to know how to work out the myriad details of one's own path to that realization. But without the sufficient maturity and intuition to do this, one can easily become trapped in the comfort of the inspirational value of such teachings, or the more insidious trap of entertaining the reassuring concept of one's automatically being this ultimate, transcendental Self, while in all honesty not really "being" that, but still stuck in some personal Maya of one's own.

As mentioned, much of the writing in the field of esotericism has been presented in such symbolic or archaic terms and possibly even these being imprecisely translated into English that its exact meaning has been hard to pin down, and its practical utilization even harder for the modern, western reader to determine.

For example, St. Paul's famous declaration: "I die daily," and the Buddha's defining the root of all human suffering to be "desire" have had diverse, uncertain interpretations by subsequent teachers, depending on their own orientation and level of understanding. To "die" might refer to self-mortification of the body, to the submission of one's will to another authority (human or Divine), or to the diminishment of and detachment from one's egos. To be free of "desire" might refer to all objects of desire, to only the objects of false desire, to sexual desire in particular, to the very nature or process of desire, or to the mistaken identification of the true Self with the fictional egoself that is programmed to have these desires.

The seeker's course of action in implementing these teachings will thus obviously depend on what one assumes the original teacher to have meant, and if guessing wrongly, one may be going off in a misguided direction. The former dictum may result in self-mutilation or even suicide, and the latter in years of passive stagnation from denial of even the desire for truth and selfhood.

Much of the material in transpersonal psychology during the last 25 years has done the seeker a great service in remedying such ambiguities by describing the actual inner mechanisms of the search in a more accessible manner in terms of human experience.

However, a major difference between much of this material and Rose's offering is that most of such writers (as seems to have perennially been the case in the fields of religion and philosophy, from which modern psychology evolved or devolved) have been primarily scholars, speculative thinkers, students of other teachers, or researchers with only incomplete findings.

What makes Rose's testimony especially valuable is that he claims to have personally experienced the final goalstate to which all the mystical teachings throughout history have pointed, and as such, his witness to the validity of his convictions is from the Source. Furthermore, he has had detailed insight into the mechanics of the process of inquiry that led him up to that Realization, in addition to being able to explain the nature of that experience as well as it can be explained, in personal terms. Because of this, he has been able to describe critical psychological principles of self-transformation that have been verified, by him, and are workable by the individual.

Although the Albigen System will be the main content of this study, supplemental information from other sources will be blended in where it is appropriate.

As has been mentioned, one advantage of Rose's teaching is his distinctive and masterful blend of psychology, philosophy, and religion into a holistic, living process of inquiry with a common aim, rather than their remaining as separate, barely compatible paradigms. However, as was

also explained, Rose has not tied in other pertinent systems of thought with his own as much as would have been possible, which would have served to place his specific message within a broader perspective on the overall search.

This study will thus be a good opportunity to expand on Rose's system by drawing in relevant elaborations and crossreferences with similar teachings. (The original source material will first be formally discussed in Chapter 2). This very effort is actually an example of how the student needs to continue to search for additional "ways and means" to help in applying the teaching to oneself; this followthrough being itself a part of the system.

And lastly, the reason for my focusing so intently on the Albigen System in this study, rather than doing a more general overview of the field of transpersonal psychology, is a personal one. As Rose's own life was largely the raw material from which his teaching was compiled, my own life of the last 15 years or so has been a living research project largely based on Rose's ideas, by putting this system into practice every day, on many levels. And so, as life can be considered an experiment in philosophy, this study serves as a recording also of my own journey; a primarily generic description of what has also been a personal process.

My choosing to respectfully examine and present Rose's work in this dissertation is only fitting. The personal yet impersonal experience of a partial glimpse of Validity that originally enabled me to recognize Rose's own testimony as being valid was what forever fused my life with the path and objective he has described. This study is completing that circle, at least conceptually.

### **Outline of Review of the Literature**

The main source of information for this study is the writings of Richard Rose, plus material from numerous lectures and personal notes from years of studying with him and working with his other students. All quotes not otherwise specifically referenced as to source and date are to be understood to have been from informal group discussions.

Relevant information will be included from writings on Zen, the Gurdjieff/Ouspensky system of Fourth Way Psychology, Vipassana Buddhist meditation, and the teachings of the Advaita Vedanta tradition by Ramana Maharshi, Nisargadatta Maharaj, Jean Klein, Krishnamurti, and Franklin Merrill Wolff.

Valuable material will be included from Jim Burns, who had experienced a major spiritual realization resulting from a complex psychological process similar to, although independent from, Rose's system. He accumulated many critical insights into this direction of inner work from his efforts and discovery.

Additional background information on spiritual psychology and sexuality will be presented from the works of Roy Masters, who is a teacher of a Judeo-Christian mystical orientation.

Research in transpersonal psychology, best exemplified by Ken Wilber, will be discussed, as well as numerous other works about the Perennial Philosophy, meditation, and yoga, as described by Richard Bucke, Sri Aurobindo, Paul Brunton, Van Vliet, Van Der Leeuw, and others.

### **Methodology**

Rose's system of higher psychology will be presented in an organized, concise manner, the meanings of all of his significant points will be explained, and the structure and interrelationship of

his system as a holistic process will be analyzed. Themes that are referred to indirectly in his writings will be brought out more clearly, and there will be further elaboration upon the relevance and implications of Rose's ideas beyond what he has originally provided. Material derived from Rose's personal contacts with his students will also be included, to give a better sense of the character and humanness in his teachings than his books alone can convey.

The purpose of this dissertation is not to prove that Rose's teaching is true, but merely to describe the Albigen System clearly and in toto, and then let readers decide for themselves its value in their own search. Even if verification had been desired, surveys and statistics would not be appropriate means for determining the validity of the information presented, due to the subjective nature of the issues involved.

In fact, no form of scholastic, inferential proof for the benefit of vicarious seekers can be possible in this kind of research, nor has it been the aim in Rose's own work. This is because the answer that is ultimately found is not apart from the self that is searching for it, nor can the reality of this discovery be shared by any second party.

The only form of "proof" that is possible is that of the direct experience of those who have applied these principles of search and selftransformation to themselves over a long period of continuous effort, and have followed their commitment through to completion.

As such, what will be offered are the firsthand testimonies of inner work and transpersonal realization of several individuals: Jim Burns, Mike C., Mark J. (two of Rose's students), Alan K., and Richard Rose himself. My own partial experience of Validity will also be mentioned. These accounts are not meant to convince the reader of anything. They are merely records of the corroboration by some individuals that Jacob's Ladder (the "map" that is the core of the system), does indeed lead to where Rose claims it does.

## **Results**

This form of study is analytic and explicative in nature. In addition to presenting the information on Rose's system of psychology, the significance of this teaching in regards to both psychotherapeutic work and transpersonal states of realization will be explained. Most importantly, this study will provide the functions of cohesiveness and explicitness in bringing together all the salient points in Rose's complex teaching and clarifying their personal meaning for the benefit of the seeker who wishes to embark on the journey that Rose recommends, yet could not clearly enough understand the "map" described in its original form.

There is also one unique matter involved in presenting the results of this kind of study. It relates to the previous comments made about the necessity for the personal experience of transformation and SelfRealization, and by some extension, the ability to then help others along these lines with the knowledge and perspective that has been so gained; this being the "evidence" of validity of such inquiry.

Subjective experiences are usually discounted in conventional psychological research (other than in phenomenological studies) that attempts to be scientific and objective, in a narrow sense, by excluding all data from consideration that cannot be measured by physical means and interpreted according to the standards of a materialistic paradigm.

However, Rose has maintained that if certain principles and processes of mental functioning can be subjectively validated by experience, through perfected introspection, then these are, in fact,

objective facts as well. *The difference is in the reference point of the observer.* This touches upon the central theme of the entire teaching.

Usually, only the researcher studying the subjects, as apart from them, is somewhat presumptuously considered the only possible valid observer and judge. However, in the kind of research being discussed here, the individual becomes both the subject of one's own research and the objective inner observer of oneself as well. When properly done, this procedure is just as scientific and the findings just as meaningful, if not more so, as that of the materialistic, external researcher. This process of studying the mind with the mind, from increasingly superior points of reference, results in the perfection of that mind and the quality of its observation, and the refinement of the definition of the self as this observer.

The process of inquiry to be discussed is an objective form of subjectivity, so to speak, or a subjective form of objectivity. The final Realization, as described by those who claim to have attained it, is one in which subjectivity and objectivity are ultimately found to be exactly the same thing. All duality is finally reconciled into one, at the Source.

This is something that cannot be known by the armchair investigator. The journey must be made personally.