A close-up photograph of a large, multi-petaled white flower, possibly a peony, with a bright yellow center. The petals are ruffled and have several dark red or maroon spots. The background is dark and out of focus.

TRIBUTE TO PIERRE GRIMES
on his 90th Birthday

Compiled by Julia Postel
2013-2014

"TRAVEL PARALLEL LINES"



Artwork here and on back cover: Rod Wallbank

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TO PIERRE GRIMES - FROM SOME OF YOUR STUDENTS - 2013





There are only a handful of us who for the past 50+ years, have known and experienced Pierre and his life work.

And what we can collectively share from this unique perspective echoes the tributes and deeply felt gratitude from colleagues and students (past and present) that flow from the first sentence to final word through the following pages.

Pierre Grimes is indeed a brilliant man, ever the teacher, dedicated to the Truth, possessor of a laser sharp focus and intellect, knowledgeable of the interconnections of history, mathematics, philosophy and the world's religions, and an accomplished translator of ancient Greek... essentially a steadfast guide fascinated and driven to assist others in understanding the trials of a soul struggling to know itself and its role in this world.

As a man, he is not flawless, not without problems. But these imperfections, these battles serve him well, as he innately perceives what each of us must struggle against in our quest to know ourselves... and to accomplish our most cherished goals.

And it is this empathy, this well camouflaged sensitivity, that may not be apparent in these tributes, yet at its core is what makes him truly remarkable.

Peter Grimes

Michelle Gregory-Grimes

Joseph Grimes

Susan Grimes-Accongio

Ray Grimes



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Forward - by Julia Postel

When I began working with Pierre in the late 80s, his goal was to “get the word out” and over many years, we did a lot of outreach with Philosophical Midwifery and I want Pierre to know that he DID get the word out and that his method, his spiritual system, will not die - it has already taken root in the lives of many of us. Compiling these offerings from Pierre’s students, colleagues and friends gave me the gift of challenging myself to go beyond the ceiling I hit a year ago when I saw how I had been duped into a false belief that it is still dangerous to reveal the truth of our spiritual experiences. When Allan Hartley suggested a Festschrift for Pierre, I was eager to organize the project and carry it out because gratitude is at the forefront of my thinking about Pierre and I still want to get more of the word out, and this project turns out to be discovering itself as it goes along. Several of the contributions mention Pierre’s 90th birthday because this compilation was originally conceived as a gift for Pierre in 2014. We hope we can revise and add to this book for that occasion! But here is the 2013 version.

This compilation is not intended as a peer-reviewed publication, Each author is responsible for their own work - I have not researched footnotes or corrected ideas if the ideas are the thoughts of the writers. I have made an effort to contact the writers with questions if I believe they have made factual errors, but since these pieces are gifts to Pierre and not submitted as academic papers, they represent the thinking of the authors at the time of their writing and they are offered as gifts. Sarah Wallbank has provided the pictures from her late husband and fellow philosopher, Rod Wallbank, for the cover. All photos in this publication are printed with permission.

Those people who contributed to this volume are able to come forward with their work for us all to see. I commend them all for their trust and generosity.

Nobuya Teraoka has been a student of Pierre’s since his undergraduate days. He and his wife, Isabelle practice Philosophical Midwifery, are both teachers, and they explore their dreams on a regular basis. After submitting his paper Nobuya had an opportunity to read “*Unfolding Truth*,” one of Pierre's latest dialogues. If you are intrigued by the ideas presented in Nobuya's essay, he recommends that you explore the idea of Truth in “*Unfolding Truth*,” for there you will be rewarded with a philosophical account of the state of mind represented by the 10th *Ox-herding Picture*.

Juan and Maria Balboa are longtime students of Pierre’s in Southern California and they were the first to submit a piece for this compilation. Pierre needs no further proof of their dedication and love of philosophy than the very large collection of work they have translated from the Greek and published (see LuLu) including many of Plato’s dialogues and a great deal of Proclus’ work. Their tireless pursuit of understanding and their generosity of spirit are gifts beyond measure for all of us fortunate enough to see their work. By learning how to understand, their translations bring with them the vitality of the Hellenic spirit.

Winter Lazerus is a longtime friend and student of Pierre's. He is also a Grammy nominated, globally recognized, multiple platinum award winning producer, musician, composer, writer and student of Philosophy. His letter to Pierre and three poems with photos are beautiful gifts to us all. From his website, Lazerus "is known by his peers as "a musical artist who can go any direction creatively with originality, innovation and a unique sonic approach." His energy and devotion are great.

Donna Laba is a longtime student of Pierre's who has gone on to study Plato with excellence and has been inspired to write her own book on reading Platonic literature. Donna left the California area many years ago but as with many of Pierre's students, the learning continues and the study is life-long.

Merrie Martino, one of Pierre's early students, has seen that "the learning never stops" Her beautifully sensitive piece for Pierre shares with us her discovery of mind itself.

Rev Roger Juline, D.D. , past President of the Holmes Institute, Los Angeles, CA, worked with Pierre for six of the years during which Pierre taught Distance Learning courses for the Holmes Institute. His piece reflects the respect from an organization which is a part of the Science of Mind denomination and reflects the understanding that Platonic Philosophy is an important element in any education.

Christine Haggarty, retired educator, practicing lay Buddhist in the lineage of Shunryu Suzuki, demonstrates her appreciation for Pierre's teaching with not only her tribute, but some calligraphy as well.

Regina L. Uliana describes herself: "proudly is the co-author with Pierre of *Philosophical Midwifery: A New Paradigm for Understanding Human Problems with it's Validation*. Regina has studied and practiced Philosophical Midwifery on a personal level since the late 1960's. When she received her Ph.D. in Psychology she extended her understanding professionally by introducing Philosophical Midwifery to the field of Psychology. She has presented a modified form for practitioners of psychotherapy through conferences, workshops and seminars. She has continued to use the principles of PM in her private practice and also in psychotherapy with college students, with youthful offenders, with youthful sex offenders, severely mentally ill individuals, with couples, and with High School students."

Allan Hartley printed *New Perspectives: A Journal of Conscious Living* for national distribution for 22 years then archived the complete print run at a local college library. It has been an online magazine exclusively at www.newperspectivespublishing.com since 2009. For those validating Pierre's work in practices and businesses *New Perspectives* is a way to share our findings in its readership. Many students found their way to Pierre through such endeavors. Hartley suggested a festschrift for Pierre Grimes after working on the promotion of a similar book for Claudio Naranjo with his publisher.

Oralia Romo, a longtime student of Pierre's, gives the gift of her own seeing, presenting for Pierre a paper which demonstrates the understanding of many of the principles of Platonic Philosophy and Philosophical Midwifery. Her delight in bringing understanding to her spiritual experiences is beautiful and contagious.

Lou Marinoff is Professor of Philosophy at The City College of New York, founding president of the APPA, and a world-renowned philosophical counselor. His books are widely circulated, and translated into thirty languages. Lou has provided Pierre many opportunities to share his expertise and methods at conferences. His piece here reflects the depths of the impact of Pierre's work.

Vaughana Feary is a Philosophical Practitioner and a member of the Board of the APPA (as is Pierre). She writes a clear and reflective piece about Pierre's history with the formal establishment of Philosophical Counseling as a profession and provides us a good look at the complexities of academic philosophy and how to resolve some of the issues for the profession.

Kevin Gray "started studying with Pierre when he was 18 years old with Pierre at Golden West College. He also studied extensively with the Noetic Society for many years and entered into the Golden Chain of Being. He went on to do a double major with Honors in Philosophy and Religious Studies at CSULB. After two years of his MA in Philosophy he decided to travel the world and has been doing so for about 7 years. During that time he has never stopped sharing Philosophical Midwifery with people all around the world and continuing his own spiritual development to maintain the experience of the most brilliant light of Being so as to not lose focus on the question 'What after all is the nature of the One in itself.'"

Raphael Hernandez, a former student of Pierre's at Golden West College, has provided a very personal story of his contact with Pierre and his beautiful writing style and depth of appreciation are very inspiring and touch something in all of us who have benefitted from Pierre's guidance.

Rifka Hirsch was a student of Pierre's and member of the Noetic Society, Inc. in the early days of Golden West College and the Friday night meetings. The effect Pierre's work has had on her work and life choices is clear and she shares her gratitude.

Mindy Mandell has been a student of Pierre's from Japan for many years and demonstrates that Pierre's method can be used through email exchanges to benefit students he cannot meet with in person.

Georgeanne Morris Xagorarakis, a student of Pierre's from the 60s, shares her story as a yoga devotee, having taken Pierre's teachings with her to find her Guru, Ramakrishna Ananda.

Joe Grimes is one of Pierre's sons and has studied with his dad at Buddhist Sesshins and other Workshops over the years and has often contributed a good question to the group. His contribution here continues a great tradition of a father dialoguing with a son.

Cathy Wilson is one of Pierre's more recent students and has written the book with Pierre called *The Pocket Pierre* in order to provide greater access to Philosophical Midwifery. Her appreciation is reflected in her work.

Michael Battistone, a student of Pierre's at GWC is a recipient of the ASGWC Perpetual Scholarship - "funded by the Associated Students of GWC to assist deserving students with their educational goals." His piece reflects humor and artistry and may take some time to understand.

Elyse Mergenthaller studied with Pierre in the earliest days of the Noetic Society, Inc., moved out of the Southern California area many years ago but has kept in touch with Pierre and some of the older students on her visits to Southern California. She has developed a strong Buddhist practice, mostly in the Tibetan tradition.

Pat Fulbright is also one of Pierre's students from the first days of his teaching in Southern California. She, too, has moved out of the area, is a teacher, a philosopher and is a practicing Buddhist.

Tom Easton was a student of Pierre's at Golden West College and gives us a glimpse of the challenges of philosophy done rightly.

John Spencer "is the multiple award-winning author of *The Eternal Law: Ancient Greek Philosophy, Modern Physics, and Ultimate Reality*. He was awarded his PhD from the University of Liverpool in 2008, specializing in the Philosophical Foundations of Quantum Physics, where he had the rare opportunity of being supervised and examined in both the Department of Physics and the Department of Philosophy. Combining the highest levels of abstract thought with powerful personal experience and extensive scholarly research, John makes his discoveries accessible to a wide-ranging audience. DrJohnHSpencer.com / ParamMedia.com"

Ken King was one of Pierre's students in the earliest days of gatherings with Pierre and he and Pierre are friends forever and beyond. Ken died suddenly many years ago and has been missed greatly for his deep and abiding love for philosophy, his long and spirited dialogues and his music. One of his most important works, his analysis of *Parmenides Poem* is included in this publication.

Rod Wallbank was also one of Pierre's students and a friend forever and beyond. His wife, Sarah Wallbank, has graciously provided some of his cherished artwork for use in this book. Among other excellences, Rod was a Master at Euclidian Geometry and taught classes at the Opening Mind Academy in Costa Mesa, CA

Pierre the Hellene and the Way of the Logos by Nobuya Teraoka

Some philosophers argue that the Socrates of Plato's *Symposium* personifies a similar state and way of being as that of the barefooted and bare-chested man who brings withered trees to bloom in the 10th picture of the Ox-Herding Pictures. Likewise, the understanding exhibited by Socrates in the *Republic* that images of the Good, Justice and Beauty manifest themselves on every level of reality, with its particular significance for man's spiritual journey as it is allegorized in the cave and upper world, is like the full recognition of the purity in every manifestation of the Source in the 9th picture, while beholding the brilliant light of Being is like the 8th picture's vast and infinite azure sky which is beyond any concept.

If this similarity holds, then two of the most significant philosophical works in Hellenic thought, the *Symposium* and *Republic*, and the most widely known Zen Buddhist account concerning levels of realization, *the Ox-herding Pictures*, describe the highest states of mind encountered by man in similar terms. Furthermore, they both distinguish the nature of reality from the cause of reality, and both describe the mind that has returned to the cause and has rejoined humanity. But there are significant puzzles in this comparison.

Few issues in philosophy awaken in me such wonder and interest as the correspondence between these two traditions about these highest states, on the one hand, and on the other the great gap that exists between their views concerning the nature of man's ignorance. For this is the crucial issue for man: how shall we account for and deal with the depth of man's ignorance, and his anger, if, in truth, the nature of reality and its cause are such as each tradition describes? It is essentially reflection on this question that separates Platonic philosophy from Zen. But if their understanding of man's ignorance is different, then might there not also be significant differences in how they understand man's highest states of mind? If there is a causal connection between our understanding of the highest states of mind and our ignorance of reality, then on the basis of such differences, we may judge which highest states of mind are better. And if a particular person's work has brought these explorations to the forefront, then we will not be reserved about expressing our deepest gratitude to that person.

We may state the question simply: "Why this, if that?" If reality is indeed perfect, right and good, why isn't it manifesting itself as perfect, right, and good to us at this very moment? Is perfection of everything just as it is only recognizable with full enlightenment? The puzzle weighs heavy right in the depths of one's own existence: Is there a reason for my anger? Can I explain why I set myself up to fail at exactly the same point whenever I am trying to achieve my most meaningful goals? Why do I think so negatively about myself whenever I even think about pursuing them? And why do I have the random thoughts, fantasies, daydreams and dreams that I have? Is there any intelligibility in this seemingly chaotic panorama of my mental states? If reality is perfect, right and good, what is the intelligible conclusion to draw about our world?

If the Platonic tradition gives an account that shows the intelligibility behind our anger and ignorance and recognizes that every thought, however negative in appearance or however partial, is a summons to turn us toward understanding ourselves in order to make us more complete and more ready to participate in the intelligible itself, while the Buddhist tradition considers such thoughts delusions and hindrances to the recognition of our true nature as being nothing other than mind itself, then though both may be said to be in pursuit of the same goal, the first tradition places man within a caring, intelligible and providential reality, while the second teaches man to stay clear of the ever-seductive delusions that prevent true seeing, though all such delusions will be recognized as nothing else than mind once one's own mind is fully enlightened.

Though both traditions agree that everything is Mind, the question is whether it is possible to understand that everything is also Intelligible. Disagreement here is fundamental. The Hellenes say yes and thus they deeply respect the pursuit of the logos by means of the cognitive state called understanding (*dianoia*), while Buddhists say no and classify such pursuits as being intellectual, in a derogatory sense, to be swept aside along with other delusions. It is solely through the contributions of Pierre Grimes, in the same path of Homer, primarily, and Platonists, secondarily, that the importance of the logos has not only become visible and clear to the post-Hellenic mind, but has functioned therapeutically to resolve in important ways some of the personal problems that have blocked individuals from achieving their personally meaningful goals, which for some has included the highest pursuit of all, that of wisdom, or philosophy. The application of the understanding and the pursuit of the logos to deal with man's dilemma, both on the personal and cultural level, Pierre calls Philosophical Midwifery.

Now, in order to better understand how each tradition views man's dilemma, let us examine in some detail how each tradition guides its students to approach the 8th stage, or the brilliant light of Being.

The letters of the Zen master Bassui clearly state the essential practice of a Zen follower: "While you are doing *zazen* neither despise nor cherish the thoughts that arise; only search your own mind, the very source of these thoughts. You must understand that anything appearing in your consciousness or seen by your eyes is an illusion, of no enduring reality. Hence you should neither fear nor be fascinated by such phenomena. If you keep your mind as empty as space, unstained by extraneous matters, no evil spirits can disturb you even on your deathbed" (Kapleau, pg. 163)¹. He also writes:

"Do not try to prevent thoughts from arising and do not cling to any that have arisen. Let thoughts appear and disappear as they will, don't struggle with them. You need only unremittingly and with all your heart ask yourself, 'What is my own Mind?' I keep urging this because I want to bring you to Self-realization. When you persistently try to understand [with the

¹ Kapleau, Philip, ed. *The Three Pillars of Zen*. New York, NY. Harper and Row: 1966.

intellect] what is beyond the domain of intellect, you are bound to reach a dead end, completely baffled. But push on. Sitting and standing, working or sleeping, probe tirelessly to your deepest self with the question ‘What is my own Mind?’ Fear nothing but the failure to experience your True-nature. This is Zen practice” (Kapleau, pg. 169).

This stage of the practice is depicted in the first five *Ox-herding Pictures*.² Man’s problem can be summed up in the first line of the 1st picture: “The Ox has never really gone astray, so why search for it?” The Ox represents our True-nature. Though our True-nature is manifest in every thought and perception, until “our inner vision is properly focused,” we cannot realize that “that which is seen is identical with the true source” (3rd picture). In the 5th picture, man finally recognizes that the thoughts that arise, one from another, are no less real than our True-nature from which the thoughts arise. In the 6th picture, he is riding towards home on his Ox. In the 7th, he is home and the Ox has vanished. He recognizes that the Ox is his Primal-nature; there is no longer any duality between his self and his true-nature: they are one.

By means of this tireless practice you may eventually break through to the state of the 8th picture:

Whip, rope, and Ox alike belong to Emptiness.
So vast and infinite the azure sky
that no concept of any sort can reach it.
Over a blazing fire a snowflake cannot survive.
When this state of mind is realized
comes at last comprehension
of the spirit of the ancient Patriarchs.

Bassui also describes a state that appears to be the 8th: “When this intense questioning envelops every inch of you and penetrates to the very bottom of all bottoms, the question will suddenly burst and the substance of the Buddha-mind will be revealed, just as a mirror in a box can reflect only after the box is broken apart. The radiance of this Mind will light up every corner of a universe free of even a single blemish. You will be liberated at last from all entanglements within the Six Realms, all effects of evil actions having vanished. The joy of this moment cannot be put into words” (Kapleau, pg. 169).

If, after beginning Zen practice and striving after Bassui’s one question, one notices the thoughts that appear and disappear, then it may occur to a naturally curious mind to ask: What are these thoughts that come and go? Why do I experience them? And if the cause of all thought is Mind, should there not be found in the effects as well something like the intelligibility inherent in Mind? The Zen master sees these thoughts but has no methodology or structure within which

² All quotations from the *Ox-herding Pictures* are from Kapleau, pp. 302-311.

to explore them; thus a student trying to understand them will inevitably be led to a dead end and bafflement. Indeed, to interpret our particular thoughts by means of some general theory will lead to making believers who are loyal to this or that school of interpretation but they will be nowhere near the experience of mind itself--a consequence the Zen master ardently wishes to avoid. Thus Zen smashes through all such intellectual endeavors to the very source of thought. Persistently ask the unanswerable question until all attempts at understanding are vanquished. But why, if Mind is as it is, do we experience delusive thoughts that have no benefit towards attaining our goal of full enlightenment? May there not be a way to bridge the gap between delusion and Mind itself, yet without recourse to interpretation, so that thoughts are understood to be beneficial to self-realization?

Pierre has demonstrated through his work in Philosophical Midwifery that the way of the logos is that very bridge. He writes: "The only obstacle to seeing is belief" (Grimes, 2011, pg. 45)³. "Philosophical midwifery seeks to understand the nature of belief through the logos, and what is that but to liberate the understanding in the quest for enlightenment? In Philosophical Midwifery we search for the origin of belief, the grounds of our acceptance of belief, and the testing of our understanding" (Grimes, 2011, pg. 28). Pierre distinguishes six kinds of belief (see Grimes, 1998, pp. 61-2),⁴ all obstacles to seeing. However the belief most pernicious to self-realization he calls the pathologos. Pierre defines it thus:

The lack of awareness that one's judgements about oneself and the nature of reality are derived from particular experiences in one's past, generalized to all, and being unable to relate to or accept that there is sufficient evidence to deny the generality of these judgments, yet thinking, feeling, and acting upon them as if they were self-evident truths, we call such irrational beliefs the pathologos. These beliefs are always irreconcilable with the attainment of one's personally meaningful goals. (Grimes, 1998, pg. 62)

He describes the consequences of the pathologos:

In accepting the pathologos there is a sacrificing of a more mature seeing for an infantile belief, and in that transition is the origin of our resentments and anger. The cause of our fundamental anger is that at some level we are aware of our condition, and we resent having been tyrannized by those we have loved and, at times, held in high esteem. It is our anger that fuels the pathologos and deprives us of our much needed clarity of mind. (Grimes, 1998, pg. 41)

³ Grimes, Pierre. *The Way of the Logos, Volume II: The Reflection*. Lulu.com: 2011.

⁴ Grimes, Pierre and Uliana, Regina. *Philosophical Midwifery: A New Paradigm for Understanding Human Problems with its Validation*. Hyparxis Press. Costa Mesa, CA: 1998.

For the Zen practitioner whose goal is to follow Bassui's one question method, who is observing his thoughts coming and going, the following paragraphs will be of great value:

[T]he most insidious influence of the pathologos plays itself out within us as the inner dialogue we have with ourselves. Those inner voices have their own roles and images; and as they unfold their message, they create our states of mind, our relationships to ourselves, and to our reality. The dialogue takes on various forms of the pathologos, and the tonality of these inner voices can often be recognized as belonging to those principle figures in the pathologos drama. In *Philosophical Midwifery* it has always been significant for the subject to describe these inner dialogues and compare them to past learnings. This is the simplest way to understand that we do not have a pathologos, the pathologos has us. The best times to study the inner dialogue are before, during or after we engage in pursuing our personally significant goals because it becomes quite evident that those early patterns of thought influence our present pattern of thoughts which in turn interfere with the achievement of our goals. The inner voice is the mirror of the pathologos; it is its reminder. Its messages are always dramatic, convincing, and knowing; for its voice is the echo of the past learning scenes. Subjects in *Philosophical Midwifery* talks are urged to note the cycle of these negative and inappropriate thoughts, when they occur, and their frequency; for it is by reflecting on them that one reaches an understanding of how such cycles affect our everyday pursuits. In addition, it is often recommended that they also learn to answer each of these negative thoughts as if they were formal charges delivered against them. For in taking these charges seriously and answering them fairly, we can say that we respect their source and treat them as Zen-like koans [...]. The practice of writing down these inner dialogues--and that includes writing our fantasies--becomes a way of seeing the pathologos as the structure from which all these thought forms are generated. The pervasive impact of the pathologos can be seen, for through this study one can see how fantasies rehearse and support the pathologos.

Fantasy life is made up of fragments of our unfinished past. We return to them to be finished. This is something that is profound about our nature: our mind functions to return us to what needs to be finished. Until this is completed we are stuck in the pathologos. We have to finish what we started; we have to take and bring to completion what we abandoned; we have to continue our own development from our highest point; we have to understand why we sacrificed our vision before we can reclaim it (Grimes, 1998, pp. 45-6).

Philosophical Midwifery is an art in the Platonic sense (read Book 1 of the *Republic* and *Ion*), which is to say the midwife operates for the sole benefit of the person with the pathologos, also called the pregnant party, and every act and word is guided by the midwife's knowledge of the Philosophical Midwifery method. For a full explanation of the method, it is best to turn to Pierre's book on Philosophical Midwifery, but in essence it is the process of examining patterns in our thoughts, images, and dreams in order to reveal our false beliefs about ourself and our reality that block us from pursuing our meaningful goals. To examine patterns, there are three objects to reflect upon: (1) the particular words or logos used by the pregnant party to talk about the thought, image, or dream (2) the states of mind experienced in the thought, image, or dream and (3) the way the pregnant party and other key actors in the thought, image, or dream function with respect to themselves and others. The philosophical midwife's role is different than a psychotherapist or doctor's. Above all "there is no need for the midwife to appear as the knower, as if they understand the meaning of everything the subject reveals, because the method itself arrives at a field of data from which the subject can puzzle out the meaning of and the answers to his problems. It is in this sense that the midwife only assists another in the birth of an idea and does not offer answers and interpretations" (1998, pg. 73). If you would like to explore these aspects of philosophical midwifery further, you will find Plato's *Theaetetus* of much interest, for there Socrates explains and demonstrates his role, method and goal as a philosophical midwife.

Socrates is the ideal model of a philosophical midwife who challenges the false beliefs taught by teachers as well as those transmitted through one's culture. However Pierre's work in *Philosophical Midwifery* focuses on a different level of false belief (or pathologos), that which is unknowingly transmitted at unique moments in one's family drama. In such scenes the parent or guardian, appearing as the authority and knower, acts unjustly toward their child and the child is intimidated into accepting the parent's conclusions over his own seeing which, had he had the courage to share it, would have challenged those conclusions. Consequently, the child must inwardly reconcile the just and good image of his parent or guardian with his direct experience of his parent's unjust action. But whenever such scenes are not discussed nor the conclusions explicitly stated, the child is caught in a bind: either the child trusts what he sees and recognizes that the benevolent image of his parent is false, or he must save the good image of the parent by accepting the blame onto himself. When the child accepts the blame, that is the source of his anger and resentment. The drama of how this anger unfolds and is maintained, its serious consequences to the pregnant party and others, the recognition of the past scenes in which he learned the pathologos from his parent or guardian, the importance of understanding the past scenes as the origin of the false beliefs, and the wisdom and power that follow from freeing the mind from the fetters of such beliefs, all are brilliantly drawn out in Homer's *Iliad* in the spiritual journey of Achilles. It is because Homer, better than Plato, understood the pathologos that Pierre considers his work an extension of Homer more than Plato.

Philosophical Midwifery functions as the bridge that binds the world of appearances in which so much of our lives appear less than rational to the Isles of the Blest, where the eternally good and divine dwell. This is not an overstatement for you only need undertake the journey of *Philosophical Midwifery* to see that every thought is a doorway toward understanding yourself.

What a remarkable world we live in since all of our thoughts are intelligible and crafted to benefit us exactly in the precise way we need to fulfill self-realization right now. Our ignorance is that we do not recognize that we live in a caring and intelligible reality; our problem is that we think we know reality though we do not. All it takes to be free is deep respect for the logos and the courage to follow the words that describe our states of mind. The more we do so, the more we are open to receive the intelligibility that binds all of reality, which is the Logos of Reality. As we grasp higher levels of the logos we ascend from doing dialectic as philosophical midwifery to philosophical dialectic, as is discussed in the 7th book of the *Republic*. A follower of Zen who meditates with such an understanding is no longer following Bassui's path, but nevertheless he is pursuing the source of his thoughts. For these thoughts are not delusions getting in the way of Mind; they are reminders from the Mind about what must be examined in order to reach completion. Yes, these thoughts are not delusions--their intelligibility can be recognized before attaining full enlightenment and they function to turn us toward Mind itself.

In light of the differences between Hellenic and Buddhist understanding of man's ignorance, it is time to examine the differences between the highest states of the Ox-herding Pictures and those of Platonic philosophy, especially in regards to the Platonic ideas of Justice, the Good, and the One. Proclus in the 13th proposition of his *Elements of Theology* makes the argument that the Good is identical with the One because the Good causes every good to be good by virtue of bringing about the wholeness of all beings, which is nothing other than the process of making beings complete and one, while the One by bringing and keeping each being together, perfects it by its presence and thus makes what it completes good. If one sees that the identity of the Good with the One is true and that it is the first cause transcending all causes, then a metaphysics that is based on intelligibility and justice follows by necessity. That is the argument in the *Republic*. Each being is perfectly as it should be at this moment, for nothing has been treated unfairly, or unjustly, and all is following intelligible principles whose source is the Good and the One; the same is true for the mind: every mind is in the state it should be according to what it has learned in the past. The Myth of Er in the 10th book of the *Republic* is an intelligible account of the soul's journey through numerous life-cycles. In the myth, the soul is justly ruled by Necessity. Each soul has been what it has been, is what it is, and will become what it will become because she is justly and by necessity held to the consequences of what she has learned during her sojourn on earth.

From our study of Philosophical Midwifery, we have learned that every moment offers us the challenge to examine our false beliefs and there is no other study material needed than our own states of mind. The examination and understanding of our own mind, the gradual release from the fetters in the cave of belief, makes us whole and brings about a unity. By becoming more unified, we become more excellent. The culmination of seeing is described in the *Symposium* in three stages: first, as touching truth, second as giving birth and nurturing true excellence, and third, as attaining a likeness and friendship with the divine and gaining immortality to the greatest extent humanly possible: "Do you not reflect that there only it will be possible for him, when he sees the beautiful with the mind, which alone can see it, to give birth not to likenesses of excellence, since he touches no likeness, but to true excellences, since he

touches truth; and when he has given birth to true excellence and brought it up, will it not be granted him to be the friend of God, and immortal if any man ever is?" (Rouse, pg. 106).⁵ In the *Symposium*, there is evidence that Socrates himself has reached this state. In this respect he functions much like the barefooted, bare-chested man of the 10th picture.

Now from the Buddhist standpoint, what do we find in the 9th and 10th pictures? First, how shall we understand the nature of the Source from the text of the 9th picture, which is titled: "Returning to the Source"? In the first line, it is said: "From the very beginning there has not been so much as a speck of dust [to mar the intrinsic Purity]." From the very first picture the mind has been struggling with delusive thoughts while seeking the Source. But none of that activity has marred the Source's Purity. It is the source of thoughts and yet it transcends them. Now, the mind observes all the manifestations of the Source yet "abide{s} unassertively in a state of unshakable serenity." The mind becomes like its source. There is no more striving. Everything follows its course naturally. Now that the seeker has returned home, he recognizes his wanderings were in vain. The description recalls the first line of the 1st picture: "The Ox has never really gone astray, so why search for it?"

The process from ignorance to enlightenment is that of becoming pure so that inner vision is properly focused (3rd picture). The process for change is a breaking of old habits (4th picture) and a struggle to control one's thoughts of gain and loss (6th picture). The overall image is that of taming something wild. But there is no hint of understanding why it is wild. Thus the Zen journey is like scraping off mental defilement, a purification of inappropriate thoughts. In that sense it is a returning to the One itself through the dialectic (if interested, you will want to read the 1st Hypothesis of Plato's *Parmenides*). The One is not stained with any positive attributes and in that sense it is intrinsically pure. But the Source as source of all is also the cause of the enlightenment state in the 8th picture. Thus it is the cause of beauty and goodness, and as such it is desired by all. In that sense the Source is the Good. Only recall Bassui's joy at experiencing the radiance of the brilliant light of Being (in his letter quoted earlier) and it can be reasoned that its source must be the Good. Yet if the Source is also the Good, and Buddhists understand this, then the idea of justice is surprisingly lacking in the Ox-herding Pictures. And with justice comes intelligibility and providence. For if the first cause is the Good and the One, and if the conclusions of Proclus' 13th proposition follow, then everything is perfect, precisely the way it is. Which is nothing other than saying that everything that is is receiving exactly what it needs at exactly the right time in order to become more fully complete and better. Such a description of reality can be called just and intelligible. And since a divine mind is watching and guiding this process unfold, providence functions over this reality. When this process becomes evident as something intelligible through our work in Philosophical Midwifery, then we shall desire to participate in it as fully as possible by becoming as rational as possible. In contrast, in Zen the adherent desires to participate--not by becoming rational and developing the understanding--but by stepping over the intelligible mud directly into pure enlightenment. If the

⁵ Plato. W.H.D. Rouse, trans. *The Great Dialogues of Plato*. Mentor Book. New York, NY: 1984. ---I have made changes in the translation.

lack of justice in the Pictures is any indication, it appears that the Source is, in Platonic terms, identifiable with the One, but its necessary identity with the Good is not understood or underappreciated.

So, what has the Zen seeker learned in making this spiritual return to the Source? “Seated in his hut, he hankers not for things outside. Streams meander on of themselves, red flowers naturally bloom red.” He has reached the stage which was already foreshadowed in the 3rd picture: “In every activity the Source is manifestly present. {...} When the inner vision is properly focused, one comes to realize that that which is seen is identical with the true Source.” Already in the 7th, the duality between one’s own mind and mind itself is seen as false, while in the 8th there is only the vision of the infinite azure sky beyond any concept. So in the 9th, what stage of enlightenment has he reached? It is the recognition of the intrinsic purity of all beings and thoughts, which is what it is without any effort because it is simply the manifestation of the intrinsic purity of the Source. It is therefore a unifying vision, uniting the Source with all its manifestations. With this recognition, the mind is unshakably serene, but it lacks an understanding of the nature of the Good.

In the 10th picture, the “mental panorama has finally disappeared.” He cannot be located, even by the wisest. His way is the way of the Source. In the 9th he remained in his hut, but in the 10th there is no place that is not his home. He is completely free to follow his own way, since it is the way of the Source. “He leads innkeepers and fishmongers in the Way of the Buddha.” He associates with the lowest class of people, but like the lotus that lives in muddy water, he himself is without stain and is full of joy. “Without recourse to mystic powers, withered trees he swiftly brings to bloom.” In what way does he bring even the lowest class into the Way of the Buddha? Does he bring about wholeness by teaching them the intelligibility and justice of their thoughts, fantasies and dreams? No, since there is no evidence for such understanding in the Pictures. But if his teaching is not through intelligibility and justice, what method does he use? Could it be Bassui’s method? If so, then even the highest enlightenment that his method brings about is still shallow, since he would not have seen for himself the caring intelligibility of the kosmos which is the bridge between the divine and the mortal. What greater joy is there than the recognition that with every one of our mental states we receive a reminder to turn us back to the Good and the One? Only follow the Way of the Logos and nurture your understanding.

The Way of the Logos is an ancient way. And just as paths, even to holy places, disappear from disuse, so the Way becomes faint. With the deepest respect I offer my gratitude to Pierre, whose understanding has reminded us that the Way to the Intelligible is itself intelligible.



Let's Look Back - by Julia Postel

Pierre Grimes had been told by Joseph Campbell in New York that there was only one place where philosophy was happening in the USA in the late 1950s, so Pierre headed to California where Joseph had said to find this guy, Alan Watts, who was doing some good stuff at The American Academy for Asian Studies which became The California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco. After spending a few years in California, Pierre got the reputation for stirring things up a bit in the dialogues happening around Alan Watts and here is what Alan Watts says in his book, *In My Own Way: An Autobiography - 1915-1965* (published in 1972, which, by the way, is 7 years later!):

“In working out those problems, I was enormously helped by two of my students, Leo Johnson and Pierre Grimes....Pierre Grimes came to us from Saint John's, Annapolis, where he had been nurtured on Plato, but in working with me he graduated to Nagarjuna and began very practical experiments with that great Mahayanist's philosophy. He saw that Nagarjuna's method was a dialectical process that went far beyond sophistry and intellectual acrobatics, and could be used as a very powerful instrument for what I had in mind - namely, the dissolution of erroneous concepts felt as percepts, Pierre devised an encounter group on the metaphysical level. That is to say, he worked out a situation in which the participants would probe for each other's basic assumptions, or axioms, about life, and then demonstrate that they were no more than assumptions; not truths, but arbitrary game-rules. This dialectic was as traumatic for a logical positivist as for a Hegelian, for as basic assumptions crumbled, members of the group would begin to show intense anxiety. He would then probe for still deeper assumptions underlying the anxiety until he could bring the group to a state of consciousness in which they could happily relax, and abandon the frustrating and futile project of trying to make a false hypothesis called “I,” on the one hand, get mastery over another false hypothesis called “experience” or “the world,” on the other. The process seemed extraordinarily therapeutic both for Pierre himself and for those who worked with him. I had feared that he would become a scornful, prickly intellectual, but he turned out to be a man of singular compassion and humor, as well as good sense in the practical matters of life. For Pierre was a true jnana yogi; that is to say, one who comes to an authentic realization, or satori, by an intellectual rather than an emotional or physical discipline.” (pg 290-292)

Still true today, that Pierre is compassionate when most people would turn a blind eye, and humorous just when it is critical to bring a group to unity. Pierre's method could not be subsumed as part of Alan Watt's work any more than it has been able to be taken under any umbrella. But Alan Watts died before they could fully test that theory then in 1973.

Since that time, The Noetic Society, Incorporated in 1978, has provided many of his students with training in Philosophical Midwifery but no Program for Training has been under way for quite some time. Mother's Market's Bruce Macgurn provided space for the Academy of Philosophical Midwifery in the late 90's. *The Hellenic Chariot* Journal was published for several years (Ed. William Gilbert) and brought Noetic Society members together into many study groups (Greek Tragedies, Homer, Greek, Theology of Plato). In more recent times, The Holmes Institute and The Philosophical Research Society were both able to utilize Pierre's teachings for their students but no Institute of Philosophical Midwifery exists today. The Opening Mind Academy has existed in two forms, once with Myo-Bong S'nim in the early 1980s and then again from 1997-2003 in Costa Mesa, CA. Why the Academies haven't survived the problems of its members is a function of the larger problems in society with respect to spirituality and what constitutes a religion and many of Pierre's dialogues and papers speak to this issue.

It is very interesting to me that those of us closest to Pierre, those able to walk and talk with him, able to meet with him for Midwife Talks, able to learn with him on Friday nights at the Noetic Society, Inc., have not formed such an Institute, that somehow we stay insulated in Southern California and even though the contacts Pierre makes all over the world create sparks of interest and some people study with him on their own and develop great skills for good lives, most students have incorporated their learning and gone his or her own way. Others get his book but don't go on to ask questions or get involved in Midwifery for themselves personally. Most intelligent people see it's beauty and importance right away but since most academic philosophers are already going in one direction or another, they find the conflict too uncomfortable to deal with, the truth that what they had thought was true is now in question and that they might now be forced by their insights to live a different life, a better life, and take the principles of PMW to heart. When we experience the effect of hitting our ceiling, the furthest reach of our courage, we shut down from pursuing that path and settle back into a more comfortable level of life. Until something wakes us up!

The Challenge of Excellence:

Pierre Grimes has been my teacher since 1986 or so and he continues to roll out his generosity day after day by providing a structure for people to understand. How to understand is a complicated study which involves not only an understanding of Plato's *Republic* but also a practice of understanding oneself, pursuing goals which will promote growth. Since the first time I went to a Noetic Society, Inc, meeting to read Plato's *Symposium* in 1985 or 86 at Pierre and Nancy's house with around 30 other students (some of whom had already been studying with Pierre for 20 years), I recognized something which defies description in words but must be described, something that feels like home, something that would keep me coming back for more contact with his work. I didn't know it then, but the reason I was hooked is because it brings a way to gain excellence and its resulting personally meaningful understanding and beauty has a special charm. At first, the benefit showed up as more energy, more clarity and more insights and it took years of study to see the reasoning behind the goodnesses that Pierre was giving us access to. I share this experience with countless others who have taken his classes at Golden West College since the 1960s or have attended his hundreds of workshops, or who have studied with him online or by mail. If I could reach all of his friends and colleagues who have benefitted from his work, he would be showered with not only these 27 contributions, but with hundreds more.

From my first experience using Pierre's *To Artemis*™ Program (the first program to be developed using Hypercard on the Mac with his son Joseph Grimes and with Carole Duncan), this work has assisted me as a parent to my beautiful Kate and has given me a structure for questioning the irreconcilable beliefs that were making my life as a single parent raised in a dysfunctional family difficult, bringing me the education of Plato's *Republic*, a way of life of self reflection and improvement, a way of seeing how things function which can assist us all to be better people and therefore more able to do what we set out to do in this life and in future lives. And it's never finished, we're never done, cooked, or complete; I struggle to continue my studies through the many distractions I place in front of myself. And I struggle with my responsibility to admit and acknowledge the spiritual implications of Pierre's work as my own experience has been tested through understanding to reveal a connection which unites us all. But my lack of academic credentials puts me safely in the world of those who can learn, grow and develop without having to share it much with others beyond our daily lives.

When Philosophy was incorporated into my life, it provided a structure for questioning, for reviewing what I thought was true which gave me the confidence and strength of mind to keep working at the company I had created even though it seemed to be in conflict with the new thought and new understanding. Since the company provides bar code labels to Aerospace and I am against war and the military industrial complex, I found it very difficult to justify making money doing something I didn't admire. But, doing it with excellence was something I had not considered. Allowing myself to be an excellent worker with my own design for balancing work and play was a challenge that raised the level of my functioning beyond simply making money

for money's sake, and allowed me to balance work with leisure realizing that money is not the measure of all things. I never became rich in cash, but the riches in life experiences uses a different measure.

I, along with many of his students, attended every class Pierre taught at Golden West College for years, auditing again and again once I had completed them all for credit. Philosophy was suddenly something to strive for, a living love for wisdom which brings benefit to the seeker, a way of living.

Pierre's demonstrations and classes at the Philosophical Research Society (PRS) in Los Angeles drew me to make the rush-hour drive every week and the work he was doing was so beautifully combined with boardwork and dialogue that I wanted to be able to view them again and believed others would also find them valuable, so I hired Bob Keller to tape record these sessions for 4 years and he and his wife both expressed appreciation for the education they received while doing this project. We also filmed a few TV shows for KOCE and if Bob had not suddenly passed away, I believe we would have continued the series, but did not push it once he was gone. Before he passed, Bob had transferred the PRS Beta tapes to VHS and volunteers have taken them to digital formats and the 115 treasures remain available for study online or as DVDs. Pierre and I also broadcasted a radio show called *The Light Show* and those programs are still available to be heard on Pierre's websites.

Pierre's method for exploring the blocks to reaching personally meaningful goals provided my first opportunity to put into words what I was wondering about in a way which provided a structure for reflection and learning. And it wasn't enough to grow as a business owner or a student of philosophy, my gratitude took me by the heart and we created a place where Pierre's students could study every day, an Opening Mind Academy which almost survived the problems of its members and flourished for several years in Costa Mesa, CA until 2003. We had classes almost every night of the week, including a class on Euclidian Geometry led by the now-deceased Rod Wallbank.

Pierre's annual workshops at the Esalen Institute since 1991 have provided him a setting for sharing his work in a place which matches in physical form the beauty of his wisdom and each year his students' understanding increases, our bravery deepens, our vision brightens. He raises the level of our seeing each year through working with our dreams and providing questions for contemplation which bring us direct experience of our blocks to becoming better and better. For, as the ancient philosophers surely knew, it is our goal to enrich the soul with learning so we can approach perfection.

Besides Bob Keller, there have been other students and colleagues who did not live long enough to help us celebrate Pierre's life. Essays by Ken King and Rod Wallbank are included in this book as a tribute to them and in appreciation for the benefit they have brought to us all.

When Allan Hartley gave me the idea to spearhead this project to honor Pierre for his contributions, I gained the opportunity to give his family, students and colleagues a way to reflect on their personal growth while also challenging myself to reach for excellence and therefore risk bumping into the same sorts of blocks that I faced in other parts of my education. What would it do to me to see myself as capable of doing this project since the very idea of being able to complete this project is in conflict with earlier beliefs that I am not smart enough, competent enough, good enough. Most of us struggle to move away from a low self image and Pierre has shown me that we each reach the ceiling of our development; unless we challenge ourselves to make that ceiling disappear, we are locked into the familiar pattern of our life cycle. Unless we find out what it is that is at the root of our beliefs about ourselves and the nature of Reality, we will not be able to change our minds about that ceiling, let it become as the morning mist, something to see and let go.

It is not a pleasant experience to see my blocks, and it has changed my idea of 'fun' to see the longterm benefit of struggling through problems and testing my beliefs. Thank you, Pierre Grimes, for being my gadfly, my mentor, my teacher, my friend. Always. Someday, Homer, Parmenides and Socrates, among others, will receive the gift of your essence. May the dialogues be grand and may you find a way to communicate them to us if you have left anything out of your already generous writings. You have given us the tools to see - can we rise to the challenge?

Throughout the many years of volunteer work I have done for Opening Mind Academy, the Noetic Society, Inc, and Pierre Grimes' workshops and other projects, I watched as many students benefitted from his work and I, myself have concluded at a few important crisis points in my life that PMW gave me a way to move forward. I believe I am most fortunate to have recognized this guy when I met him as my teacher. It gives me great joy to read that Plato knew the significance of recognizing one's teachers (see Book X, *Plato's Republic*) and I can see that many of my choices have kept me away from pursuing Philosophy as a career for the past ten years. Somehow I convinced myself that I could not simply do the work and ignore the disdain of the academic community, denying me the right to practice professionally because I did not have the academic credentials. Even though Pierre understood the importance of going outside the University system to learn and to teach as he believes that one's credentials come from the understanding, the practice of using the method, being reviewed by one's peers, and being able to review other's work. In order to move forward with my ideas in spite of the difficulties would have required a higher self image than I had at the time and for that time period, I had hit quite a ceiling. I am still bumping my head.

I have accompanied Pierre Grimes to many conferences around the world, attended all but one of his Esalen 5-day workshops, published papers, attended the Academy of Philosophical Midwifery at Mother's Market in the late 90's (space donated by Bruce and Sharon Macgurn), started Opening Mind Academy which ran successfully for 6 years in Costa Mesa California, have been a Noetic Society, Inc member since 1986, and I even memorized one of the PMW talks Pierre and I had so that I could see more clearly what was happening in my past which kept me blocked from meaningful pursuits (at first I did it on his dare which turned out to be his gift

called “*The Symmetry*”). A group of like-minded students performed the play Pierre wrote around that talk and the implications of his method for exploring human problems began to be clearer; if people could reflect on their early learning scenes and see how they came to believe the false beliefs which are at the foundation of what blocks us from our meaningful goals, then we can see what is blocking us from higher states in meditation. We can also see what is blocking meaningful love relationships, and we can see that there is an order to things, patterns, and that these patterns are reflections of the Real. As we move into an understanding of metaphysics, we learn to see the full range of beauty and can recall seeing what caused beautiful things to exist, we get excited and thrilled. Then, by understanding the reason why it is exciting, we learn to use the mind to analyze things - we learn to evaluate what is said to us and around us in a new way, naturally seeking meaning. We also learn to test our seeing to make sure that the feelings of excitement are the result of the beautiful, not the false image.

I wanted to compile these papers for Pierre because it demonstrates that many people see him as a great man, one as worthy as Socrates was of having dialogues written about his teachings and as worthy as Socrates of having someone use his work to write pieces that could assist others to use their mind and see Reality. And since he has continuously written dialogues which assist us in seeing with mind, he is not only like Socrates, but he is like Parmenides in being able to not only talk, but also to write. And he is also like the Dream Master, a Divine Being in that he can create the perfect conditions for our seeing, for our benefit, and then assist us in the reflections. And, I see that I wanted a place that would be a permanent (ha!), written record of my participation with Pierre. I have enjoyed putting this compilation together. I am so grateful that he is still with us to guide us onward. Thank you, Pierre. Now and Always.



Tribute by Juan and Maria Balboa

16 Jan 2013

We find it both an honor and a pleasure in having been asked to join others in paying Tribute to Dr. Pierre Grimes. First of all we have known Dr. Grimes since the early seventies when we were his students at Golden West College. And we are still, to this very day his students and will remain being his students until the end. For on the one hand, we recognize that Dr. Grimes not only possesses an unfathomable Intellect and an unfailing Memory, but on the other hand, he also possesses the deepest care for his fellow human beings, and which care is joined to an amazingly inexhaustible reserve of energy that is focused on bringing Light to his fellow human beings. We have both participated in this Light of Reason and know of countless others who have also shared of his Vision. His Beneficial Energy has not only brought to our attention the knowledge of the always relevant Ancients like Homer, Plato and Proclus, but his Wonderful Energy has also produced many beautiful books and essays for our rectification and edification. Dr. Grimes has remained at his appointed post of Educator for the Benefit of all of us, since the early sixties to this very day.

Furthermore, we would like to pay Tribute to Pierre as our Friend and Benefactor, especially since through his association with us, we have been brought to understand what it means to be a Friend. Indeed, by his association with us we have discovered the Value of many Beautiful Words that are now Full of Meaning. For it was Pierre who brought our attention to the Socratic Method that is wide open and ready for anyone to use, even a young uneducated slave boy; for notice what Socrates says, "Without anyone having taught him, and only through questions put to him, he will understand, recovering the knowledge out of himself?" For Socrates not only offered up this Invitation to Seeing to Meno and his slave boy, but to everyone who has ever paid attention to those words. For it is an invitation to Discovery and Insight that originates from The Very Source of Life: The Center of Our Soul. Thus we ask ourselves, if the Communion of Friendship happens to be the Binding Force that holds together The Four Virtues in a wonderful hierarchical relationship just as The Communion of Friendship is the bond that holds together The Four Arts, then how much more are we bound together who have Seen this connection. What if instead of calling The Bond that indeed binds them together Friendship, we call it Analogy or Proportion, would they be any less or any more bound? What if we were to call it Love? It was Pierre, our Benefactor and Friend who pointed out that we do not have to look any further than our very own souls for the answers to our inquiries. What a Great Gift! Yes indeed, It is The Very Ancient Hellenic World-View that Sees that The Innate Friendship of Intelligible Number is also found in All of God's Creation.

Pierre has opened many doors, for many of us, that would have otherwise remained closed, not the least of which, is The Doorway into The World of Ideas, and The World of Ideas in turn, has set Aright our world at large. Many years ago, before I even knew that I would be translating those authors that I then only knew by name, Pierre made reference to my future scholarship. We have also at different times, presented certain troubling dreams to him, that upon examination, were no longer troubling, but quite the opposite, they became the source of

clarification for our Waking-World and the source of wonder not only for The World of Dreams but for The Man Himself. It has Been our Very Good Luck to have crossed paths with Pierre, and having crossed his Path we now try and follow the best way that we are able, With All our Love and Gratitude, Juan and Maria Balboa.



From : L Z S (Winter Lazerus)
To Pierre:

To my dearest, truest, beloved maestro with whom I am so profoundly grateful.

I always wondered what the phrase, "The measure of a man" meant. It was only when I met Pierre Grimes that I understood it's very real and important meaning and it's staggering depth, challenging gauntlet and courageous beauty.

I am cursed/blessed now to only ever reach for such sacred increments with my own life, for Pierre has made it so that I can never buy short, sell out or imagine living any form of a True existence if I do not look into the depth of Wisdom. Pierre Grimes is the very measurement I use every time I take a stand in this world, every moment I engage in art, community, vision and every breath I take to love and love well. To such I am now blessed by Wisdom and cursed by Wisdom and thanks to Pierre, I can know the difference. Oh Divine madness.

Oh Divine Madness.

You introduced me to The Dream Master, showing me that I am given my own, profoundly specific, multi-media presentations every night, to guide my journey of Soul. I will never forget the time you and I went through 10 of the dreams I'd had over a months' period. We did that all in one go, in sequence with you drawing each one out on your artists easel.

THEN, we laid them all on the floor of the stage at the Philosophical Research Society in the order that I had dreamed them. There they were, the ten Dream Master Movies I'd had over time. We were alone and you and I then just walked around them, as you showed me how all the dreams were now related to one another in a chain of Consciousness and meaning guiding me over the period that I had them.

Incredible Pierre!

I still have all ten of those drawings and one day will frame them. (That will be a LARGE wall space for certain)!

Oh Divine Madness.

And on the Earthly plane of day to day existence:

Never has anyone taken so much care to guide me beyond the facades and "obstacle delusions" of my own foolish perspectives.

You have done this time and time again with such joy, finesse, love, and unrelenting demand for the true respect that real Wisdom deserves.

My favorite personal, one-on-one quote of yours is this : "Lazerus, I've discovered how to write the greatest occult work ever: Simply tell the truth and no one will understand you".

I LOVE THAT!

How many times have you and I sat together one-on-one as I stumbled through Plato's dialogs with my near-sighted pathologies interpreting everything in shallow manners with the hope of 'getting it right'? Only to learn that even my pathologos were choices? (Utterly effecting how I interpreted Wisdom when I encountered it).

So how could I even begin?

Oh Divine Madness.

How many times did you make me laugh and then help me discover "on my own" (well that is your way) just what it was that I was missing, confusing, or making far too minimal in value, when it came to the precious commodity of Wisdom? (The Gold Standard that Gold wishes it could meet).

You guided me to write and complete a remarkable Masters degree Thesis in 2012 on "The Death of Socrates" that literally had me experiencing the presence of Socrates and also of finding myself on the floor in the process. Stunned, blessed and so aware of just how little I knew/know.

I still remember Huston Smith's smile when he saw you again at Krotona (after some 30 + years). He said you were the only living Platonist on Earth. (And I reckon he'd be one of the single greatest authorities on how true that is)!

I live a very different life due to our profound relationship, each day being based upon, as Socrates would say, 'Knowing where my Soul is in the labyrinth'. (A theme of the paper we wrote).

I am a "blessed one" for your care and loving guidance.

You enchanted me again and again and again.

I pray I may enchant others to discover Wisdom (for themselves of course) by understanding all that you've helped me to study, engage, love and cherish.

Oh Divine Madness,

Oh Divine Madman.

I will close this with 3 poems inspired by you and created for you.

I love you Pierre, all ways;

:Lazerus - 8/1/2013

Stains of Wild Wisdom

*When Wisdom Is Packaged In New And Improved Forms
Where Does It Go To Smell The Deep Dirt Of Its Own Timelessness?
If It Is Sold Shiny And New,
What Value Does Its Gift Hold In The Forest Of Earthly Archetypes?*

*I've Bought Some Of The Latest Nouveau Wisdom
And It Seemed To Go Out Of Fashion So Fast*

*And I Longed For The Stains Of Wild Wisdom
The Ones It Always Leaves On The Knees Of My Jeans
When My Growing Pains Force Me To Crawl
With A Magnifying Glass In The Garden*



*"Stains Of Wild Wisdom" - Winter Lazerus
Photo by Winston Boyer
(used with permission)*

Socrates and the Bushman

*Socrates knew
The greatest secrets in this world
Were hidden, coiled and dangerous*

*The Good
The True
The Beautiful*

Were the poison that freed him

Bushman says:

*"When the Heart is dark
The Poison's unknown*

Socrates says:

*"When the Heart is light
The poison is shown"*

"Socrates And The Bushman" by Winter Lazerus - Photo by Winston Boyer (used with permission)



Little Wing

*I heard a voice coming from a hummingbird's nest
Seated upon a long branch of a Cypress just above my head*

*The voice sounded like the roar of a wild lion on the Savannah
And my soul was devastated*

*So I climbed the tree carefully
To see how this might possibly be*

*And when I found the tiny nest
It was empty*

*Save for a cipher's clue
Written in broken egg shells*

*And once decoded
The message read*

*"The king of the beasts survives
On the wind of the smallest wing*

*"Little Wing" by Winter Lazerus
Photo by Winston Boyer
(used with permission)*



Little Wing

*I heard a voice coming from a hummingbird's nest
Seated upon a long branch of a Cypress just above my head*

*The voice sounded like the roar of a wild lion on the Savannah
And my soul was devastated*

*So I climbed the tree carefully
To see how this might possibly be*

*And when I found the tiny nest
It was empty*

*Save for a cipher's clue
Written in broken egg shells*

*And once decoded
The message read*

*"The king of the beasts survives
On the wind of the smallest wing*

*"Little Wing" by Winter Lazerus
Photo by Winston Boyer
(used with permission)*



To Pierre Grimes by Donna Laba

In my second semester at GoldenWest College, I took an intro to Philosophy course with Pierre Grimes and it altered the direction of my life. I was taking 18 credits and I recall someone suggesting that I drop the Philosophy to lighten my course load. That was absurd. I knew very quickly that I would be willing to drop everything BUT that class. Pierre had introduced me to Plato.

He understood Plato. He would include us in the exploration of the dialogue, deftly leading us through a series of questions. Respecting the internal integrity of the work through a close reading of the text, Pierre bypassed the pitfalls of interpretation. I would read and study to prepare for class. However I would inevitably discover how little I knew and how much I wanted to learn. I would leave in a state of “wow!” as he revealed the obvious. For truth is always obvious. I would then reread the dialogue with greater clarity, realizing that there was still much more to see. This wasn't about maintaining my 4.0. It was about bursting through puzzles that offered glimpses into the nature of Reality and what made life worth living. I had fallen in love with Platonic thought.

Pierre was always available to his students for further discussion over a cup of coffee. Whatever the level of the student, he would take you higher. One of the greatest gifts that he gave me, was the ability to pursue my own education in Plato. He taught me how to play with Plato and become an active participant in the dialogue. Because of Pierre, Plato became my teacher and I became my teacher. This was especially important as I continued my undergraduate and graduate education.

I was deeply disappointed in the approach to Philosophy that I encountered after GoldenWest. It was taught through commentaries by professors that lacked understanding of Platonic thought. Just as a reliance on religious dogma serves as an obstacle to the pursuit of the Divine; reliance on educational dogma serves as an obstacle to understanding and insight. Dogma promotes obedience and faith. How can you have Philosophy without Love of Wisdom?

After 30 years of exploring Plato and other metaphysical paths, I still have to return to Pierre if I want to share an insight or pose a question. I know he'll understand and take me higher because he practices Philosophy as an art. He possesses the comprehensive knowledge and understanding of all aspects of his art. He is adept at demonstrating that knowledge and understanding to those willing to learn. He is able to judge what is done well or poorly within the context of that art. He provides that good for the benefit of his students and I am grateful to have been one of them

A Few Words of High Regard for Pierre Grimes by Merrie Martino

It was a gradual effect, when I came to realize that I had a mind. Not that I didn't think before that, but thinking is not always an indication of mind. Mind, it turns out to be, is more than a brain function that includes thought and memory, feeling and emotion, the unconscious, intentionality, sense perception and sensation, imagination and our capacity for all of our beliefs. All of this we casually refer to as attributes of intellect, and popular with literary artists, mind, it is said, is the stream of consciousness, although the unconscious is also part of this faculty that gives us the uniquely human function of reasoning. I hazily recall being in my first philosophy class, but the reality was that it was the beginning of an introduction to my mind and now after the decades of many classes and uncountable social get togethers, in-sync awareness of using my mind, being able to use it became a way of life. In a way, that first experience of circumspection was shocking. This shock has never left me even though 40 or so years have passed by since that initial realization in the class taught by Pierre Grimes subliminally guides my entire life. And that is the breathtaking importance of finding one has a mind.

If anyone had the best affect on my ability to more fully experience the world, it was Pierre. His keen intelligent artistry was to ask the most acute questions that got to the heart of ideas, then allowing the minds of his students, his friends, to expand beyond just obvious answers, to learn to make distinctions when it would have been so easy to just gloss over them, missing the deepest and most elegant points the mind is capable of digging out. In some respects I will always be a student of Pierre's as the learning never stops. If anyone could evince wisdom, Pierre was that model. He taught what wisdom meant and what having it meant. He is a most unusual human being. And I wish him a most wonderful and happy birthday.

Sincerely,
Merrie Martino

DR. PIERRE GRIMES

by Rev. Roger Juline, D.D.

It was my pleasure to be associated with Dr. Pierre Grimes for the years 1998-2004 when I served as the President of Holmes Institute, Los Angeles. Dr. Grimes was the instructor of our distance learning course entitled "Classical Philosophy" and it was one of the most popular courses in our curriculum. Pierre showed a great dedication to our students and was always willing to spend extra time in coaching and tutoring as well as sharing his incisive comments on their papers and submissions. He was a pleasure to work with and as far as I know his course is still being used in our masters level program for ministerial study.

One event in particular stands out. During one of our annual colloquia in Santa Barbara, Dr. Grimes had several of his college students perform a play he had written titled "The Symmetry." This play was set in ancient Athens and consisted of dialogues among individuals who utilized "philosophical midwifery" - an ingenious invention of Dr. Grimes - to analyze and heal various psychological and medical problems. It was a marvelous evening for our students who were able to see how these ancient concepts could be used to deal with modern issues. Pierre's actors, who were students of his at a local college, came to our Conference at their own expense. We were most appreciative of this generous expression of interest in and concern for our student body.

I wish to convey my most sincere congratulations and best wishes to Pierre on this auspicious occasion. May his light continue to shine.

Tribute to Pierre Grimes on his 89th birthday by Christine Renden Haggarty

How many Philosophy 1A classes have you taught? How many students have been perplexed by your questions? I met Pierre at Golden West having recently graduated from high school and though my goal was to be a mother and a housewife, I found myself taking college courses for no particular reason. From an early age, I was very perceptive, much to my parents' dismay. In order to control and curb my often-verbal ideas and opinions, I was told that my perception was inaccurate and my vision was corrected by being told what to believe, rather than relying on my very acute observations and intuitions. Thus, by the time I took Pierre's Philosophy 1A class my psyche was as fragmented as the Pre-Socratics.

His classes were like a breath of fresh air being let into a dank enclosed room. I took every class that he taught. His Eastern Thought class brought me to Maesumi Roshi and Z.C.L.A., which continues to influence me as a practicing lay Buddhist. Most importantly, his reasonable approach and his coffee break conversations allowed me to see my mind and myself as a finely operating organ of thought that had cohesion and integrity. I began to trust myself.

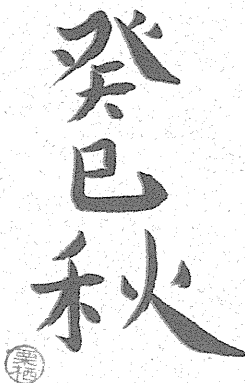
I was only around for three or four years before moving to Northern California, where I continue to live. My trips to "the south land" became less and less frequent. I became a teacher, working for Sonoma County Office of Education in Sonoma County Jail. I taught G.E.D. and art. I provided students with the Rouse translation of the dialogues for those who expressed interest in higher-level learning. I think that the Socratic method of exploring, as practiced during my time at Golden West, enhanced my professional and personal life.

In 2010, I took early retirement to pursue my interest in Asian calligraphy, an interest that I'd been cultivating for over 15 years. The images and writings in the zendo, were always a fascination of mine, perhaps a brief respite from the endless hours of sitting. As with my fortuitous meeting of Pierre, it is said that when the student is ready the teacher will appear and so I found a calligraphy teacher in Kazuaki Tanahashi, with the added bonus of him being a Dogen scholar. The practice of calligraphy brought me back to the Ion and the question, "What is art?", echoing down the decades, like the day the question was first posed in that Philosophy 1A class. Happy Birthday Pierre

Christine Renden Haggarty

Website: zenbrush.net

Autumn – year of the water snake



癸巳秋



For Pierre Grimes

By Regina Uliana

What is a tribute? What would be the *hyparxis* of tributes? What would be a tribute to Pierre that would be worthy? In Greek, *φόρος τιμής* are the words for a tribute. *φόρος* has two meanings. Both come from *φέρω*, meaning to bear, to bear or carry a load, to bear along. Metaphorically, it means conducive of health. The first meaning, *φόρος*, is “that which is brought in tribute or way of payment,” while the second use is *Τιμής*, which means “that which is paid in token of worth or value,” as well as “worship, esteem, honor.”

Both words can mean that which is brought in a way of payment or that which is paid in token of worth or value. From Plato’s dialogue the *Phaedrus*, Socrates says, “Let this tribute, then be paid to memory, which has caused us to enlarge upon it now, yearning for what we once possessed.” What payment is worthy of Pierre, a noble birth and life? Without question, these words are small compared to the universality of this man, the wealth he has brought me, my friends and mankind, instilling a yearning for what we once possessed. I owe a payment to Pierre; as Socrates says in Plato’s dialogue the *Phaedo*, “We owe a cock to Asclepius; pay it without fail.” Pierre has brought soul health, honor, and esteem to MIND. What kind of payment can one bestow on someone who brought to myself and all who Pierre has made contact with on his illustrious journey—Mind—the spirit of mind, the spirit of truth in mind. My reference to mind will be the Hellenic mind and spirit. These may seem like clichés, and perhaps they cannot capture fully this man’s gift to myself and mankind. The closest may come in the form of the god, Prometheus. He stole to bring light and provided dialectic to man. Pierre shows the significance of the light Prometheus brought to man. In the myth, Prometheus brought light or mind to mankind. Pierre, in that golden chain of those who dwell in Mind, most excellently has extended a way to explore mind from its deepest recesses to its illustrious *hyparxis*, through dialectic.

Pierre has shown that dialectic not only can explore the more noble ideas of the mind as beauty, justice and good in themselves and their relation to one another, but his most valued insight extends the dialectic to explore the most troubling and unsightly areas of mind, the images of these ideas in the areas of false beliefs and ignorance manifested as tyrannies of our soul. He has provided, like Prometheus, a light to uncover and make intelligible our personal ignorance, our personal false beliefs that will inevitably block us from participating in mind unhindered. For without understanding the reason we became loyal to our false beliefs, we can never fully achieve the highest good or reach *hyparxis* of Mind.

For those who are able and willing to share and participate in this kind of Mind study, the journey is wondrous, human, personal, yet universal and filled with treasures of unbelievable wealth and magnificence. As was said in Plato’s *Phaedrus*, “For sight is the keenest of our physical perceptions, though through it wisdom cannot be perceived. For marvelous would be the love excited by wisdom, if wisdom were capable of presenting to vision such a clear image of

itself as is presented by beauty.” Pierre has opened the gates to this wonder, awakened yearning for what we have forgotten and excited the love for such wisdom, and challenges us to go for the highest possible goals. He has shown that mind is present, always. It is up to each of us to study its depths, just as he has done. He has provided an antidote to help in our journey, because each of us is marred by unquestioned false beliefs that lurk to block, to hinder our journey to “know thyself” and mind function unhindered.

So what debt do I owe to this man who has provided the conditions for my soul, my mind, my life—Mind? The irony is that for once one has a glimpse of Mind, a glimmer, the word mine drops away, for one sees how silly it is to say my or mine. Pierre lives Mind, by its justice and truth, by its method of study through dialectic, by its aspirations and yearnings to benefit. By some providence I have been given the chance to participate in Mind with Pierre, to the degree I am able.

Pierre can be described as mind loving and mind lover and let’s not leave out mind-blowing. In every way possible Pierre has traveled the near and far reaches of mind, opened the intelligibility of dreams, daydreams, fantasies, tangents, and any moment that takes one away from one’s most meaningful goal. He has shown his love of mind by sharing his insights, his journeys, his wondrous questions, to bring all who wish to follow and converse as he travels himself along the wondrous pathway of where mind leads, but he has challenged those following along to attain the *hyparxis* of Mind, to reach after the highest, most excellent, the excellence of mind.

Pierre as a mind lover desires to reach the deepest depths of mind’s wonder and excellence. As mind loving he cares, loves, nurtures it wherever he goes to allow it to grow and develop and achieve its own *hyparxis* for him and through him for whoever follows. To say the least, Pierre is mind-blowing, for although there are experiences of enlightenment, there are also problems, puzzles, mysteries, blocks, beliefs, so it requires at times some radical redirection, upheaving that part of mind that wants to keep one limited. So, in a way, Pierre maybe considered a problem terrorist, for he comes with his questions and explodes the dams one holds dear in the form of false beliefs and then demands to remove the structure that are blocked by beliefs.

He has developed Philosophical Midwifery as a means for anyone, anywhere, to carry the torch of mind for eternity, for Philosophical Midwifery is mind reflecting on mind from the personal problems to the journey to dialectic of the relationship between the Good and Idea of the Good. Pierre has provided an extraordinary and yet simple way to reflect on mind, to assure that one who is stuck has a model to understand the causes of the blocks and then move on into studying mind unhindered. He has shown how this model can uncover the intelligibility of the most daunting problems and puzzles on a personal level, in dreams, daydreams and fantasies and obviously on the metaphysical level. My experience has been that this is not a small task, it is not without its eddies, its cliffs, its slides, its avalanches, its life and death struggles, and it is a way through mind to gain the highest spiritual experience, excellence, wisdom and understanding. On a metaphysical level, it also is not without its struggles, yet it moves

gracefully through ideas, enjoying the kinship or not as one explores the ideas in themselves, unhindered.

To the succession of the Golden Chain, Pierre and his philosophical midwifery, have added his name. Without doubt or question, he has established himself among the most honorable, the most wise and the most illustrious mind travelers. Reaching back to Homer, Confucius, Tao, and Dali lamas to the present day, he leaves no stone unturned. In his own journey to understand himself and these thinkers and what it is they have valued in their journey, he has been open to share to bring along people who find this journey most rewarding. As such, he doesn't follow a tradition, that is, he hasn't developed a location with a hierarchy of individuals, but he makes intelligible the traditions to anyone who wants to participate. We could also liken him to Socrates, for Socrates mingled with anyone who visited in the market place and wanted to talk and explore ideas. Mind is everywhere, but those who wish to reflect pop up in the strangest places. Pierre wears no robes, has locations, or prodigies. It's only up to each individual to participate on the journey he himself has been traveling. If one wishes to ride along, Pierre is open, and if someone, because of his or her own problems fails to keep up, he lets them be, but if they wish to return to the journey, he again welcomes them. In every way, he has shown the depths and possibilities of one's own mind and mind itself and shared it. Its unending depth and possibilities are truly wondrous. I can say little as to the extreme compassion, kindness this person has shown to people and to myself in regards to one questing for their *hyparxis* and for the *hyparxis* of reality.

Egos laid aside, even though one loses in arguments, even though one may see something better than Pierre, it is incumbent upon the individual to present it in its finest form to test its merits. Pierre shows us how to consider it to be a gift if there is found to be something flawed, ignored or overlooked or left unquestioned. That's the beginning of dialogue with oneself, only Pierre has begun the journey for us by forcing us along in our reluctance to value this journey.

It is no small debt I owe, for the gift of dialectic and mind that Pierre has brought reaches beyond the stars and queries the most wise, and it has opened my ugliest ignorance to see the why's for holding false beliefs. One who has provided the conditions for those to participate in Mind, to love *ousia*, mind turning upon itself in the spirit of play and friendship and challenge, can be likened to being selected to participate in the greatest of all Olympics, the Olympics of dialoguing through Mind. For such a gift, what debt can one pay? Without question, it would be the most priceless payment anyone can pay.

A temple alongside Zeus, for it is Zeus who Pierre follows and is companion, joining in line with Socrates, Plato and Parmenides. But Pierre does not ignore Apollo, Aphrodite, Athena, Hestia and all the other gods and goddesses and heros and heroines and how they function and what significance they played in the Hellenic mind. He has invited any who wish to come to participate in this wonderful family. It is with trepidation that one travels this road, but on the other end, reaching out with a question, Pierre has been there, welcoming.



Essay recalling my association with Pierre Grimes by Allan Hartley

At the end of 1990 and the beginning of 1991 I ran out of everything and went to the Zen Mountain Center where the Abbott Jitsudo took me in for a stay of three months until I was able to get my magazine *New Perspectives: A Journal of Conscious Living* up and running again. Living in the forest and with the help of Jitsudo I was able to revitalize myself and the small publication. The elevation and the time of year, sunny days followed by rain, snow and wind, let me experience nature at its most invigorating. Meditation or *zazen* was done three times a day and more often when there was a group there on retreat.

Prior to starting the magazine in 1987 I had some ideas about doing a soy deli. There was one in Los Angeles and soy products were beginning to be popular, so I thought about doing a lunch counter in a health food store that had been established years before in Hemet. I did actually do this for about six months as a vegetarian lunch counter, never getting around to promoting the soy deli part of it. So I had a little experience in doing vegetarian food preparation and I was considered assistant *tenzo* or cook during most of my stay at the Zen Mountain Center.

Pierre Grimes and his group would periodically spend a weekend at the ZMC where Pierre conducted discussions and *zazen* practice of meditation. The group was there toward the end of my time in the mountain center and so I got to make them a breakfast. As I recall, Jitsudo worried about having a *tenzo* available because his was very much interested in hiking and sometimes he would be gone in the mountains for a day to a week at a time. Jitsudo also didn't care for the intellectual approach and told me so concerning the Grimes group—that I shouldn't get involved with them because of this. Of course, one doesn't get far by telling or suggesting that I don't do something.

My first experience with Pierre and his group was taking a walk with them after breakfast. We didn't have much time for discussions then. Several years after I had returned to Hemet via Riverside I asked him for an article for my publication. He had us run "An introduction to the Art of Delivering Oneself of False Beliefs" from his book *Philosophical Midwifery*, co-authored with Regina Uliana, Ph.D., using an additional explanation as subtitle: *A New Paradigm for Understanding Human Problems With Its Validation*.

Pierre has this tremendous energy which seems to come from his work, and he wants to let everyone know about it and use it. It is reflected in words he uses which he repeats whenever he can. One of his favorites is *curious* and he likes to use it a lot. It is a motivator. We need curiosity to get us started in this most noble task of self understanding. The next important word in his lexicon is *understanding*, and he gets us there by using *reason*. He wants to make his students free of their misunderstandings to go on and become philosophical midwives themselves. That is, to help others let go of ideas that are no longer working for them. There have

been a number of times when I got emotionally stuck and called him for some help with it. He asked me a couple of questions and in no time at all I had a breakthrough with insights.

One of his most impressive writings in the early days of our association was his dialogue play called "*The Symmetry*." A number of his students committed it to memory and gave several performances. They were discussing a religious conference that one of the characters had gone to and came back with ideas and questions. I was very surprised that he made me a character that was referred to several times in the play. I was invited by him to see it at the first performance at Golden West College. In the first page of dialogue his first character says: "Say, are you planning on writing another article for the *New Perspectives Journal*, or what?" Maybe he was referring to writing about the play "*The Symmetry*." Then at the end his second character tells us: "I think I have had my fill, Joseph. Thanks for the recollection. I've got enough to think about. I'm not sure what I'm going to do with it all, but I know I'm going to have a couple of cups of coffee with Allan Hartley about this." A good closure because they are of the same mind as me that one can depend on coffee for stimulation and to bring up new ideas to discuss and hopefully resolve others that have been left hanging.

This began a long working relationship that not only included Pierre but it brought some of his students into the journal with their writing as well. Pierre has the qualities an editor appreciates. One favorable aspect is that he doesn't know the word "No!" I have told people on several occasions that he and several theosophists that I know have this quality. It is such a joy to hear, "Sure, I will write a piece for you. When do you want it?" Not like most people who will say, "I dunno, maybe, but not right now."

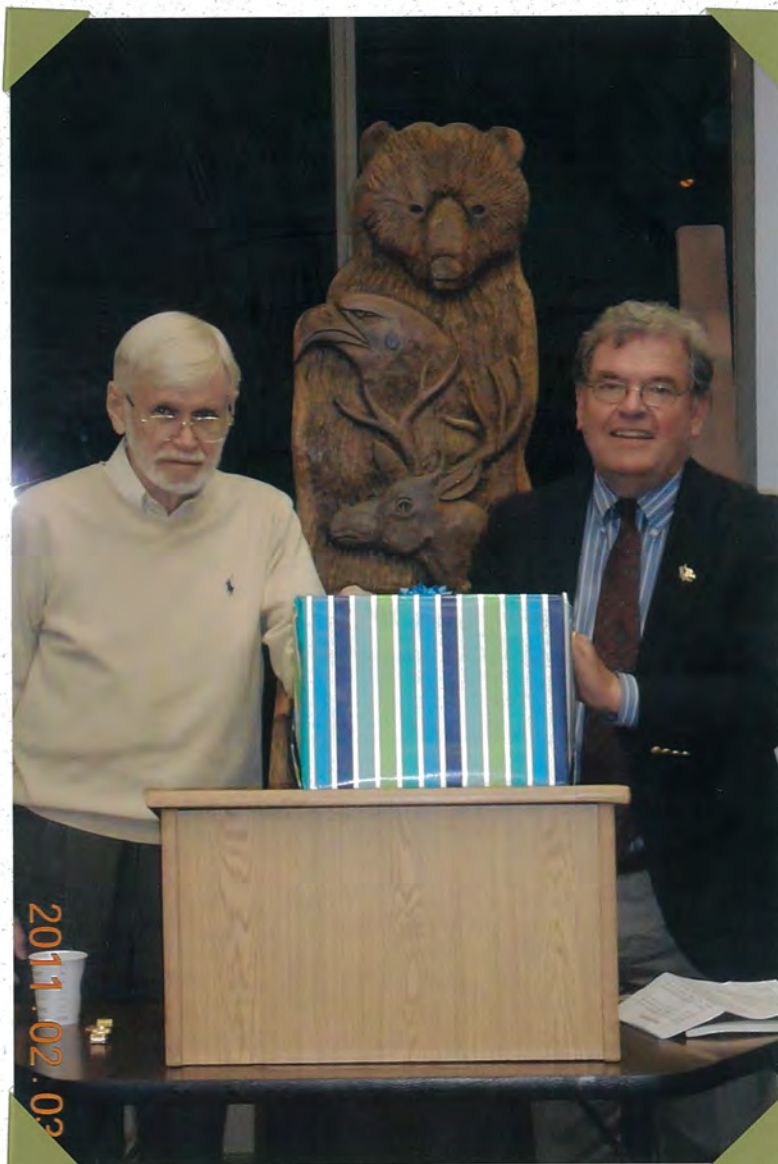
Pierre wrote a column for *New Perspectives: A Journal of Conscious Living* for a number of years so we got to work together on a regular basis. I called his column "The Philosopher." I had one other columnist that ran alongside of his which I left pretty much open and called it "It's Her Life." She is a writer and performance artist. They worked well together because hers was not always that serious. He loved to play the game of coming up with ideas and then getting them out to people. There were also meetings we had in Corona where just the two of us met because it was pretty much half-way for us. He had as much energy and eagerness to share the last time I met him there at Marie Callender's as any time before.

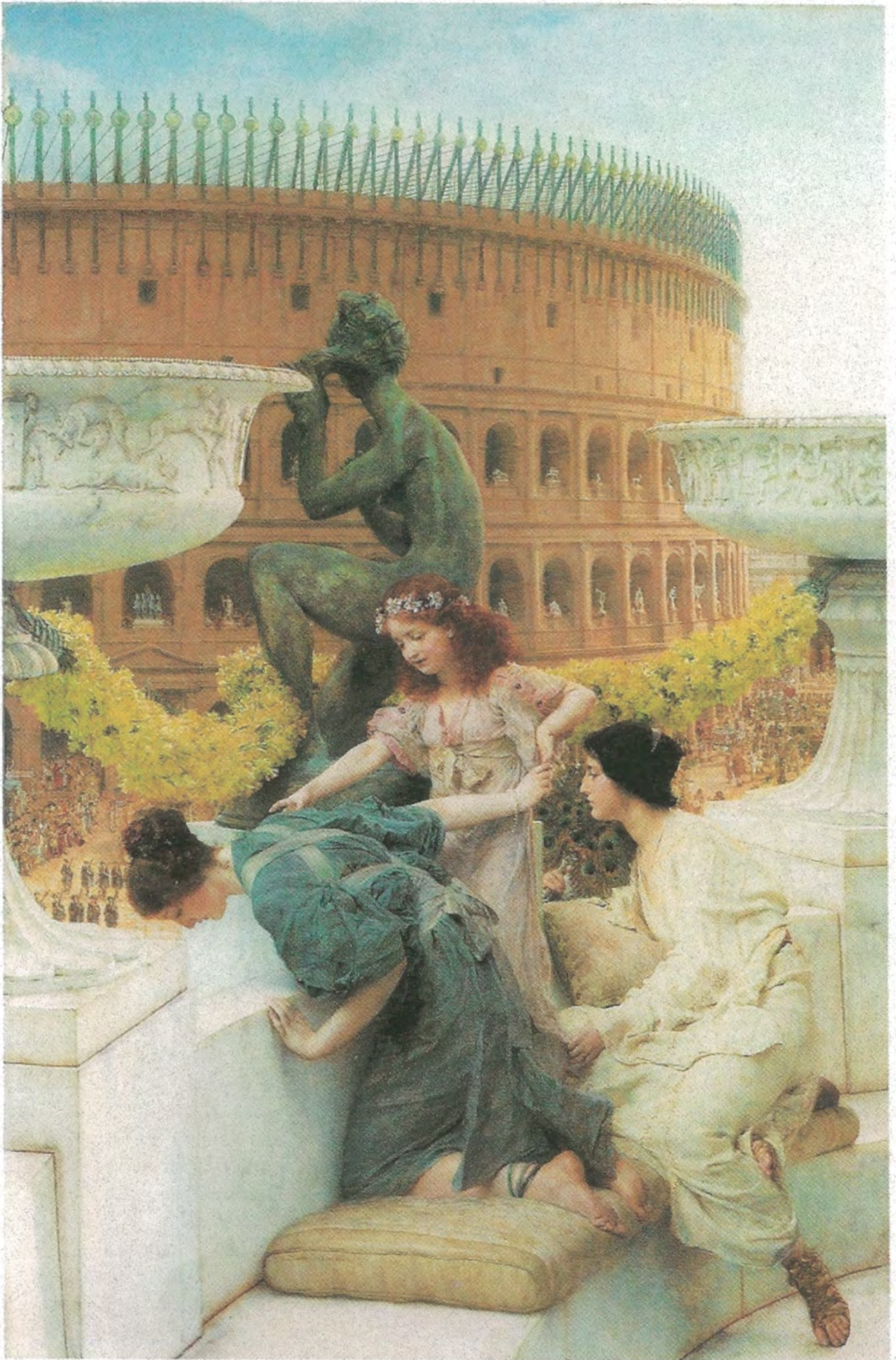
In the first few years of the magazine I was a little uncomfortable because many of the articles and advertisements that came my way were more of a new age nature. I wanted to reflect more what I thought which was definitely not "sweetness and light." When Pierre and his students started writing for me it was more aligned with how I wanted ideas presented. Of course I gave assignments rather than accepted submissions by people I didn't know. One problem I saw that occurred to me was that until it was cleared up, Pierre's students put him in the article I asked him or her to write, no matter what it was about. That is probably good for one's ego but not appropriate to the task at hand. Not even he did that. I like it when someone can have the courage to go against the status quo, in this case new age thinking. Pierre wrote a critique on the movie "*What the Bleep do We Know?*" He took exception to the acclaim by scientists and lay

persons alike. He told us he is reminded of “the New Age mantra of everyone can have their own private truth with no worry about testing or understanding since judgment has been abolished.”

I missed his dream workshops at Esalen although he did come out to Hemet for his dream presentation. I was not part of his student/teacher experiences, as I mentioned, ours was pretty much a working relationship. I didn't see that part of his life. It must have been very intense and deep because there are some of his students/devotees who claim they owe their lives to him. I am sure he can feel very good that his life has been fulfilling in the sense of following his heart and offering his service.

Thank you for allowing me to share with you my reflections of our work experiences over a fifteen year period.





For Pierre Grimes by Oralia Romo

The shadow¹ of love and generation in these *The Elements of Theology* of Proclus' *Metaphysics*² is in the transcendent reality that is the cause of all existence. These two fundamental ideas or divine principles bring about a new way of thinking that assumes that two entities can enter into a shared existence of participation: as mind participating in the One, or the Good as demonstrated in Proclus' Proposition 1 that "**All Multitude Participates, in a certain way, of The One.**"³ In his introduction to Juan F. Balboa's translation of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* our beloved and loving teacher, Pierre Grimes, PhD writes "For what greater gift is there than to be brought to see that mind is no stranger to mind and can know itself and its sublime cause?"⁴ This certain way of using the mind to know the mind refers to a mental activity that is the medium in and through which the mind shares in a higher reality while simultaneously transformed by its beauty as it recollects directly that that reality just as it is IS the source of what most deny has any existence. It is clear that this mind is seeing beyond the unreliable senses to bring about a certain kind of intuitive reasoning, while knowing that this procession (*proodos*) is both providentially transcendent and causally present to all things. And upon reversion (*epistrophe*) this certain way of loving participation in mind is the result of values receiving the cause as the perfection (*telos*) by which this unique understanding is

¹ Pierre Grimes, PhD. Friday night Noetic Society meeting lecture demonstration: Our much loved and caring teacher, demonstrated that our own body casts a partial or total image caused by the body's mass intercepting light and blocking the rays of light thus its shade goes on unseen until we turn around to cast a glance at its image.

² Peter A. Angeles, *Dictionary of Philosophy*, P.169, Harper & Row, New York, NY. 1981. (Metaphysics Gk., *meta ta physica*, "after the physics" from *meta*, "after," or "beyond," and *physikos*, "pertaining to nature," or *physis*, "nature," or "natural," or "physical"). The origin of the word *metaphysics* is uncertain. Aristotle did not use the term, although there is a compilation of his works called *The Metaphysics*. There is not general agreement as to how to define metaphysics. The following are some of the main definitions: (1.) Metaphysics is the attempt to present a comprehensive, coherent, and consistent account (picture, view) of reality (being, the universe) as a whole. In this sense it is used interchangeable with most meanings of synoptic philosophy and cosmology. (2.) Metaphysics is the study of Being as Being and not of "being" in the form of a particular being (thing, object, entity, activity). In this sense it is synonymous with ontology and with first philosophy. (3.) Metaphysics is the study of the most general, persistent, and pervasive characteristics of the universe: existence, change, time, cause-effect relationships, space, substance, identity, uniqueness, difference, unity, variety, sameness, oneness. (4.) Metaphysics is the study of ultimate reality--reality as it is constituted in itself apart from the illusory appearances presented in our perceptions. (5.) Meta-physics is the study of the underlying, self-sufficient ground (principle, reason, source, cause) of the existence of all things, the nondependent and fully self-determining being upon which all things depend for their existence. (6.) Meta-physics is the study of a transcendent reality that is the cause (source) of all existence. In this sense metaphysics becomes synonymous with theology. (7.) Metaphysics is the study of anything that is spiritual occult, supernatural, supranatural, immaterial) and which cannot be accounted for by the methods of explanation found in the physical sciences. (8.) Metaphysics is the study of that which by its very nature must exist and cannot be otherwise that what it is. (9.) Metaphysics is the critical examination of the underlying assumptions (presuppositions, basic beliefs) employed by our systems of knowledge in their claims about what is real. In this sense metaphysics is synonymous with important definitions of philosophy and also with epistemology. All these definitions of metaphysics with the possible exception of #9 are *rationalistic*. By the process of thinking we can arrive at fundamental, undeniable truths about the universe (reality, the world, existence, God, Being). Experimental and scientific methods are not essential in obtaining metaphysical knowledge.

³ Juan F. Balboa, Translator, *Elements of Theology*. P-1. **All Multitude Participates, in a certain way, of The One.**

⁴ Pierre Grimes, PhD. Introduction for translator Juan F. Balboa's Proclus' *Elements of Theology*.

intelligible because it knows the *why* and its relationship to the *what* of its thinking or noetic paradigm or divine root. In this view the unity of participation---as mind participating in The One or the Good---is both the beginning and the end, the *arche* and the perfection (*telos*) of all things as proved in Proclus' Proposition 12 which simply says that "*The Source and First Cause of all The Beings is The Good.*"⁵ The emergence of all things from the Good and their return to The One is the expression in dynamic terms that depicts this loving way of participation which the entire NeoPlatonic tradition sees as the measure of all things as our most gentle and compassionate teacher Pierre Grimes, PhD says "for Man only knows, truly lives, and is nourished by mingling with Being; for it is through participation with Being that Man gives birth to Noetic-Intellect and truth."⁶ The soul, while mastering self uses these divine principles of love and generation while beholding the good for that is the meaning of life and its beauty is seen as a unity in reality and it functions in our life as divine providence--"the primary cause of the goodness that even proceeds through dreams and visions."⁷ In his book, *The Eternal Law..*, John H. Spencer's writes that:

"If there were no such thing as unity, physics would not be possible. Nothing at all would be able to exist, as Proclus argued in the first proposition of his *Elements of Theology*. If something does not partake in unity, it cannot be unified and so can never become a whole, a 'something'. Only by being unified, by becoming a 'one something'---whether an electron, an apple, a universe, or a **mind**---can any thing ever exist or be what it is. It is not possible to object to this reasoning, because any objection presupposes that there is something unified in one's objection; otherwise, it would not be an intelligible response. In other words, says Spencer if an objection has no unity, no rational way of bringing different words, concepts, and thoughts into a coherent whole, then this objection cannot possibly make sense. Indeed, a person could not even exist in the first place unless all of their different parts were bound together into a unity."⁸

Clearly these words suggest that there is a certain relationship with this participated unified principle because a **mind** can exist only by being unified in its activity of naming its beliefs about the world. This kind of presence or seeing uses the mind to know the mind (of self) while simultaneously taking part in a unified whole--The One/The Good as the most *Brilliant Light of Being* and this metaphysics is proved by Proclus' Proposition 70 which says that "*All*

⁵ Juan F. Balboa, Translator, *Elements of Theology*. P-12. *The Source and First Cause of all The Beings is The Good.*

⁶ Pierre Grimes, PhD. "Return of the Gods". P. 29. Not yet in print.

⁷ Pierre Grimes, PhD. "Return of the Gods". P. 31. Not yet in print.

⁸ John H. Spencer, *The Eternal Law: Ancient Greek Philosophy, Modern Physics, And Ultimate Reality*, P. 189. Param Media Publishing, Vancouver, BC. 2012.

That is More-Whole among The Archetypal Causes Illuminate The Participants both Before and After those partial natures depart/abandon that Participated Nature.⁹ Our most brave and courageous teacher Pierre Grimes, PhD says that some can find in Proclus "a return to rational mysticism that can return man to a higher and more meaningful direction for their lives."¹⁰ The ancient Platonic philosophers emphasized the discovery of metaphysical unity underlying all of the physical reality with the aim of personal transformation. To turn around and see self as a loving principle while bringing about virtue and goodness in likeness to The One/ The Good so far as possible is the quest to this aim. Considering such a unique journey of truth and self-discovery brings about a godlike vitality powerful enough to see life in its unified simplicity and its function is seen as the greatest good to mankind as evinced in Socrates' words that say: "For if I say that such conduct would be disobedience to the god and that therefore I cannot keep quiet, you will think I am jesting and will not believe me; and if again I say that to talk every day about virtue and the other things about which you hear me talking and **examining myself and others is the greatest good to man**, and that the unexamined life is not worth living you will believe me less."¹¹

Clearly Socrates is an example of a model of direct intelligibility which suggests the starting point from which *logos* moves attention away from the body while remaining as soul and reverting back upon itself. Spencer writes of Proclus that it is not in the nature of any body to revert upon itself so that the whole is reverted upon the whole. Thus if there is anything which is capable of reverting upon itself, it is incorporeal and without part as proved in the Elements of Theology--Proposition 15--"***All that is Convertive to Itself is Incorporeal.***"¹² "This activity of the knower knowing the known, the self becoming the direct object of the knowledge by the self, entails that, as Proclus puts it in Proposition 83 that --"***All that Is Self-Realized, is Entirely Self-Convertive.***"¹³ The knower and known are here one, and its cognition has itself as object. Since 'the soul has knowledge of principles superior to itself, it is capable *a fortiori* of knowing itself, deriving self-knowledge from its knowledge of the causes prior to it' as Proclus proved in Proposition 11 that says "***All The Beings Proceed from The First Singular Cause.***"¹⁴ Furthermore our most honest and kind-hearted Pierre Grimes, PhD challenged those who listen to find the

⁹ Juan F. Balboa, Translator, *Elements of Theology*. P-70. ***All That is More-Whole among The Archetypal Causes Illuminate The Participants both Before and After those partial natures depart/abandon that Participated Nature.***

¹⁰ Pierre Grimes, PhD. Introduction for translator Juan F. Balboa's Proclus' *Elements of Theology*.

¹¹ Fowler, Harold North, Translator, *Plato: Euthyphro - Apology - Crito - Phaedo - Phaedrus*. P. 133. Loeb Classical Library. Harvard University Press, London, England. 1914.

¹² Juan F. Balboa, Translator, *Elements of Theology*. P-15. ***All that is Convertive to Itself is Incorporeal.***

¹³ Juan F. Balboa, Translator, *Elements of Theology*. P-83. ***All that Is Self-Realized, is Entirely Self-Convertive.***

¹⁴ Juan F. Balboa, Translator, *Elements of Theology*. P-11. ***All The Beings Proceed from The First Singular Cause.***

built-in axiom in this proposition.¹⁵ Consequently, the built-in axiom verified that the soul is capable of reverting upon itself and of having direct knowledge of itself and its self-evident truth which entails that self as soul is incorporeal and must be separable from the body, since 'what is inseparable from body is incapable of reversion upon itself' as proved in Proposition 186---"***Every Soul is an Incorporeal Essential-being and is Separate from body.***"¹⁶ In other words, says Spencer, if we can attain genuine self-awareness, the part of us that has attained such awareness would be separable from the physical body."¹⁷

Socrates' own self's examination is an example of his comprehension that he is not only a necessary part of that thoughtful way of living and that this generating love of self is also awakening his love for fellow human beings. This power of loving is so self evident that Socrates makes an intellectual insight about his own state of mind as evinced with Socrates words that say "love is the only thing I profess to know about."¹⁸ It is possible that the inference of Socrates' words mean that to the degree we possess greater understanding in the art of self love, to that degree we are able to understand other human beings and on a more profound level we are also able to recognize the highest or most fundamental simple, abstract, unchanging, and unifying laws of *physis* (nature). In addition, the power of understanding these deeper underlying principles--such as love and generation--and laws of *physis* (nature)---which requires at least some degree of theological understanding of metaphysics as a thinking process arriving at fundamental, undeniable truths about the *Soul-Body, Soul, Being, Intelligence, The Good, The One*---depends upon understanding our own self. For as Diotima says to Socrates that the best way to approach the things of love or be led by another is this:

"beginning from these beautiful things, to mount for that beauty's sake ever upwards, as by a flight of steps, from one to two, and from two to all beautiful bodies, and from beautiful bodies to beautiful pursuits and practices, and from practices to beautiful learnings, so that from learnings he may come at last to that perfect learning which is the learning solely of that beauty itself, and may know at last that which is the perfection of beauty. There in life and there

¹⁵ Pierre Grimes, PhD our most resourceful and awesome teacher presented a challenge to all those who listened at the Friday night Noetic Society meeting and suggested that there was a built-in axiom in P-11, if anyone could find it. The author of this paper took the challenge and discovered that if one accepts the definition of an axiom as a self-evident or universally recognized truth, then this truthful knowledge is evinced as an Intuitive-Insight that comes from the most center core of one's good mind and is the essence/*hypraxis* of who we are in view of the fact that we are one of many thinking beings that proceeds from The First Singular Cause.

¹⁶ Juan F. Balboa, Translator, *Elements of Theology*. P-186. ***Every Soul is an Incorporeal Essential-being and is Separate from body.***

¹⁷ John H. Spencer, *The Eternal Law: Ancient Greek Philosophy, Modern Physics, And Ultimate Reality*, P. 194. Param Media Publishing, Vancouver, BC. 2012.

¹⁸ W.H.D. Rouse, Translator, *Great Dialogues of Plato*, P. 75, 177E, *Symposium*, A Mentor Book, The New American Library, New York, NY, 1956.

alone, my dear Socrates is life worth living for man, while he contemplates Beauty itself."¹⁹

According to our most cool-headed man of good spirits---Pierre Grimes, PhD---platonian philosophy has a spiritual dimension "that is, primarily, a training of the mind to think, remember, and bring about understanding which enables the philosopher to return to the One by awakening the mind to a higher reality, by leading it on a contemplative path, and by rejecting ideas inconsistent with the One or the Good itself."²⁰ This art of training the mind to know how to use the mind to function at a higher level of mental activity plays an essential role by way of the dialectic, generating the spiritual dimension of man on a more profound level of functionality showing goodness in reality. In his book, *Is It All Relative?* our most cavalier and selfless teacher, Pierre Grimes, PhD says that "all arts have a capacity to anticipate the future, and it is because of this that they are said to possess a kind of foretelling of the future which can be called a rational prophecy. To anticipate the future through an art was first expressed by the Ancient Greeks in the myth Prometheus as evinced in the name of the god for the idea of foretelling is depicted in the name Prometheus which means to see ahead, or having forethought."²¹ In one of his dialogues between Zeus and Hera in "*The Return of The Gods*", our excellent and generous-with-his-time teacher, Pierre Grimes, PhD states that Prometheus failed to perceive the significance of our sacred lineage and it was his arrogance and insolence that blocked him from understanding the nature of the reality of this divine progression and unknowingly man has become like him fettered to his sizzling folly and eaten away by his hot tempered rage which interestingly enough is the metaphorical image of what Prometheus stole from Zeus: fire.²² In a hurry to secure the bonds of Man's Necessity to survive, Prometheus ignored the hierarchical ordered cosmos and broke the sacred Bond of Likeness which chained mankind to his Soul's Fate unable to grasp how analogy generates allegory and fettered him to the closed system of Nature, ill equipped to grasp and restore the old Gods as objects of vital concern and in the grip of false beliefs.²³

Just as Prometheus has a functioning power of seeing ahead, so too, Love as "follower and servant of Aphrodite"---and "a great *daemon*" as called by Diotima in the *Symposium* generated from Plenty as its paternal cause designed upon "beautiful and good things" and Poverty as its motherly cause "always dwelling in want"---has an analogously different genera functioning as a power of making life worth living.²⁴ This union of love---such as that of

¹⁹ W.H.D. Rouse, Translator, *Great Dialogues of Plato*, P. 105-106, 211C, *Symposium*, A Mentor Book, The New American Library, New York, NY, 1956.

²⁰ Pierre Grimes, PhD & Regina L. Uliana, PhD, Ibid. *Philosophical Midwifery*. P.148.

²¹ Pierre Grimes, PhD, *Is It All Relative?*, P. 118, Hyparxis Press, Costa Mesa, CA. 2007.

²² Pierre Grimes, PhD. "*Return Of The Gods*", P. 30. Not yet in print.

²³ Pierre Grimes, PhD. "*Return Of The Gods*", P. 54. Not yet in print.

²⁴ W.H.D. Rouse, Translator, *Great Dialogues of Plato*, P. 98-99, 202C-204C, *Symposium*, A Mentor Book, The New American Library, New York, NY, 1956.

Poverty and Plenty--conceived on the birthday celebration of Aphrodite clearly brings about a creative force that can be an object of contemplative experience because it gives birth in the beautiful which "has most power to provide virtue and happiness for mankind, both living and dead."²⁵ As our thoughtful and virtuous teacher, Pierre Grimes, PhD writes, that "if Man can be guided by taking the challenge of understanding himself through the discovery of his own mind there is no need to believe that Man stands in need of some savior. For to discover how the particularity of things fits into a unity is to understand how Providence, Destiny, and Fate produce and maintain the order of the cosmos which is guiding the flow of justice throughout all."²⁶

Clearly, contemplative reasoning by way of reflecting and exploring different, same, or other ideas does not depend upon science or the data of the senses but only what can be understood in and through the use of reason alone where physics is derived from facts about the world. It is this kind of study, says our lover of philosophy and the truest definition of what it is to be a human being, Pierre Grimes, PhD that is called metaphysics.²⁷

A case in point of this metaphysical study is that of a *daemon* which in the ancient Greek religion, designates not a specific class of divine beings, but a peculiar mode of loving activity with an occult power like that of Socrates' *daemon* that refrains him from or engages him to do certain actions. Since *daemon* implies an expression of divine or loving activity, every god can act as a daemon such as Diotima's great *daemon*--Love. This Love first demonstrates in itself a loving power of this kind of participation, and is the medium between the object of desire (Wisdom) and the desiring nature (Ignorance), and is the cause of the conversion of subsequent to prior natures as Proclus showed in Proposition 145 that says "**The Distinctive Character of Every Divine Order Constantly Traverses through All Secondary Natures, And Bestows Itself to all the subordinate (inferior/needy) Genera of Beings.**"²⁸ Accordingly Proclus distinguishes two forms of love. On the one hand, the ascending love which urges lower principles to aspire towards their superiors. And secondly, the descending or providential love (*eros pronoetikos*) which obligates the superiors to care for their productions and transmit divine grace.²⁹

It is interesting to note that Love has "no parents" and as "a great god was wonderful on earth and in heaven, especially in his birth." And Parmenides says of Birth, that she (Birth) "contrived Love the first of all the gods." Thus many agree that Love is most ancient among

²⁵ W.H.D. Rouse, Translator, *Great Dialogues of Plato*, P. 78, 180B. *Symposium*, A Mentor Book, The New American Library, New York, NY, 1956.

²⁶ Pierre Grimes, PhD. "Return Of The Gods", P. 31-34. Not yet in print.

²⁷ Pierre Grimes, PhD, *Is It All Relative?*, P. 127, Hyparxis Press, Costa Mesa, CA. USA. 2007.

²⁸ Juan F. Balboa, Translator, *Elements of Theology*. P-145. **The Distinctive Character of Every Divine Order Constantly Traverses through All Secondary Natures, And Bestows Itself to all the subordinate (inferior/ needy) Genera of Beings.**

²⁹ Algis Uzdavinyas, *Philosophy As A Rite Of Rebirth: From Ancient Egypt To Neoplatonism*, P. 300, The Prometheus Trust, Wiltshire, BA, UK, 2008.

them. And being most ancient, he is "cause of the greatest good for us." And Love's function is to "guide mankind through all his life."³⁰ This means that each and every god--even our own *daemon* for example--has the power to act as a higher godlike self. For Plato *daemon* is a spiritual being who watches over each individual, and may be considered as his higher self, or some thing divine-like.

In addition, for Plato, philosophy as a love of wisdom has a likeness to living life in erotic madness (*mania*) because the mind is using the mind to bring not only the experience about the world itself just as it is but also it's most profound cause while continuing its upward journey. As participants of this shared existence--as a mind's participation in The One--both within us and about us--we stand in adoration and awe at the intelligible possibility of mankind's spiritual development through the idea of Philosophical Midwifery that is brought about as having forethought to keep mankind on the path towards the perfect noetic Beauty, the most *Brilliant Light of Being*. Plato evinces in the *Phaedrus* that there are two kinds of madness, one arising from human diseases, and the other from a divine release from the customary habits"³¹ like those of false beliefs or *pathologos* for instance.

In addition, Diotima in Plato's *Symposium* describes education in erotics as an upward journey "a breeding in the beautiful, both of body and soul" and in need of "divination" so as to ascent towards the perfect noetic Beauty.³² To make this need of "divination" clearer to her beloved student, Diotima says the following:

"All men are pregnant, Socrates, both in body and in soul; and when they are of the right age our nature desires to beget. But it cannot beget in an ugly thing, only in a beautiful thing. And this business is divine, and this is something immortal in a mortal creature, breeding and birth. These cannot be in what is discordant. But the ugly is discordant with everything divine, and the beautiful is concordant. Beauty therefore is Portioner and Lady of Labour at birth. Therefore when the pregnant comes near to a beautiful thing it becomes gracious, and being delighted it is poured out and it begets and procreates; when it comes near to an ugly thing, it becomes gloomy and grieved and rolls itself up and is repelled and shrink back and does not procreate, but holds back the conception and is in a bad way. Hence in the pregnant thing swelling full already, there is great agitation about the beautiful thing because he that has it gains relief from great agony. Finally, Socrates, love is not for

³⁰ W.H.D. Rouse, Translator, *Great Dialogues of Plato*, P. 76. 178 B. *Symposium*, A Mentor Book, The New American Library, New York, NY, 1956.

³¹ Harold North Fowler, Translator. *Plato: Euthyphro-Apology-Crito-Phaedo-Phaedrus*. P. 531. (265-A) Loeb Classical Library. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. USA.1914.

³² Algis Uzdavinyus, *Philosophy As A Rite Of Rebirth: From Ancient Egypt To Neoplatonism*, P. 299, The Prometheus Trust, Wiltshire, BA, UK, 2008.

the beautiful, as you think. Why not? asks young Socrates. And Diotima answers that it is for begetting and birth in the beautiful."³³

There is truth in Platonic realism in view of the fact that the pre-eminent unifying principle known as The One which Platonist have identified as the Ultimate Nature of Reality, must be Supreme Good as proved by Proclus in Proposition 13---"**Every Good brings about the unity of what shares in it, all unification is good, and the Good is identical with the One.**"³⁴ Our most sensible and reasonable Pierre Grimes, PhD states that "in Plato's thought, the One is defined purely as being beyond all categories; all knowledge even the name and language of The One is denied of it. However, inherent in the term *The One* is the first hypothesis and "this one may be spoken of," which subsist intellectually of a *daemoniacal* allotment so that the One is the first hypothesis. The inherent content of its highest term, The One, pushed to its natural conclusion shows how the alternatives can be viewed as different levels of discourse each of which can be related to its corresponding philosophical term--*The Good, Intelligence-Being-Soul, and Soul-body*. The identity between *The Good, The One, and God* is offered by Proclus in an exquisite proof that is based on taking these terms in their unqualified sense³⁵--- as in Proposition 113 which simply says that "**Every Divine Number is Unitary.**"³⁶ According to our most godlike and gracious, Pierre Grimes, PhD "the metaphysical identity between the highest terms, *The One, The Good, and God* provides the spiritual dimension of Platonic philosophy, and the declension through the other philosophical terms binds the whole into a philosophy whose metaphysical levels make understandable man's spiritual quest."³⁷

The metaphysics that the Platonist put forward entails that the universe is intelligible, beautiful, and good, and that humans need to be transformed in order to follow these ultimately real moral spiritual aspects of reality. For Plato, real knowledge, or the deepest knowledge, is only possible once we have apprehended that that reality which really is seen with and through our senses *IS* our own life's loving activity which is unchanging and yet responsible for all changes. This can only be understood once the first principle of Platonic ethics is seen that one must become in likeness to god in terms of generating right loving actions.³⁸ This is written in the Platonic doctrine that clearly states: "For the performance of every action is, in itself, neither beautiful nor ugly: So what we are doing now, whether drinking or singing or speaking, is not itself beautiful, but according as it is done, so it comes out in the doing: when it is done well and

³³ W.H.D. Rouse, Translator, *Great Dialogues of Plato*, P. 101, *Symposium*, 207a, A Mentor Book, The New American Library, New York, NY, 1956.

³⁴ Barbara Strecker, Translator, *Proclus' 13th Proposition in Pierre Grimes' PhD book Is It All Relative?* P. 128. Hyparxis Press, Costa Mesa, CA. USA. 2007.

³⁵ Pierre Grimes, PhD & Regina L. Uliana, PhD, *Ibid. Philosophical Midwifery*. P.161-162.

³⁶ Juan F. Balboa, Translator, *Elements of Theology*. P-113. "**Every Divine Number is Unitary.**"

³⁷ Pierre Grimes, PhD & Regina L. Uliana, PhD, *Ibid. Philosophical Midwifery*. P.162.

³⁸ John H. Spencer, *The Eternal Law: Ancient Greek Philosophy, Modern Physics, And Ultimate Reality*, P. 53-54. Param Media Publishing, Vancouver, BC. 2012.

rightly, it is beautiful, but when not rightly done, it is ugly. Just so with being in love, and with Love himself; he is not all beautiful and worthy to be praised, but only so far as he leads to right loving."³⁹ The idea of righteousness rests in showing what is due to each and in each moment is to respect its coming forth by meeting it with one's most sincere acknowledgement and to match and grasp it with a counter good. Even the slightest gesture and every act is worthy of recognizing as an act of the mind revealing itself in each moment.⁴⁰

Begetting divine luminosity is our birth right as stated in the *Timaeus* with Plato's words that say:

"For they who constructed us, remembering the injunction of their Father, when He enjoined upon them to make the mortal kind as good as they possible could, rectified the vile part of us by thus establishing therein the organ of divination, that it might in some degree lay hold on truth. And that God gave unto man's foolishness the gift of divination a sufficient token is this: no man achieves true and inspired divination when in his rational mind, but only when the power of his intelligence is fettered in sleep or when it is distraught by disease or by reason of some divine inspiration. But it belongs to a man when in his right mind to recollect and ponder both the things spoken in dream or waking vision by the divining and inspired nature, and all the visionary forms that were seen, and by means of reasoning to discern about them all wherein they are significant and for whom they portend evil or good in the future, the past, or the present. But it is not the task of him who has been in a state of frenzy, and still continues therein, to judge the apparition and voices seen or uttered by himself; for it was well said of old that to do and to know one's own and oneself belongs only to him who is sound of mind."⁴¹

A mind that is sound integrates rationality and mysticism generating love while seeing that life neither is out of the ordinary and brilliant or irrational. It is kind of what it is just as it is-- **both rational and extraordinarily luminous** because "even if nature (reality) simultaneously could be what it is and what it is not, it would simply say what it says, or do what it does, without deliberation, not caring whether or not it violated our cherished beliefs for if nature (reality or universe) appears to be contradictory to our reason, then our inability to reason correctly is the cause of the apparent contradiction as quantum theory implies."⁴² For while the

³⁹ W.H.D. Rouse, Translator, *The Great Dialogues of Plato*, P. 78. *Symposium*. 181a, A Mentor Book. The New American Library, New York, NY. 1956.

⁴⁰ Pierre Grimes, PhD. "Return Of The Gods", P. 37. Not yet in print.

⁴¹ R. G. Bury, Translator, *Plato: Timaeus - Critias - Cleitophon - Menexenus - Epistles*, P. 187. Loeb Classical Library. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

⁴² John H. Spencer, *The Eternal Law: Ancient Greek Philosophy, Modern Physics, And Ultimate Reality*, P. 36. Param Media Publishing, Vancouver, BC. 2012.

world seems chaotic and some times problematic says philosopher and truth-seeker, Pierre Grimes, PhD:

"...it is entirely possible to verify for oneself that we are part of a caring and intelligible universe. The verification is a kind of proof since it is a way of understanding that is based upon a realization that our mind constantly communicates with us and for our benefit. The communications from the mind are as profound as they are utterly appropriate to our circumstances; for while the scope of the mind is pervasive, its precision is always directed to what is personally significant."⁴³

The universe doesn't care how it is being observed, it is the same for everyone Good and generating Love. A sound mind sees that symmetry is only possible because of beauty and so it seems reasonable to agree with Proclus that symmetry presupposes beauty.⁴⁴ The brilliant and enlightened mind of Pierre Grimes, PhD plays a key role in opening our intuitive mind to a reality of beautiful things while living a life of exploration and clarification of Platonic dialectic ideas in philosophy and "functions as a vehicle for the discovery of the truth about man's condition, cultivates the understanding, distinguishes hierarchical levels of reality, and leads to the knowledge of the divine. When it functions as Philosophical Midwifery, it seeks to benefit man by the elimination of false belief.⁴⁵ It is one thing to turn around and see one's shadow caused by one's own body blocking out the rays of the sun/light. And it is another thing says practical and down-to-earth, Pierre Grimes, PhD "when you turn the mind upon itself, and that turning about separates and frees it of its travail. In Platonism the preparation for vision is the freeing oneself of belief, developing the art of contemplation, and the mastery of the dialectic."⁴⁶ The development of Philosophical Midwifery from the dialectic is an evolution of Socratic dialogue. For this development makes visible the difficulties that keep us from participation on any level of the mind, or in philosophy, since it makes clear what it is that blocks us from entering into those higher levels of meaning and, in doing so, it offers a way to resolve these problems.⁴⁷

A mind beholding the good is generating the activity of intellectual insight while participating in a loving principle which is inseparable from the diagnosis that plays a central role in every art. Our most mystical and creative Pierre Grimes, PhD states that

⁴³ Pierre Grimes, PhD & Regina L. Uliana, PhD, *Philosophical Midwifery: A New Paradigm for Understanding Human Problems With Its Validation*, P. 18. Hyparxis Press, Costa Mesa, CA. 1998.

⁴⁴ John H. Spencer, Ibid. *The Eternal Law*, P. 84-85.

⁴⁵ Pierre Grimes, PhD & Regina L. Uliana, PhD, Ibid. *Philosophical Midwifery*. P.145.

⁴⁶ Pierre Grimes, PhD, *The Way Of The Logos, Vol. II: The Reflection*, P-188. Lulu, Lulu.com, USA, 2011.

⁴⁷ Pierre Grimes, PhD & Regina L. Uliana, PhD, Ibid. *Philosophical Midwifery*. P.162.

A Tribute to Pierre Grimes

by Lou Marinoff

Introduction

It's a privilege and pleasure to write this tribute for Pierre. I first heard about him in 1994, at the First International Conference on Philosophical Practice, which Ran Lahav and I co-organized at the University of British Columbia. Although Pierre did not attend that particular conference, his reputation preceded him. Pioneering American practitioners, including Paul Sharkey and Vaughana Feary, spoke so admiringly of Pierre that I was inspired to make his acquaintance at the earliest opportunity.

After having met Pierre briefly at a conference on the West Coast in the mid-1990s, I invited him to present at the Third International Conference on Philosophical Practice, in New York, in 1997. Pierre gave a talk and workshop on Socratic midwifery at this watershed event, and he was simply sensational. In the ensuing years, I have become much more familiar with Pierre: as a philosopher, colleague, and friend. It is on these three pillars that my tribute is based.

Philosopher

First and foremost, Pierre is an outstanding philosopher. His signature work lies in Socratic Midwifery, one of the most enduring and effective methods of philosophical practice to emerge from ancient Greece. Pierre's illuminating book on this subject, co-authored with Regina Uliana, continues to inspire philosophical counselors from every orientation.¹

As a philosopher, Pierre's expertise is broad and deep. He is well-versed not only in Plato and the Socratic tradition, but also in Plotinus and Proclus, among other significant neo-Platonists. Pierre's complementary interests lie in Indian philosophy, particularly in Nagarjuna and his reformation of Mahayana Buddhism, and more generally in the realm of philosophy of consciousness, of *noesis*, and its transcendent properties.

Pierre has taught philosophy in a variety of academic and extra-academic settings, and has conducted long-standing weekly programs at his Noetic Society, Inc. and his Opening Mind Academy, in Orange County CA. Pierre has been a philosophical practitioner since the early 1960s. While Gerd Achenbach is credited by many Europeans as the "founder" of contemporary philosophical counseling (1983), Pierre clearly pre-dates him by more than 20 years!

¹ Pierre Grimes and Regina Uliana, *Philosophical Midwifery: A New Paradigm for Understanding Human Problems With its Validation*, Costa Mesa: Hyarxis Press, 1998.

According to the late, great Alan Watts, Pierre is a true *jñana* yogi. Pierre's insightful healing abilities as a philosophical practitioner are also akin to those of a Bodhisattva. During a career spanning six decades, Pierre has ascended to the highest rung on the philosophical ladder: beyond scholar, teacher, mentor, author, speaker, guru, and practitioner, Pierre is a sage.

Colleague

Philosophical practitioners in the US and abroad are most fortunate to have Pierre as a colleague. Pierre knew personally and professionally many of the leading lights of the beat and hippie generations -- poets, authors, and visionaries -- who were instrumental in engendering the current flowering of philosophical consciousness in the West. Pierre has been a living link to important luminaries of the recent past.

The American Philosophical Practitioners Association has also been a beneficiary of Pierre's collegiality and experience. Pierre has been a valued Director and Vice President of APPA since 2002. Always a reliable source of encouragement and sound advice, Pierre has helped guide the growth and development of APPA into a leading association of its kind.

Pierre's collegiality has also extended to strategic advice on the fortunes of philosophical practice at CUNY, a public institution of higher education that formerly did everything in its power to outlaw the practice of philosophy at its flagship campus, The City College of New York. Pierre's steadfast counsel, and his historical perspective, have been invaluable in helping me deal with academic prohibitions and persecutions.

Friend

In addition to his active philosophical career, Pierre is also a devoted family man, and a wonderful friend. Pierre's friendship is a treasure in the classical sense. It's always a delight to see him. He is consistently mindful, and equally gracious as host or guest. In our many memorable conversations over the years, we have touched on a staggering array of topics.

These range from Pierre's vivid recollections of WWII (it turns out that he served in several theatres of combat in which my father also served), to his coming of age as a philosopher, from "the scene" in San Francisco to the Esalen Institute, from the origins of psychology to the future of philosophical practice.

Pierre and I have enjoyed many meals together, on both coasts, our culinary tastes as eclectic as our dialogues. And we have also talked about music. Much, and often. One thing that I will always cherish about Pierre's friendship is his encouragement of my guitar playing. Every time that Pierre and I have met, or spoken on the phone, he has always inquired about what repertoire I am working on, and whether I find enough time to practice.

That is incredibly thoughtful of Pierre, and insightful too. His appreciation of music puts me in mind of hexagram 16 of the I Ching, namely Enthusiasm, which says:

"Thus the ancient kings made music,
In order to honor merit,
And offered it with splendor
To the Supreme Deity
Inviting their ancestors to be present."²

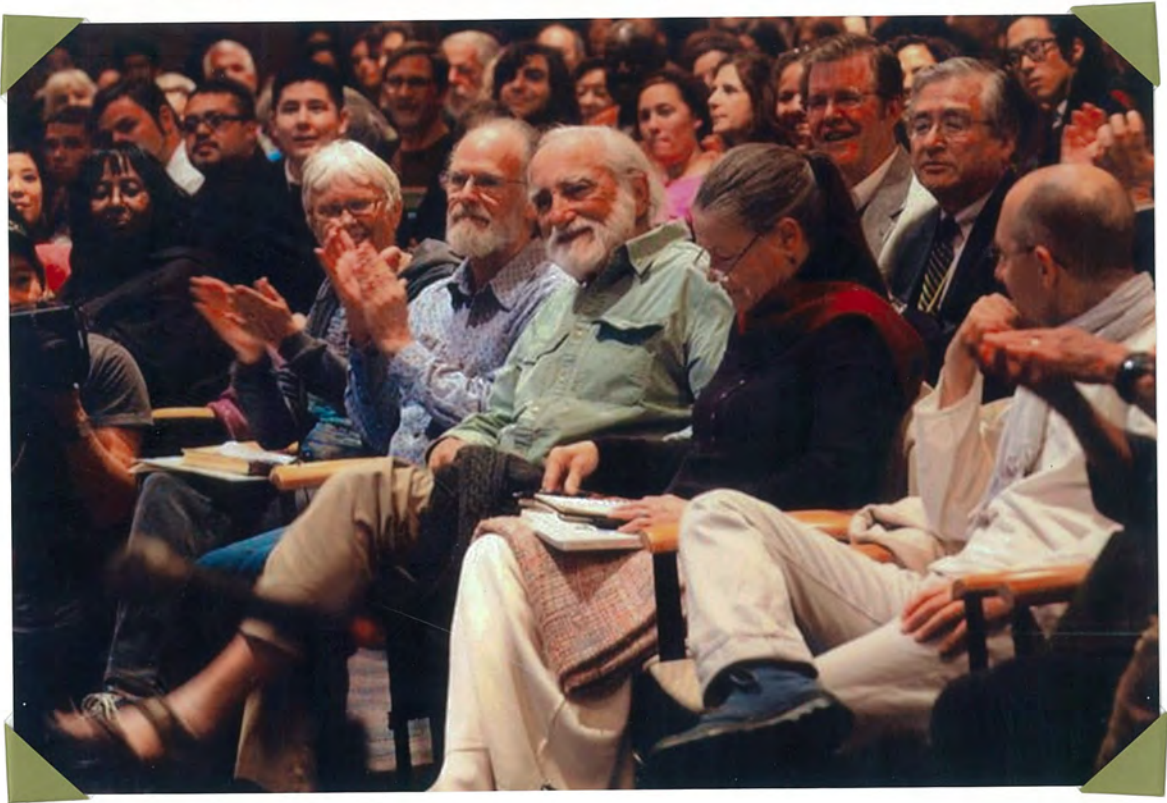
One who could properly conduct this sacred ritual became one "in whom the heavenly and the earthly world met in mystical contact."³ Confucius said that whoever could thoroughly comprehend this ceremony "could rule the world as though it were spinning on his hand."⁴

I have the impression that Pierre is just such a mystic, one in whom the heavenly and earthly realms are indeed united. Thus he has made the world of philosophy spin on his hand these many decades. On this happy note of reminiscence I will go and make more music, rehearsing a program dedicated to my dear and sagacious friend Pierre Grimes, philosopher for the ages.

² *The I Ching, or Book of Changes*, The Richard Wilhelm Translation, rendered into English by Cary F. Baynes, Princeton University Press, 3rd edition, 1967, pp 67-71.

³ Ibid, p.69

⁴ Ibid.



Pierre Grimes: A Counselor in the Platonic Tradition

By Vaughana Feary

In the last fifteen years, a great deal has been written about the ever growing international movement in philosophical counseling and practice. Until recently, however, Pierre Grimes has not always been sufficiently acknowledged as one of the first founders of philosophical practice and one of the greatest masters in this expanding field of philosophy. Probably, one of the reasons for insufficient attention being given to the work of Pierre Grimes in the early years of the movement following the first International Conference in Philosophical Practice organized by Lou Marinoff and Ran Lahav in Vancouver was the fact that philosophers were in the process of defining the field and, as I have argued elsewhere, disputing about the merits of three seemingly competing conceptions of a philosophical practitioner. Now these foundational questions have been explored, philosophers are finally in a position to recognize that the work of Pierre Grimes constitutes a paradigm example of philosophical counseling and, further, that Pierre Grimes exemplifies all three conceptions of a philosophical practitioner.

The expanding community of international practitioners now more or less agrees that philosophical counseling involves the uses of philosophical concepts, methods, and theories to resolve the personal problems of clients as well as to inform and enrich their thinking, emotions, conduct, and relationships. Philosophical Midwifery, as developed by Pierre Grimes, uses techniques pioneered by him to identify what he calls the *pathologos*. The *pathologos* is the irrational belief, which blocks the ascent of an individual's vision to stages above Plato's Divided Line. It interferes with an individual's pursuit of happiness, self actualization, creativity, and wisdom. When undetected it ultimately consigns the individual to the role of cave dweller. In order to free an individual's thinking from the tyranny of the *pathologos*, Grimes explores the context in which the *pathologos* was originally formed and accepted. Some European and American philosophers with only a cursory understanding of his methodology have mistakenly dismissed it as being psychological, not recognizing that his work is not at all like contemporary psychology, but rather a return to a wholly platonic psychology, a philosophical orientation which predated and which should continue to inform modern counseling.

The international philosophical counseling community continues to debate the respective merits of the three conceptions of a philosophical counselor. I have argued elsewhere that two of these conceptions, the counselor as professional and the counselor as social activist, are descriptive conceptions of a philosophical counselor, while a third conception, the classical conception, is an honorific conception

The professional model of a philosophical counselor holds that philosophical practice should be professionalized. This means, as Lou Marinoff has shown in *Philosophical Practice*, that philosophical counselors as professionals must hold graduate degrees in philosophy, have experience and training in philosophical counseling with individuals, demonstrate familiarity with the corpus of literature pertaining to their field, and conduct their practices in accordance with the ethics codes of some recognized association in their field and country.

Pierre Grimes has demonstrated his commitment to professionalizing philosophical practice by graciously agreeing to serve on the Board of the American Philosophical Practitioners Association (APPA). It has been an honor to serve with him and to listen to his suggestions for the association and for advancing the profession

Pierre Grimes holds a PhD in philosophy and has years of teaching, training and administrative experience. He is an authority on Plato and unlike many contemporary philosophers is conversant with both Eastern and Western philosophical traditions and their applications to problems of daily living. He has pioneered a new method of philosophical counseling and utilized it in new areas for philosophy. I have been fortunate enough to participate in many of his workshops, and I have learned firsthand about the efficacy of his methods by beginning to look at the source of some of my own creative blocks when I served as a volunteer in one of his demonstrations of philosophical midwifery. I have also observed his scrupulous ethical regard for his clients, for doing no harm, and for respecting their needs for confidentiality concerning some details of their philosophical problems. Finally, he was one of the first philosophical professionals to demonstrate empirical support for the efficacy of his methods. It is always a joy to witness such a consummate professional at work and to serve on the Board of the APPA with such a distinguished philosophical counselor

There is a second conception of a philosophical counselor, the counselor as a social activist. Despite the many advantages of establishing philosophical practice as a profession, undeniably becoming an accepted part of society can in some cases diminish the desire of professionals to serve as social critics. Given the historical function of philosophy in serving as critic of other disciplines and its traditional commitment to concerns of ethics and social justice, philosophical professionals may be less likely to accept the status quo than other professionals. Unfortunately, however, after the 1960s were over, academic professionals seem to have withdrawn more and more from engaging as Socratic gadflies in favor of teaching or writing scholarly articles which are inaccessible and in many cases wholly irrelevant to the needs of the general public. Philosophical counseling, by its very nature, is engaged with the philosophical problems involved in living. It can not only theorize about social problems, but actually engage with those problems and the damage that they cause to individuals. Thus it can serve as a corrective to what one might call the inactivist tendencies of recent academic philosophy.

I value the conception of a philosophical counselor as not only a professional, but also a social activist. I have done a great deal of my own work with disadvantaged segments of the population and very often I discover that Pierre Grimes has been there before me. He was one of the first philosophers to use a philosophical method to address the needs of substance abusers, criminal offenders, and cancer patients.

There is a third conception of a philosophical counselor which I call the classical conception. This conception derives from ancient philosophy where, as Pierre Hadot and others have shown, philosophy was a way of life. The philosopher in ancient philosophy was an exemplar of the life of reason and virtue, modeling philosophy as a way of life, serving to demonstrate the life of theoretical and practical wisdom. The idea of philosopher as sage in Indian and Chinese philosophy belongs to this conception of a philosophical counselor. I would argue that this conception of a philosophical counselor is an honorific rather than descriptive one. Although it identifies ideals to which most philosophical counselors subscribe, few of us can claim to always realize these ideals in our own lives.

Pierre Grimes, is one of those rare few whose philosophy is his way of life. At our recent APPA annual general meeting it was a privilege to witness a brilliant workshop demonstrating his methods. At a very advanced age, after just being diagnosed with an immediately life threatening illness, he was not only in command of his material, but in command of his life, as serene at the possibility of death as he has always been serene in life by overcoming any personal pathologies. He is a philosophical counselor in the classical conception of the term, exemplifying philosophy not merely as a theoretical discipline, but as a way of living.

Pierre Grimes has taught his colleagues and his clients that we do not need to disagree about the three leading rival views of being a philosophical counselor. They are not mutually exclusive. It is possible to be both a professional and a social activist and, perhaps, with sufficient dedication and courage, it is possible to be a philosophical counselor in the classical sense as well.



APPA Annual Meeting, New York, July 13, 2013

Platonism in The United States: An American Spiritual Experience

by Kevin Gray

In this reflection we are going to trace the spiritual tradition of Platonic Philosophy from ancient Athens to Huntington Beach, California. We will start at the beginning with Socrates, continue through the most known figures and track where they lived and traveled. We will finish with seeing how and in what way Platonic Thought reached the early United States and continued into the modern era to provide such institutions, as the present day Noetic Society, which is a Platonic study group in Huntington Beach, California, led by my guru, Pierre Grimes.

So we begin in the golden age of Greece, centered around the city of Athens, with the birth of Socrates in 470 B.C. Socrates was a Greek philosopher who pestered the Greeks with what is now known as the Socratic dialectic, a method in which he drew forth knowledge from his students by pursuing a series of questions and examining the implications of their answers, thereby by testing the truth of idea that is given birth to. Socrates' dialectical method forces one to turn their attention towards contemplating the nature of ethics and virtue itself. Socrates spent a lot of time at the Agora (market place) where he held conversations and dialogues with town's people about the nature of the Good or the One, Excellence, Justice, Courage, Temperance, Wisdom, Beauty and the like. He was known for exposing ignorance and conceit but despite having many followers, Socrates had pestered the people of Athens a bit too much for their own liking and in 399 B.C. at the age of 70, he was convicted of not believing in the same gods as the state, treason, and corruption of the young. He was sentenced to death by a jury and although he could have easily escaped he chose to stay based on the philosophical importance of the Laws. He fulfilled his sentence of death by drinking hemlock and going to that place where he would be in company with good men like himself, as it is said in the *Phaedo*. Socrates wrote nothing and left behind no texts. However, we know his teaching through the texts of one of his well known students, probably the most well known philosopher of all time, and arguably the embodiment of Wisdom itself, Plato.

Plato was born in 427 B.C. as the son of Ariston and Perictione, who both came from famous wealthy families which had lived in Athens for generations. It is likely that Plato became friends with Socrates in early life since his mother's brother knew Charmides, who was a friend of Socrates. Plato saw war service and had political ambitions in early life but he could never wholeheartedly dedicate himself to this. He did however come under the influence of Socrates and he was a devout pupil of philosophy, the love and desire for Wisdom. The execution of Socrates in 399 B.C. was a tragic blow to Plato. For how could it not be? We are talking about the execution of a spiritual guru. I would venture to say that this is the reaction of the type of people who are chained in the cave of the mind and do not recognize the Eternal Reality behind transitory appearances.

So Plato went soul searching, to continue his quest after wisdom, and to see what was really going on in this world of Mind, so he went traveling. He traveled to Egypt, Sicily and

Italy for several years. In Egypt he learned of a water clock and later introduced it into Greece. He also makes references to Egypt in some dialogues which broach a highly debated topic that is important; I will address this in a moment. In Italy he learned of the work of Pythagoras and came to see the importance of sacred geometry and number. This is essential, for from Pythagoras, he developed the idea, and nurtured the insight, that the nature of reality can be expressed in geometrical and numerical terms. Pythagoras is remembered by many Platonic philosophers, like Iamblichus who wrote *The Life of Pythagoras* and Proclus, who I will speak of in a moment, when he writes his commentary of *The Elements of Euclid's Geometry* and praises the Pythagoreans for probing number and geometry in an intellectual and immaterial manner.

After, Plato returned to Athens, and devoted his life to philosophy and the pursuit of the mind. In the western suburbs he founded a school known as the Academy which is justly called the first university in Europe. It was a school for training the mind in philosophy, mathematics, science, music, and the dialectic: basically anything mind based or intelligible was to be studied. Plato, for the most part, remained at the Academy for the rest of his life. It is this Academy that started (or continued from the Pythagoreans), the noble tradition of Platonic philosophy, which is the handing down of spiritual techniques for developing the furthest reach of the mind (a map of the mind as it were). It was, and is, the cultivation of a spiritual quest that centered around the quest for wisdom that had granted them profound spiritual goals and was epitomized in the maxim "Know And Master Thy Self." The Academy remained a respected institution until 529 A.D. when the Eastern Roman Emperor, Justinian, ordered it closed and everybody executed or exiled. It was the last stronghold of paganism in a Christian world, and it is at this point that the Western world turns its back on the spiritual roots of its own civilization.

So, the point of this whole discussion was to see the beginnings of the Platonic tradition and where it came from. It is clear right from the beginning that Italy, Greece, and Egypt are interconnected in the ancient world. So much so that there are books such as *The Black Athena* discussing just how much influence the Egyptian culture had on Ancient Greece. We also see all the areas that Platonic thought, and the influence of the Greek civilization, had spread to by looking at the famous figures in the tradition, also known as the Neo-Platonists. Plotinus, for example, known as the founder of Neo-Platonism, was born in Egypt in 204 A.D. He went to study philosophy in 232 A.D. at Alexandria, the great Hellenistic center of learning built on the command of Alexander the Great. It was there he read the works of Aristotle and Plato, both of whom had major influences on his thought. Alexander the Great of course was taught by Aristotle who was taught by Plato.

By 244 A.D., Plotinus had opened his own academy in Rome which attracted many students including his star pupil Porphyry, who was born in Syria of Syrian parents. He went to study in Athens, and then in Rome, with Plotinus. And he taught Iamblichus (250-230 CE) who was the founder of the Neo-Platonist school of philosophy in Syria. So now we have Syria, which is located just under Turkey, in our picture. Now the Middle East is involved in our picture of the development of Platonic philosophy: this becomes important to know when looking at the philosophy of the middle ages. And finally, you can look at Proclus who was the

last major successor of the Academy before it had to go underground due to the closing of the Academy in 529 A.D. He was born in the famous Constantinople of Turkey and studied at Alexandria as well. Finally, he moved to Athens where he became the successor of the Platonic Academy. So given this, we are also now incorporating the upper portions of the Middle East.

The closing of the Platonic Academy by the emperor Justinian makes the story of Platonic Thought rather interesting. For it had an entire tradition just interrupted, cut off, truncated, and for all intents and purposes, completely annihilated. "Pagans were barred from the civil service; baptized Christians who lapsed into paganism were to be put to death, as were any persons caught making secret sacrifice to the gods.

Where did it go? Did it go away? Did it just die out? For about the next 1,000 years the Western world goes through the Dark Ages marked by a distinct lack of philosophy and spiritual growth. However, the Platonic tradition did not die out: rather it went underground to stay alive. I mean this in two ways. First in that Damascus, the head of the Academy at that time, and other philosophers with him, emigrated to Persia and Syria looking for a place to be free. It is thought that some of them founded schools which lasted until the Islamic period beginning in 622 A.D. And so the works of philosophers such as Proclus were preserved in Arabic. In fact, I have a work by Proclus in Arabic.

Here arose the Sufis which are Islamic mystics and philosophers. What the Sufis are in reality, or at least what they originally started out as, was the last remnant of the Platonic Academy in Athens. These are the expelled philosophers from the Roman Empire settling in Persia and Syria. The philosophical texts of Greece survived in this way all the way up until the renaissance because the Greek tradition was maintained in Byzantium from the time that its capital was built in Constantinople in 324-330 until the conquest of that city by the Ottomans in 1453. The tradition of Greek education and letters was perpetuated through a system of education that emerged from the Greek world in late antiquity.

The second major way that Platonic thought survived the Dark Ages is through what I like to call the funniest joke of all time. Picture a bunch of Platonic philosophers sitting around about to get kicked out of their homeland by an emperor based on the foundations of an irrational system of beliefs with no reason-based metaphysics, no understanding of Reality, and no mind. So a chap by the name of Pseudo-Dionysius, who was a student of Proclus, and very familiar with Neo-Platonic texts, decided that he is going to beat them at their own game. He decided nothing will stop him from writing philosophy, searching for Truth and Wisdom, and preserve his tradition. So this student of Proclus went into disguise; he posed as a Christian. Historically he was thought to be the Areopagite who was converted to Christianity by the preaching of St. Paul. And so Pseudo-Dionysius set out to build a complex, yet simple, metaphysical and hierarchical system, sophisticatedly integrating Neo-Platonist motifs into a Christian framework. In the process he essentially became the founder of Christian mysticism. This is to say that the language is Neo-Platonic but the terms are Christian. This embraces a period of about one thousand years and who this figure actually is should be saved for another discussion. During

this time his writings gained absolute authority in the church and influenced some of the most important philosophical and theological figures in the middle ages such as St. Thomas Aquinas, who relied on his writings extensively.

By the time of Aquinas, 1225-1274, these writings had been all over Europe and had influenced practically every single theologian of the Middle Ages including Anselm and Meister Eckart. The forgery was not discovered until the Fifteenth Century, during the renaissance, when Laurentius Valla proved it to be a fake, a sham, and a forgery. He showed that Dionysius is a Pseudo-Dionysius and further that he was a student of Proclus.

This in essence solves one part of the question of how Platonic and Neo-Platonic thought got to the United States for we know the early immigrants and settlers brought with them the Christian tradition, both the rational and the irrational aspects, in which the rational aspect is nothing other than a watered-down form of the grand mystical-intellectual tradition dating back to the cradle of western civilization itself. But there is still more to this story.

The next major important development that puts the Platonic and Neo-Platonic texts one step closer to America is the Renaissance which sparked the modern era in which we currently live. Constantinople was the gate for Eastern Europe to the Islamic world; it acted to transfer the elements of civilization through contacts and interaction and therefore had a tangible influence on forming European thought and paved the way for the European renaissance. Ancient Greek texts were being brought to Italy by its own trading agents as well as by the Greek scholars fleeing the fall of Constantinople. For Italy, Rome and Florence were undergoing major transformations which gave rise to the Humanism movement and as a result the Italian humanists translated much of the body of the ancient Greek texts. An important humanist by the name of Marsilio Ficino, born in 1433, translated the entire body of the Platonic dialogues and Plotinus as well. He also became the head of the Platonic Academy at Florence. This is extremely important because this means that from translating the ancient Greek, which had been lost to the Western world for many years, that the Greek texts were now in a modern language, Latin. This is when the Western world had joined up with its own past that it had lost some 1000 years prior with the closing of the Academy.

Now we are getting close to seeing the arrival of Platonism itself in the United States. And it is in 1758 that a man is born that will allow the English speaking world into the realm of Platonic thought for the first time. He goes by the name of Thomas Taylor or the first English Platonist. Taylor died in 1853 and was the first person to translate (into English) the complete works of Plato and Aristotle as well as many other important texts by others such as Proclus. This gives us our first direct link to the United States because it was Thomas Taylor who was held in high esteem and influenced the New England Transcendentalists movement in America including such figures as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. Born in 1803 Emerson had become a Unitarian minister in 1829 following the footsteps of his dad. But the early death of his wife brought him to journey to England in 1832 where he got to know people like Wordsworth and began to develop his transcendentalism. Whether or not Emerson knew

Taylor is inconsequential for the impact he had on Emerson and Wordsworth is clear. And then he returned and became a major player in the American Renaissance which spanned from 1835 to 1880 and centered on Maryland and the upper East coast.

From this we have the last and final development that brings the ancient wisdom of the Platonic tradition to my doorstep. For the 'hundred great books' program at the University of Chicago was a result of the transcendentalist movement and this in turn produced a 'hundred great books' program at St. John's of Annapolis in Maryland. This program gave the chance for people to get directly into Plato and Plotinus as well as other philosophers, without having to take someone else's word for it.

In 1948, my teacher took this program and has been studying Plato ever since. Since then my guru has studied with Joseph Campbell in New York and Alan Watts in northern California, as well as many well-known Buddhist monks and is an actual receiver of Dharma Transmission that traces its lineage back to the Buddha himself, and for that matter the beginning of time itself.

For the last 50 years he's been studying Plato and Platonic Philosophy and teaching it at Golden West College in Huntington Beach, CA. I met him there in 1993 when I graduated high-school. And since then I have been training the mind, consistent with Platonic tradition, to gain a vision of the nature of Reality itself which is experienced as the most brilliant light of Being from which can go on to ask "What after all is the nature of the One and the Good in itself such that it allows an experience of the most brilliant light of *Ousia* without being an object of experience?" "How is it that that which is the cause of causes is not a cause itself?" And since I do this in the United States, and I met my most divine guru, aka spiritual teacher of the hidden mysteries in the United States, then ergo, this is my American Spiritual Experience.

In conclusion I would like to say only one thing. I wrote this paper when I was 24 years old for an introductory Religious Studies class at Cal State Long Beach, after studying with Pierre for 6 years at that point. I have now come back from traveling the world after 7 years to figure out my next step (Plato like?). And, I am now 38 years old, but not a single thing has changed except for the development and growth of all the spirits and souls of the Noetic Society including our most beautiful and intelligible teacher, Pierre Grimes. He is now approaching 90 and has just been diagnosed with cancer. But as we all know from our studies our soul is immortal: the body is not. So all I have to say is that as Pierre prepares himself to approach and become One with the other great men like himself (remember the *Phaedo*), so too we will prepare ourselves to join him. This is my prayer and offering to the Gods. Aum Namaste Aum.



For Pierre By Raphael Hernandez

The aim of this essay is to explain how Philosophical Midwifery has helped me overcome my deepest problems, what this work has meant to me, and what impact it has for the future.

I clearly remember the first day I met Pierre Grimes. I was a nineteen-year-old student at Golden West College, sitting in a philosophy class recommended to me by a friend. I walked the instructor, a confident man who looked younger than his years. He proceeded to write his name on the chalkboard as “Pierre Grimes, PhD”.

I was immediately struck by two very strong impressions I couldn't explain. The first was incredulity that his first name was “Pierre”. I never understood why I felt this. It was a disorienting feeling similar to suddenly discovering that a close relative's name was actually George and everyone had always called him that, even though I had always known him as John. The second impression was a simple wish that I could have a grandfather more like him. Given my history with my own father and grandfather, this feeling was easier to understand.

This class gave me my first exposure to Greek philosophy in general, and Platonic philosophy in particular. It was a strange, often exhilarating experience to explore these studies. Some of these ideas were the most challenging puzzles I had ever encountered, and for a serious physics student such as I was, steeped in mathematics and the hard sciences, I was astonished to find philosophical inquiry *much* more challenging. I soon found myself taking Pierre's classes each semester, sometimes two at a time, and I occasionally attended the Noetic Society meetings each week.

But it didn't last. Eventually, I stopped attending the NS meetings altogether and dropped the classes. At the time I rationalized this decision by telling myself that I needed to focus my time on “what was important”, which was based on my assumption that philosophy, while fascinating in its own right, was ultimately not important. What was “really important” was to focus my energies in pursuit of a career that was recognized by the world at large as important and meaningful, and to pursue that until I could attain a high level of achievement.

This confused, shallow thinking was further polluted by the ideas of other noted and respected figures of the day. Ideas such as “follow your bliss” and “make what you love your life's work and you'll never work another day,” only contributed to my confusion. I was propelled away from the very answers I didn't even realize I was searching for, and driven in a direction I thought would fulfill my desires, but didn't.

Fast forward fifteen years later, and I found myself having achieved more success than most of my peers, accomplished more than I originally thought possible, and yet was so deeply dissatisfied with my life that I considered myself an utter failure. I felt that all of my past successes were ultimately worthless and each one of my failures completely overshadowed them.

I had faithfully followed through with what I had believed to be true, meaningful, and real, and yet it had all resulted in a personal disaster.

My relationships with others fared no better. I found myself unsuccessful in all attempts to have closer and stronger relationships with the people I loved. It seemed that no matter my intentions, or desire to conduct myself with greater integrity, something would always surface that would drive us further apart, or end relationships altogether.

During this time I attempted to find a way out of these vicious cycles and the despair that accompanied them. I took up Zen and Vipassana meditation, but lost respect for these pursuits when the inherent contradictions in these systems became painfully apparent. I dove into Joseph Campbell's work, but the further I investigated it the less coherent and consistent his work appeared to me. I tried a number of other systems, philosophies, and self-appointed gurus, but these too offered no real help. And throughout this desperate search, everything seemed to be polarized between two camps: on one side were the scientific materialists who defined the mind within crushingly narrow limits, but *did* have a modicum of respect and value for it (so long as it remained obediently within the cage they had constructed for it), and on the other side were the non-materialists, influenced by Eastern philosophies, who accepted a far broader scope to human existence but didn't see the mind as anything more than a hindrance to more profound experiences. And I was trapped between these two extremes, never satisfied with either camp and never able to shake the deep feeling that neither of these views reflected the underlying reality.

For years I continued in my confusion, filling up a reservoir of despair and anger in my soul. It was only when I finally accepted the very painful conclusion that nothing in the consensus world of opinion could be trusted, or could help me through my crisis, that I was able to turn around and start moving in the right direction.

One of the first things I did was return to Pierre and the Noetic Society, the place where I had first encountered the fundamental questions of truth and reality. I'm not certain what ultimately drew me back, it may have been a longing I had never even put a name on, but not long after returning, I was struck with a series of realizations.

To begin with, the same conclusion I had so very painfully come to accept—that consensus reality was largely false, mostly a lie, and ultimately indefensible—was taken for granted in the Platonic system and Philosophical Midwifery. It was also well understood that beliefs predominantly shape our views of the world and ourselves and that, in turn, these beliefs are layered one on top of another forming our personal world view and value systems. It was understood that the problems resulting from many of these beliefs keep us from those things we love most and from achieving our highest goals; that these beliefs ultimately find their origin in a special class of belief that forms very early in our childhood, without our conscious awareness. Each of these realizations struck me like successive thunderbolts spread out over the course of

many months and because of them, along with my work on dreams and discussions with Pierre, I was finally able to zero in on the root causes of my problems.

I came to realize that most of the problems that had caused me so much misery resulted from just a few core beliefs I never even knew I had.

The first was that *Excellence Is Meaningless If It Is Not Appreciated*. With Pierre's help, I traced this lie to the very moment when it was first planted in me at the age of six years old. I then saw how successive layers of false beliefs, all predicated on this root, created in me a deep abiding fear of rejection from those whom I admired and held authority over me. I came to see how this belief invalidated anything good I could ever do if it wasn't appreciated by certain individuals in my life who fit a specific role or dynamic. This belief effectively made me a slave to the opinions of others.

The second core belief was that *Mind Is Not Enough*, meaning that for many challenges I would face, perhaps even most of them, my mind was not enough to meet and overcome the obstacles placed in my path. This too was tracked down to early memories that, once surfaced, allowed me to trace the path of the wrecking ball that had been unleashed throughout my life. Because of this belief I found it incredibly difficult to face challenges at the most opportune times and in the most ideal way. Instead, I would procrastinate to the point where a challenge would escalate to the level of imminent crises before I would finally act. This one belief alone had crippled me and led me to squander countless opportunities to excel throughout my life.

These two core beliefs, in tandem with all the other resultant beliefs that were layered on top, led me to conclude that I, and the world in general, were ultimately not intelligible. Just like my mind was not enough to meet the most significant challenges placed before me, *no one's* mind was enough to understand the World in all its madness.

Today, I now see clearly how these two beliefs resulted in the majority of the misery and self-punishment I foolishly inflicted upon myself, and these insights are a complete validation of the principles of philosophical midwifery, as well as the role of the mind in overcoming these problems. Without this help, and the rest of what I have learned from studying with Pierre, I would still be lost in a fog of confusion and suffering.

Having now gone through this experience, I sometimes ask myself what Philosophical Midwifery is worth, relative to all the other distractions that litter our world? "Everything," is my immediate answer. But to really stop and consider it, the question should be posed something more like this: If you took the average person on the street and asked them what value they would place on trading the current here-and-now world they live in with one that is more ideal in every way, one where they can relate to themselves and those closest to them in a more positive and meaningful way, add to this an all-pervading sense of hope and that this new world is more real than what they formerly accepted as 'reality', what would all this be worth to

them and what would they trade for it? The answer would be the same, but there would be far more insight behind it.

I could continue expounding at even greater length on what Pierre Grimes' work has done for me, and of my respect, admiration, and love for him, but I think the best way for me to further demonstrate this is to focus on what his work implies for the *future*.

The false beliefs that formed the roots of my problems were transmitted to me when I was a young child. I now see how they formed into unspoken conclusions, solidified into deeply held unconscious beliefs, which in turn were covered over with successive layers of other beliefs, self-delusions, and lies, like the structure of a weed, from buried root, to thorny stem, to bristling leaves.

It was no accident that I acquired these core false beliefs. They were transmitted to me during my early childhood by my parents, who in turn received them from their parents before them, and on and on, for God knows how far back, like a parasite or virus, sucking the life out of generations of people.

But all of this stops with me. I am slowly but rigorously rooting these beliefs out of the soil and examining them one by one before burning them. I am doing this for myself and those I love—and even more so for the next generation, so that they will not have to live with these crippling burdens and will lead better, happier lives.

And I am especially doing this for my son. He's a rambunctious 3-year-old full of wonder, adventure, and mischief. I am now forearmed with the knowledge of what to nurture and encourage, what states of mind I see in him that need to be safeguarded and not discouraged, and above all, when I slip up or misstep, to talk to him about it afterwards and not leave it up to him to draw false conclusions. Everything I have learned is now a tool I can use to help set him on a more ideal, more perfect path in life. My sincerest hope is that I succeed in this, and that my son surpasses me in every way so that he in turn can inspire the next generation to even higher excellence.

I certainly hope so, because his name is Pierre, too.

Pierre Grimes

A Tribute, written by Rifka Hirsch, a student of philosophy

In January, 1969, I had a vision of reality. Nearly two years later, while attending some meditation practices at the LA Zen Center, I met Pierre and some of his philosophy students. Pierre seemed nice, and the students seemed intelligent and interesting.

A few months later – in January, 1971 – I attended a 7-daylong *sesshin* at the Zen Center, under the guidance of Koryu Roshi. Pierre Grimes and a number of his students also attended. A second *sesshin* took place in February, and a third, in March. I noted that some of Pierre's students were having profound experiences – *kenshos*, glimpses of enlightenment. I had one myself, on my birthday, on March 22, 1971, during the third *sesshin*.

Compared to the clarity and depth of my vision of reality in 1969, my 1971 *kensho* was merely a blip, and I would have missed it entirely, had not Koryu Roshi acknowledged it for me. By the time the *sesshin* ended, several days later, the blip had expanded into greater vision and presence.

During the session, I'd fallen in love with one of Pierre's students. I never looked into his face, and never spoke to him – I fell in love with the sense of him when he came near me. I knew the feelings were strong and mutual. After the *sesshin* ended, when participants were free to talk, look around, socialize, hug, and laugh, my feelings for this young man didn't go away. I moved to Orange County and accompanied my new lover to Pierre's philosophy classes and extra-curricular gatherings.

Here would be a good place to use the expression – mind-blowing.

Here were people sitting around, drinking coffee, and talking about truth, justice, goodness, and beauty – not just as interesting ideas, but as realities – and not just briefly, but deeply into the wee hours of the night.

Though my love affair with the Buddhist philosophy student only lasted for about three weeks, my life-long love relationship with philosophy was just beginning.

I stayed in Orange County and became one of Pierre's philosophy students. I attended Friday night gatherings and weekend seminars. I was swept up in a dimension of life that was exhilarating and beautiful and meaningful.

Pierre was brilliant. He led us beyond the confines of 'ordinary reality,' into realms of living ideas – into Plato and Parmenides, Plotinus, Proclus - into a universe beyond time and space, which transcended, and yet embraced, the world of time and space.

Soon after I became involved in philosophy, Pierre and his students built a Greek temple on the lawns of Golden West College and filmed *the Parmenides Poem*, newly translated from Greek, by one of Pierre's students. I played the Goddess. Here I was, a youngish wannabe philosopher, speaking words which flowed from ultimate understanding, about the One and creation, even down to the realm of appearances in time and space. Though I could only glimpse the meaning of the words, I did feel their beauty and their light.

For the next 11 years, I continued to hang around Pierre, as he guided us lovingly and carefully through Plato's Dialogues, Plotinus, Proclus. My life was centered on philosophy, and its intelligence and beauty.

But at the same time, I was living through my young womanhood, sometimes in love relationships, but mostly feeling misunderstood and insecure. I experienced times of clarity and vision, but there was an immeasurable gap between my intellectual understanding and my ability to integrate it into my daily life. I lived in duality, and over time, my intellectual clarity became overshadowed by emotional darkness. I came to feel uncomfortable with Pierre and with the group around him, and in late 1982, I left the Noetic Society, to seek the truth in other ways.

I became the Executive Director of a new nonprofit agency, whose purpose was to help Cambodian refugees start new lives in Orange County. I ran this agency from 1983 until I retired, in 2008. It was an amazing and challenging time, during which this insecure woman learned to live in the world of time and space, and develop more emotional maturity and practical skills.

Though I didn't hang out with Pierre and the members of the Noetic Society, I never ceased being a student of philosophy, seeking wisdom, loving the truth, bringing it into my daily life. I'd learned much from Pierre. I could never go backwards. I just took my knowledge and experiences out into a broader world.

While running the nonprofit, I wrote novels and short stories and poetry ... usually about the search for truth and the discoveries of wisdom. (All are unpublished.) I pursued the Advaita Vedanta approach to enlightenment. I became a facilitator of Stephen Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, a conceptual model of living a self-aware and principle-centered life. I trained extensively in three approaches for healing trauma (Somatic Experiencing, Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy, and Prenatal and Birth Therapy). To the degree I could (while writing grants and administering the agency), I integrated the fruits of all these endeavors into my work with refugees, in order to help them recover from trauma, and to help them rediscover their own true natures ... because that's what all these endeavors were helping me do, and I wanted to share them with my refugee staff and clients.

Since I retired from the nonprofit, I've pursued my writing and furthered my studies of truth, including the mystical teachings of Jeshua (or Jesus). I've been developing an approach to

healing and awakening, inspired by all my life's studies and personal visions of reality, and I practice this approach with a few interested people. All my studies, teaching, writing, developing, and practicing – point towards the existence of a universal curriculum, which leads from the One, or God, through creation to the belief of being a separate and suffering individual ... and then turns back again through a journey of healing and remembering and awakening ... all the way home to God, the One.

Pierre, with his brilliantly expanded mind, demonstrated that this universal curriculum exists. He taught it, pointing us to its eternal truths, and challenging us to see them for ourselves.

Though my life has involved moving away from Pierre, the mindfulness awakened in me through his teachings and ways of questioning, the love of wisdom and of truth and goodness ... these awakened aspects of my being have never diminished, but only gotten more full and real. I'm still a student of philosophy, still referring to and deepening my understanding of the meaning of *Plato's Allegory of the Cave* or *the Myth of Er*, in *Plato's Republic*, or realizing more deeply the value of the few, between the one and the many, in *Plato's Philebus*. Or wondering about conception, as described in *The Parmenides' Poem*.

Pierre, my philosophic guide and teacher, I want to thank you for opening my mind to philosophy and to the living principles of the good, the just and the beautiful. And thank you for demonstrating these truths through your own amazing mind – so vast, so clear, so filled with light and subtlety and awareness. What I learned from you, through your guidance, continues to guide me and bear fruit in my understanding, helping me become more alive and conscious and skillful.

Pierre, dear man, dear philosopher, I appreciate you deeply.
I love you.

Rifka Hirsch
August 11, 2013



A Healthy State of Mind

by Mindy Mandell

A true teacher is a rare find, and no distance is too great for a sincere seeker. Wisdom literature is rife with stories of seekers who traveled hundreds of miles on foot over harsh terrain just for the rare privilege of gaining even a brief audience with one who truly sees. From my home in Japan, I've had the cherished opportunity to work with such a teacher for the last 12 years. Fortunately, in these modern times, the Internet can connect people anywhere in the world without the physical hardships of yesteryear. The inner hardships and struggles, however, remain the same.

The life of the philosopher is not easily dissected. Cutting it into steps or practices robs it of the richness of the state of mind to which the parts have contributed, and continue to contribute. This was the thought I kept coming back to when I pondered how Pierre Grimes' work has affected me. Which area of study should I focus on?

Should I write about what it means to read without interpretation? Then again, Pierre's extensive work in the areas of dream analysis and using midwifery to uproot *pathologos* beliefs has been a great benefit to me for years. And, of course, there's also the metaphysics, the beautiful teachings about the One and the Golden Chain which extends from it. Another approach could be to write about philosophic death and the practice of purification—the separation of the soul from the body and the preparation for it. This, Plato told us in his dialogue *Phaedo*, is the true philosopher's only practice¹. However, focusing even on this most profound of practices offers only a sterile and lifeless shadow of the beauty known to one who, with the gentle guidance of a true teacher, has reaped at least some degree of the rewards of putting all the steps and all the pieces together.

Pierre has often said that enlightenment is not an experience but a state of mind. It can't be found in a pill; it can't be smoked or gained in a motivational seminar. You can't get it by reading a book or earning a degree. It must be cultivated with patience, courage and integrity. What is false must be cut away and what is true must be honored regardless of the social costs. It is the state of mind that Plato hinted at when he wrote: “[T]here is no way of putting it into words like other studies. Acquaintance with it must come rather after a long period of attendance on instruction in the subject itself and of close companionship, when, suddenly, like a blaze kindled by a leaping spark, it is generated in the soul and at once becomes self-sustaining.”²

It is this state of mind which has been the greatest gift to come out of my years of acquaintance with Pierre Grimes. It is a state of mind that takes time to ripen. What I am in essence is so much more than the mortal person existing in time and place that I generally

¹ Plato, *The Phaedo*, 67c

² Plato, Epistle 7, 341c, trans. L.A.Post

identify with in this incarnation. To experience that is one thing, but to live that knowledge day in and day out is quite another. I am gradually learning to see this lifetime through this wider lens. This lifetime is one in a string of lifetimes, each offering its own unique springboard from which to grow.

There was a time, early in my practice, when I wondered if my distance from Pierre would limit my growth. I could benefit, of course, but I had suspected that to wake up, I would need to be in California participating in his classes and discussing my blocks with him face-to-face. However, Pierre has always been encouraging. He has reminded me that being a good student has nothing to do with how close I live to the teacher or living in a community of like-minded people. He has explained to me on numerous occasions that the circumstances in which we find ourselves are the precise ones we need in order to wake up. And, with his guidance, I have found this to be true. Through the various changes that my life has gone through over the years, from jobs to marriage to motherhood, he has always had advice on how I could incorporate these aspects of my life into my practice.

I have come to appreciate to ever-greater degrees that wisdom has nothing to do with how well I can debate with sophists or quote passages from Plato's dialogues. It manifests in my interactions with the world around me and with everyone I come into contact with whether they are Platonists or not. It is what guides me not only when I am struggling with a metaphysical dilemma, but also when I spend a day at the park with my family or when I greet my neighbors in the morning. It speaks to me when I sit in deep reflection and at various times throughout the day when I pause to ask myself, "what should I do in this situation?" It challenges me to have the courage to honor that voice and act on what I know to be true.

Wisdom comes from holding on to the knowledge of what is truly good, beautiful and just³. It manifests by reflecting that knowledge in every action. Every moment offers the opportunity to act in accordance with wisdom, effecting goodness through my very being. One moment is an opportunity to bring a smile to a stranger's face. Another is a chance to compel a friend to think about something in a different, healthier way. The next might be an opportunity to recognize a pathologos belief before it plays itself out. We are here to learn, and each moment is a new lesson.

Over the years, Pierre has been not only an advisor and a guide, but also a friend. He has always treated me with integrity, inspiring me to believe in myself even when it seemed as though nobody else did. He has the uncanny ability to frame his questions and comments in a way that gives me credit for the insights I've had while at the same time encouraging me to push further.

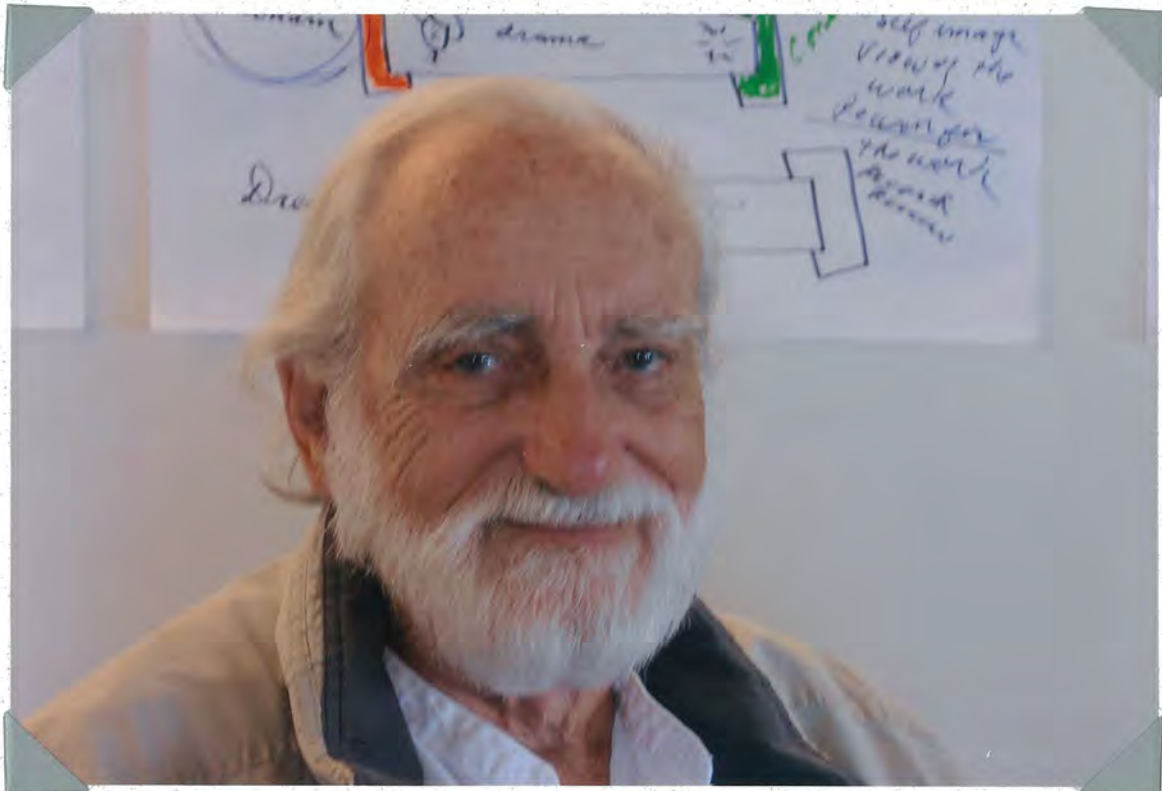
I've long suspected that the diverse differences among teachers and their teaching styles is part of some divine plan. Each seeker is coming from a unique state of mind and so teachers

³ For example, Plato, *Republic*, 484a-485a

cannot be one-size-fits-all. We are each drawn to a teacher who embodies our image of human perfection, and perhaps some of us will change teachers as our understanding of what this is matures and evolves. I've had the great fortune of never needing to change teachers. Pierre will forever exemplify to me the reaches of human potential.

Pierre was not born wise or with any special psychic 'gifts.' He is not a bodhisattva who one day stumbled upon his true identity, thereby being instantaneously transformed into the quintessential teacher. Rather, he is a regular man who recognized that wisdom is of the highest value and that in order to gain wisdom "he must work like a slave to win it or he never will."⁴

Pierre has spent his lifetime doing that work, and the work is never done. He is not infallible. What he is instead is so much more meaningful to the rest of us because his achievement is not out of our reach. He is someone to emulate, not put up on a pedestal. He stands as a role model of what any of us can achieve if we exercise courage, strength and integrity and never settle for "good enough." The better I understand what wisdom is, the more impressed I become with the state of mind that Pierre has attained. Just by being who he is, he inspires me to keep working on myself. I would not know the state of mind I function at today had Pierre not introduced me to the possibility, and the profundity of Pierre's goodness and beauty points me toward the potential of states of mind I have yet to know.



⁴ Plato, *Republic*, 494d, trans. W.H.D. Rouse

Tribute letter - Fri, 2 Aug 2013 by Georgeanne Xagorarakis

Hi Pierre,

In 1964, you were my Western Civilization history teacher. You asked on the first day, "What is history?" The next class, you asked that I do an oral report on "What is the lunar calendar?" That was the beginning of a series of questions as I later took your philosophy classes on Socrates and Plato and then World Religions.

My whole world turned upside down after taking your classes and for the best. I dated Larry Murphy at Orange Coast College for a year. We enjoyed sitting outside on the patio at school "talking dialogue."

I then graduated from Long Beach State Univ. and became an elementary school teacher. Then traveled to Greece and taught English and eventually married a Greek man. Upon returning to Costa Mesa, I met my guru, Ramakrishna Anandaji, and have been studying and teaching yoga for the last 30 years.

Thank you for opening and awakening my mind to new possibilities and realms of thought. It all started in your classes. I have found peace of mind, ever new joy, and appreciation for all religions around the world. You were my favorite teacher in college.

Peace to you and eternal joy,
Georgeanne Morris Xagorarakis

“What is this life all about?”
A short dialogue from, about, with, and for Pops
by Joe Grimes

Everyone was sitting comfortably, ready to start sitting Zazen in the Zendo when Alexander stood up and asked, “Pierre, what is this all about, this life?” Alexander looked all around the room and continued, “Why we are here?”

Pierre instantly answered, “Because you chose to be here.”

Alexander said, “No, I mean what is the purpose of my life?”

Again, Pierre instantly answered, “To live a good life.”

“But that’s too simple. That’s not what you really think, is it?” Alexander asked.

“To live a good life is not as simple as you might think.” Pierre responded.

“But what does that mean? Really?” Alexander pleaded.

Pierre leaned back for a second and was about to speak when the gods pushed the clouds aside and the sunlight started to stream in through the skylights, heightening the drama of the moment. He always had good timing.”

“Why are we here? Why indeed?” Pierre stroked his beard and continued. “Why does this question even come up? I think the reason is because we feel that our lives have little meaning. We are aware of being alone without knowing if there is a greater whole that we are a part of. We can’t see the big picture within which our existence might have some kind of meaning. We are faced with wondering if this life is all there is – and nothing more. We seek meaning through many ways - psychology, drugs, religions - but we find it almost impossible to bridge the gap to anything beyond ourselves.”

“You see...we are caught in a great mystery, a mystery of our existence here on earth. We don’t remember whatever existence we may have had before birth and enter into an unknown world after our death. At this moment in time, we believe that we are stuck here alone.”

Pierre glanced around the room, as if looking for questions. No one spoke. “Yet, it’s this very sense of separation from the *whole* of the universe that provides us with the clue to our mystery, to our life” he said, “Consider for a moment: we seem cut off from all else and have no memory of any prior existence, so therefore we *must* settle our account in this life - our Karma - with what we have. And we *must* find some way to provide for our existence here or perish -we are locked within ourselves - in these bodies.” He put both hands on his chest.

“Let me share with you the Platonist view for the reason for our existence.” He paused, sensing the significance of the moment. The room was perfectly silent even though the wind was starting to rage outside. He continued in a very simple and gentle manner:

“Plato says that we must plan, care, and command ourselves to do whatever we think is important to achieve our goals. And in this struggle to achieve our goals, we try to gain a clue to our existence and to bring meaning into our lives. How? By learning mastery of oneself and as the Delphic Oracle directed us - to *Know Thyself*.”

“We organize our lives in the best way we can in an effort to achieve our goals. We seek these goals because we think them good. Our goal in life is the pursuit of the Good embodied in these goals. Plato said that everyone seeks the Good. Even if our goals end up being a mistake, even if they prove detrimental to us, we sought them because we **thought** them good. No sane person seeks evil.”

His words hung in the air as a plane does without proper lift. He seemed to be waiting for a question. But again no one said a word. “We test our understanding of this Good in the turmoil of our failures,” he went on. “We need to answer the nagging question, Why did I fail?”

Alexander spoke up, “So we are here to fail?”

“Not to fail, but to learn from our failures. You see we are part of a caring and intelligible universe. Mind is constantly communicating with us for our benefit. The communications from Mind are profound and are utterly appropriate to our circumstances. While the scope of Mind is all-encompassing, its precision is always directed to what is personally significant to each of us. Our choice of goals, the problems we face, the daydreams and fantasies we have and the dreams that visit us in our sleep – each and every one of them are like doorways into the richest source of insights into our life. What we discover through these insights is that Mind itself provides ample evidence of its goodness and intelligibility. You see Mind is beneficent.

The problems we have, we *should* have. The solution of these problems is in our highest interest, and with the freedom from these problems we can function on a higher and more personally significant level of existence.

Understanding these problems is the result of *turning around* and looking at the reasons and consequences for our failures. By learning from our failures, we discover that the actual causes are accepting the false as true, the appearance for the genuine. In the struggle to become free of those false beliefs, we reach for those true ideals. How? By training and nurturing our understanding.

We can say that it is here, *this very life*, where we test ourselves. It’s in this very life where we train our understanding. When we leave here and go into the afterlife, if we take anything with us, anything at all - we **must** take what we have learned and nurtured. Our existence here has given us this task: to overcome the effects of those false beliefs that have turned us away from pursuing what is truly right and Good.

In return and in reward for our struggle, we recover what we have lost - a recollection of what we have forgotten - the virtues like justice, wisdom, courage, temperance, and Beauty. Learning about and *experiencing* these virtues is what Plato cites as the true value of gaining an earthly existence...**for it is only here, in this life**, that the soul can be trained in these things. Prior to this existence, it is said that the soul missed the opportunity to see *the most splendid and blessed mysteries*.

If we are to complete our spiritual evolution, we need to return to where we can gain the necessary training, to be reborn in **this very life, here and now**. Do not waste this precious time. The problems we face today are our lessons for tomorrow.”

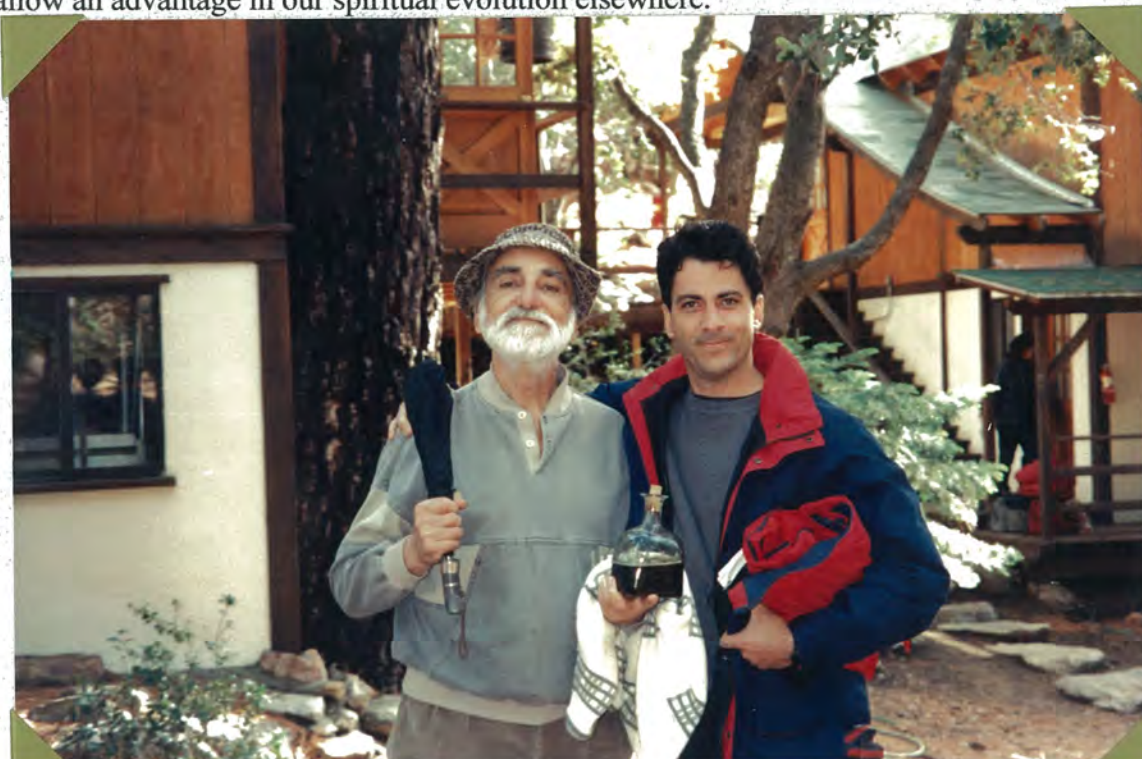
Pierre pointed at the chalkboard: The practice of Koan study and practice of midwifery - mapping out daydreams and dreams - turns us around to focus on our existence. In order to understand the forces and ideas that operate in our problems, we must turn our attention around and reflect on those things that escaped our notice. This *turning about* of our very being is called *Ousia* in Greek. In that turning around motion, there is a *turning about* of the mind toward a reality *beyond* existence. For Plato, this reflective *turning about* is inherent in the very nature of ourselves - the very nature of Being.”

Alexander said, “as in the Koan: What is watching?”

“Good heavens, yes.” Pierre answered, “Therefore, through our existence we can touch upon true Being and participate in that true Being by *Ousia*. Plato said in “*The Republic*”:

*“This power is already in the soul of each,
and is the instrument by which each learns
thus if the eye could not see without being turned
with the whole body from the dark towards the light,
so this instrument must be turned round
with the whole soul away from the world of becoming
until it is able to endure the sight of Being
and the most brilliant light of Being:
and this we say is the Good, don't we?”*

“When we do journey forth after our existence here, this process of understanding and enlightenment that the Greeks called *Paedeia*, coupled with the nurturing gained through this art will allow an advantage in our spiritual evolution elsewhere.”





Bright Journey

by Cathy Wilson

This is the saga of a typical woman of my generation, flitting from healer to modality to product, seeking healing. You've all met her in one form or another during your life; in many cases, you've maybe even been her. We humans are all trapped in soul pain (often manifesting as physical pain) from our pathologos problems, and people of my generation, particularly women, often turned to natural healing to try to solve them.

My first teacher was Jo, short for Josephine, a neighbor grandma with a huge yard full of familiar herbal remedies: mint, rue, long rows of hops—and many less-common home remedies, such as rows of Oriental poppies. Many days, Jo would walk me through her garden, teaching Latin names and multiple uses and combinations, which she demonstrated in her herbal lab on the covered veranda. Later, together with Dr. John R. Christopher, the father of the herbal renaissance, I wrote several books on herbal medicine. My favorite is *EveryWoman's Herbal* (find it on Amazon).

Realizing that herbs helped many things, but not all (this is a foreshadowing of Philosophical Midwifery [PMW]), I researched homeopathy, which works along the lines of herbs but includes mental states. If you've used homeopathy, you know it's a huge study of a multitude of remedies; you have to find the right one if the remedy is to work. I also learned about essential oils, eventually writing Simple and Essential with a local health company (it's now out of print but I'm preparing it for a new edition).

My friend Margot, now deceased, was a companion along this educational journey of many years, and she cajoled and pushed me into taking a series of trainings in CranioSacral Therapy, a light-touch energy-based bodywork protocol originating with Dr. John Upledger, now also deceased, that purports to be quite scientific but ends up being simple: follow the body and answer its messages. One of the facets of CST is Somato-Emotional Release (see the hopeful scientific slant in the language!), which seeks blocks in the body and addresses it with a particular form of dialogue hauntingly similar to PM. I became pretty good at CST, bought myself a massage table, and had a decent little bodywork practice for some years, developing my own style that came to resemble being a traditional healer more than using just a CST protocol. My latest book, *The Power of StillPoint* (Amazon again), is about how to use the basics of CST to as a simple, effective meditation technique.

During all this time, I was playing out my own pathologos problems in an unfortunate decades-long marriage with many children. Somehow I got loose, got a divorce, bought a house, and settled down for a long winter's nap—or perhaps not, since most of the children were young and still at home. To my surprise, I met and married a man good for my soul, and moved to his town, sixty miles away, where he was a longtime professor of music.

I began a bodywork practice there in a chiropractor's office, but while there were many people with needs, there were few with means, since it was a poor, rural, mining town. Instead, I taught college for some years and then, enticed by a soul challenge that proved to be perfect for me, shifted to teaching for the local school district, inside a juvenile correctional facility and later splitting the day as an art teacher at a junior high. Especially inside the facility, though I was ostensibly teaching writing and art to incarcerated kids 10-18, I was also doing what I privately called "hands-off" healing, and found a similar result as I did with my bodywork clients: you could help to a point, and then you couldn't.

I began visiting Southern California more and more frequently. I thought of the reasons I was drawn there: to my sister in Costa Mesa, to the beach, to the drum circles, to my grandchildren, and so on. Then my son Yoni asked me to a Friday-night Philosophy meeting with Pierre. He invited me to share a dream, and I happened to have one, very short, mostly an image. Within a few moments of dialoguing familiar yet very new, we came to a breakthrough that about knocked me over. This was something new! This breakthrough was genuine but it took me in a new, helpful direction. Over the next few days of this visit, I joined Yoni and Pierre on several walks on the bluffs and got a small sense of what this work is about.

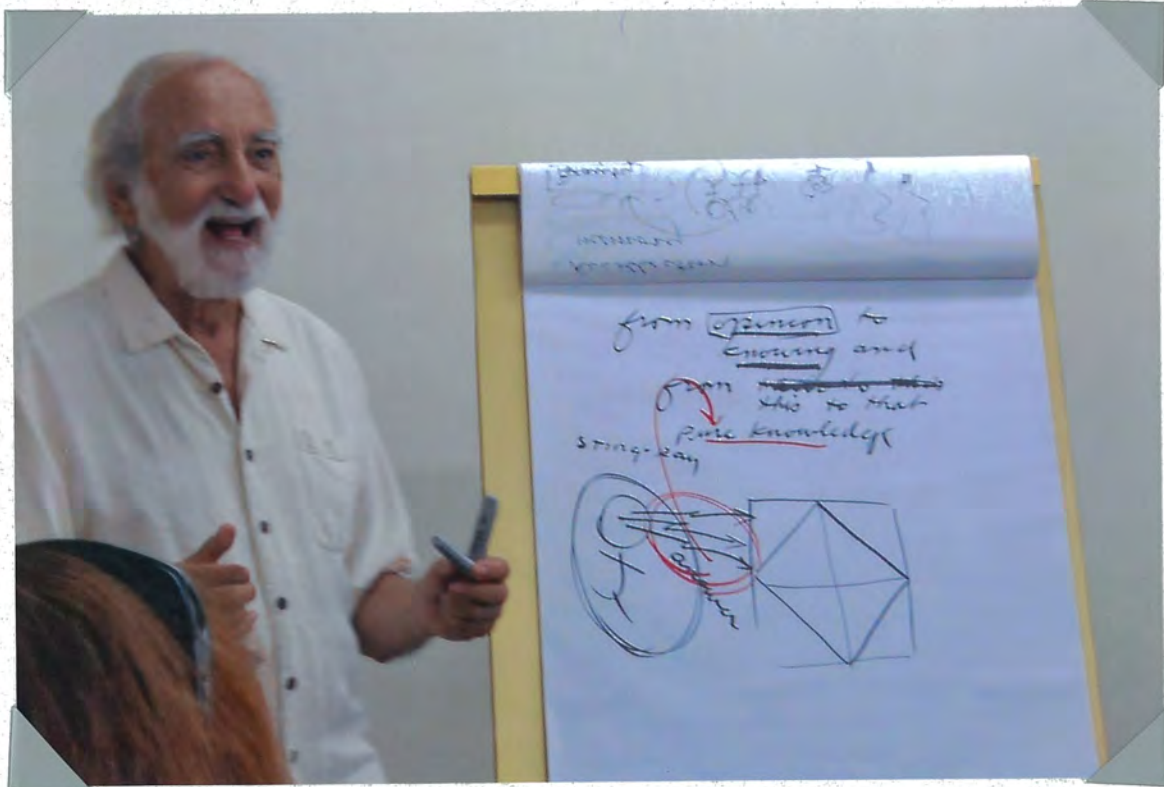
Pierre gave me a copy of the orange hardback, *Philosophical Midwifery*, by Pierre and Gina. As I read it, I launched into ghostwriter/editor mode, since that has been one of my side businesses for many years. My particular expertise is taking stuff that's hard to read and "translating" it into a friendly, understandable style. Pierre's orange book floored me, but it was pretty technical and the style quite academic. I approached Pierre with the idea of preparing a book based on the orange book but aimed at a more popular audience. Thus was born *The Pocket Pierre* (Amazon again; this is getting predictable).

Then fast-forward through the next few years, which brings me here, retired, now living in Huntington Beach. I am still observing and internalizing PM work and do not yet feel I'm ready to be a midwife, even though doing *The Pocket Pierre* certainly gave me a strong theoretical ownership of the process. Using imagery, metaphor, and words—this was all right down my alley as a writer and poet. However, watching Pierre, the master midwife, was a revelation in dialoguing. I had no idea of how patient, thorough, persistent, and committed a healer could be. I know that Pierre doesn't call himself a healer at all, but I have superimposed my lifeview on Pierre and his work. To me, he is indeed a healer.

Here was a protocol that relied on dialogue; that insisted on the dreamer's interpretation and not on any therapist's; that worked with language, image, and metaphor; that stopped when it was time and not when the hour was up; that contained humor, gentility and occasional incisive strokes; and that in Pierre's case, he offered generously and for free.

Attending the Friday night meetings is a mixed experience for me. I am passionate about the PMW dreamwork, but often flounder in the discussion of philosophical texts. Barbara assures me that this is normal for newbies and that after one or two years, I will feel more competent. One or two years! This is a new undertaking for a flitting butterfly healer like me, but I'm in for it.

Like just about everyone who knows Pierre, I confidently say that he changed my life for good, into an unexpected bright journey. I love PMW work. I feel that among all the burgeoning and sometimes presumptuous modalities out there, which make claims they cannot support and which almost always trend to idolizing the guru, this work is different. I see Pierre as an anti-guru, insisting on a healing process that peers do for each other. I love to go for walks with him and watch him work with people. Realizing that I need plenty of time to understand and learn PMW, I can only hope that he'll still be with us for many years to come.



Daily Life (in Four Parts)

by Michael Battistone

1

The dogs turned on each other in a flash, barring teeth, bristling hairs, and eliciting screams from the roommates in the living room. They overthrew first the dining room table and chairs, (along with Michel's pasta dinner), and then the coffee table.

2

After pulling the dogs apart, checking each for blood and broken skin, and then vainly trying to catch her breath over the kitchen sink, Mya called the roommates who owned Nua, the aggressive Pitbull-Boxer mix. They were just up the street at the neighborhood café and had half a sandwich for Nua when Michel and Mya arrived with her at Ainara's request. Aritz said, "It's happened before, I think she might be in heat."

3

A pleasant evening closed with peaceful conversation on the tree-lined patio. The roommates strolled back to the apartment together and said goodnight. Aritz and Ainara, in the stillness of their room, took off their clothes. A sweet, small tingle of anticipation arose. They settled into the sheets with easy half-smiles. His whiskers bristled her neck (she still laughed at the tickle). She reached down. They conversed softly. The room warmed. Breathing heavied. They decided to try something new.

4

A big splinter of a crescent moon perched itself just above the castle atop Monte Igeldo. Although most its mass was as dark as the black night, the illuminated form cut a divine beauty into the heavens above the city, lifting the silent, silvery waters a few meters higher up the beach.

Tribute to Pierre Grimes by Elyse Mergenthaller

In 1965 I met Pierre on the Orange Coast College Campus. The following is an account of those days. I learned many skills from Pierre and was exposed to many interests; philosophy, Eastern religions, psychological investigations and interesting people, many of whom I am still in touch with.

I am grateful for all these gifts and the chance to have known a fascinating and very interesting man of many talents who I still count as a friend, however I may have disagreed, at times, with some of his hypotheses. May a shower of blessings rain down upon him, in this life...and all the rest.

Pierre Grimes was partial to the Greeks, he was particularly passionate about Plato, Pythagoras and Plotinus. Eastern religions and any other such esoteric and mystical traditions also fell to his domain. He taught most all such courses and enjoyed a loyal following. After my inquiry into the Platonic view of death, I began to hang around with Pierre and his philosophy group. During breaks and late into the afternoon on the sprawling Southern California campus we would sit huddled around tables in the patio drinking coffee and discussing matters of utmost philosophical consequence. On Friday night we met in one of the buildings on campus, a spacious, tastefully furnished lounge, probably meant for faculty. We read and discussed Platonic dialogues, and did our very best to emulate them with all due pomp and circumstance.

It seemed deliciously foreign and forbidden to be pondering matters of existential consequence; if the nature of reality is truly One, how is it that it appears to be Many? Was knowledge something acquired or remembered, and what was the nature of death? We reveled in our reconstituted pursuit of Truth, Beauty, and Justice. As if that weren't already thoroughly "over the top" we dared to dabble in various psychological modes of inquiry. Our, erstwhile, philosophy Guru had apparently given up the study of psychology for philosophy but was quite versed in the trade. When it appeared that our philosophical pursuits were being hampered by someone's psychological blockade we, conveniently shifted into group therapy mode.

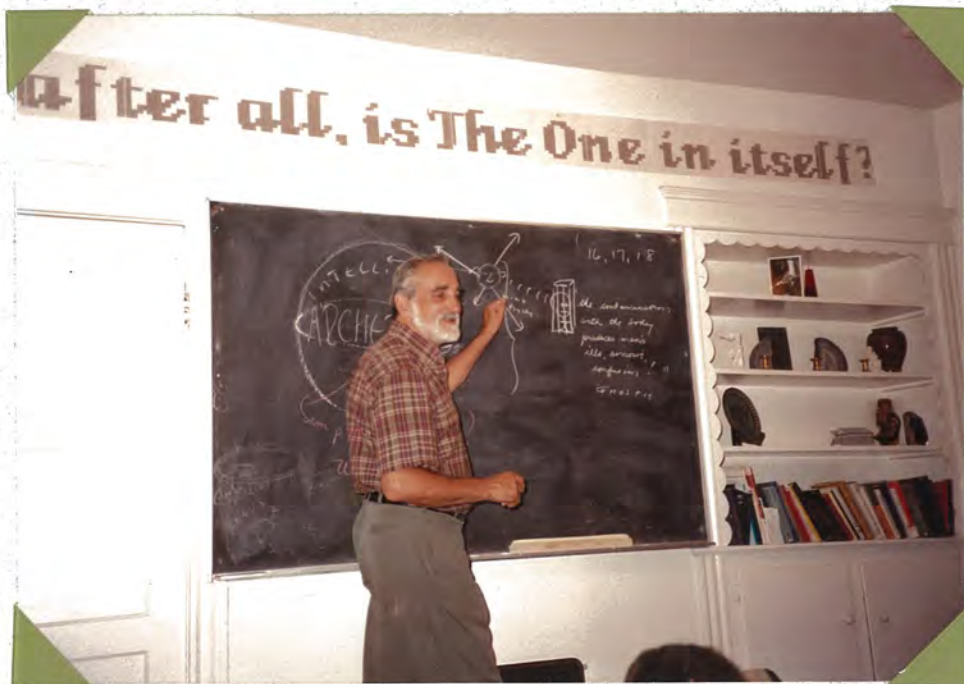
Likewise, we actively engaged in the study and practice of dream work, exploring the contents of our psyches individually, among ourselves, or in group. It was a veritable smorgasbord of the eclectic arts. It was like belonging to some ancient secret society while living in the middle of a huge flat wasteland inhabited by people who worshipped the Palm Tree and the Automobile. The adult females of the species wore pink stretch pants and sported the unflinching bubble hair-do which they had immortalized, religiously, every week at their hairdressers.

I remember seeing Mr. Greerly's wife on campus once; they were from New York. She was wearing a turtleneck, a black "A" line skirt, grayish tights and black flats that weren't pointed at the end. I don't know where I ever saw anyone dress like that before, but I immediately recognized it as a sort of code of arms; a veritable uniform of my true philosophical

disposition. I was in awe, and inimitably fascinated. How could someone, an adult no less, so simply and blatantly defy the pink and yellow stretch pant code of ethics?

I had heard of "beatniks," probably I had seen pictures of them. We were reading T.S. Elliot and Lawrence Ferlinghetti in my English Lit. Class, but it all seemed rather remote from the geo-socio-political standpoint of Orange County. I had no notion that therein lie the natural abode of many of the things I was "clicking" with. One member of Pierre's group was about as close to being a "beatnik" as we had in residence in Orange County. Miguel was a very tall thin gangly creature with shaggy hair and a bent nose that sat, like a worn monument in the middle of a very surrealistic looking face. He was always reading or writing poetry and uttering "profundities" in a drawl, somewhat fatalistic tone. He was the first of our colleagues to take up residence in what was soon to become "the Haight Ashbury" in SF.

In any case, we were passing our days in a manner that was distinctly inconsonant with our geo-political location, but no one was speaking of anarchy or rebellion. There was no angst ridden undercurrent of dissidence (my career as a political dissident had died with John Kennedy) or self-righteous effort to assert that we were different or superior to the mainstream. Of course we knew we were different and the mainstream was out of the question, but we were really too absorbed in our own eclectic little phenomena, which seemed to be spontaneously rising up of its own accord, like mushrooms in spring."



Pat Fulbright's Tribute to Pierre Grimes

"Philosophy is a madness of the soul that sets free the soul from the confines of the body and the mundane to find solace and rest among those companions in the heavens where gods feel free to have friendships among men through oracles, prophecies, and visions—and thus invites the wandering stranger who is a philosopher to find his home."

At a Friday evening philosophy meeting in 1969 at Goldenwest College, Pierre Grimes shared this lovely definition of Platonic philosophy. His clear vision and passionate practice of this philosophical vision have both inspired and guided his students over many fruitful years.

I learned to love this philosophy while studying in Pierre's dynamic, question-driven classes, and joining his informal after-class discussions over coffee. I expanded my understanding over many pleasurable hours spent exploring philosophical ideas in spontaneous dialogues with friends—these hours of discussion were invaluable to me. The philosophical habits of mind developed under Pierre's care are both practical and therapeutic for many of us, for me especially in my career as a community college English professor, teaching classical mythology, literature, expository essay writing, and critical thinking.

With Pierre as my charismatic model and acute critic, I carefully studied seminal works of Plato and the wisdom literatures of India, Tibet, China, and Japan. I unpacked the texts, mapped the arguments, and learned them by heart. I posed, then explored fundamental, powerful questions arising from the texts; I applied core concepts to my life with the goal of integrating these profound ideas into the fabric of my familiar world.

With Pierre and my philosophical friends, I demonstrated Euclidian geometry propositions, practiced methods of Buddhist meditation, and joined in practicing philosophical midwifery, sharing in the grand enterprise of philosophy as a means of turning our souls from everyday concerns and pleasures and rising to a dazzling realm of ideas, insights, and a new way of being.

Let me illustrate my claim for philosophy: Just last weekend in Sonoma County, I met with eight philosophy friends of forty years or so to discuss Plato's *Protagoras*. We had a wonderful time exploring the text, explicating the arguments, applying the myths, and challenging our understanding of *arête* (excellence) and whether it can be taught.

I deeply appreciate and value the gift of Platonic philosophy that Pierre Grimes has generously offered his students over so many years. For myself, I count Platonic philosophy as my greatest treasure.

My best wishes to Pierre,
Patricia Fulbright,
Portland, Oregon

This Was Not the Assignment...A remembrance

by Tom Easton

It was either 1990 or 91 when I decided to take a philosophy class. It was my first.

The class was *Philosophy 101* and was taught by one Pierre Grimes, Ph.D.

At the time I didn't know Dr. Grimes nor anything about him. I chose his class only because it was an introductory course and was scheduled for 8am. I figured only the truly dedicated would be there that early and thereby make the class more interesting.

For the first few weeks we read & discussed Plato's *The Apology*. Then came our assignment: write a paper explaining, with quotes from the text, the charges against Socrates along with his defense.

No sweat.

I wrote what I believed was a pretty good paper. Having never before taken a course from Dr. Grimes I wasn't exactly sure what he was looking for, but I thought my effort was a decent piece of work.

When our papers were returned mine didn't have a grade. Instead at the top was written, "This was not the assignment. Please rewrite & resubmit".

Needless to say, I was dumbfounded. I had somehow entirely misunderstood the assignment. So after class I made an appointment with Dr. Grimes to discuss it during his office hours.

He patiently explained that I was injecting my own ideas rather than simply extracting what Plato/Socrates was saying. I saw his point and immediately set to work at rewriting & resubmitting.

My 2nd attempt yielded a "D" grade and a return visit to Dr. Grime's office.

My 3rd paper received a "B-" but I was not satisfied. Yet.

Finally, my 4th effort was rewarded with an "A". Which also turned out to be my grade for the course.

I went on to take every class Dr. Grimes offered. They were equally as challenging and, with many rewrites, I managed to do well in all of them.

Thank you Pierre for all the help you have given me. In turn, I'll pass it on.

Pierre Makes it Personal

John H Spencer

August 2013

Pierre Grimes offers academic philosophy, and society in general, several significant challenges, which I shall leave to others to address in this volume. What I want to focus on here is the challenge he presents in terms of the role of philosophy in our personal development as spiritual beings.

Most people appear to have relatively little regard for philosophy (or have any idea what it is), and even academic philosophers strongly disagree amongst themselves about how to define it and what its roles should be. While I would never devalue the importance of logical analysis, rigorous argumentation, or meticulous clarification of concepts and meanings, I certainly do reject any attempt to limit philosophy to such constricting functions.

Other philosophers may resolutely reject the bestowing of any importance on logical arguments, while still others assert that there is no truth about anything, or that philosophy should merely describe our subjective inner experience. Some philosophers have even claimed that philosophy is meaningless, while they continue to receive their salary for teaching this apparently meaningless discipline at university or college. But seldom do we see philosophers boldly proclaim that philosophy can help to alleviate our misery and prepare us for union with the Divine or God, or what is also called the One. Pierre, however, is one such philosopher.

Pierre brings back to life the ancient Platonic tradition, which stretches back more than twenty-five centuries and has as its ultimate goal a “return to the One”, to the source of all reality. What is referred to as Platonism also includes the work and ideas of philosophers prior to Plato, such as Socrates, Parmenides, and Pythagoras, who had undertaken powerful initiatory training in Egypt. Unfortunately, not many people in our modern culture know very much about this tradition, despite the fact that it has provided the foundation for both science and religion. The fact the previous sentence may seem so shocking for many supposedly educated people further demonstrates how little we know and understand about our own heritage, or about the foundations of science and religion.

While it may be relatively easy to understand why many academic philosophers would reject the claim that philosophy can help to prepare us for union with the Divine, it is somewhat disconcerting that many of those philosophers and classicists who specialize in Platonism have also tended to be very difficult to persuade of this. While it can be an intellectually fulfilling experience to study such ancient philosophical texts, it is relatively unusual for academics to take the practices seriously as a personal way of life. There are exceptions, of course, some of whom I

know personally, but the entire academic structure is such that it virtually forbids taking philosophy personally. This situation could be compared to the practice of modern medicine, which thrives on people being sick, not healthy, and yet there are individual doctors who genuinely seek to help their patients become as healthy as possible within a patently unhealthy system.

Despite their best efforts to appease their administrative masters, many philosophy and classics departments continue to be only a semester away from the bureaucratic chopping blocks, susceptible to the slightest whims of policymakers. After all, there is little obvious financial gain in getting a degree in these fields, and so there is equally little incentive in our excessively materialistic culture for students to devote themselves to the difficult study that is required to penetrate them. Forget the fact that we are mired in such a horrific economic disaster precisely because we have been barking up the wrong philosophical trees, all the while denying that such trees have any importance (or that they even exist).

Through some of philosophy's darkest moments since the so-called Dark Ages, Pierre has persevered with his mission to help restore Platonic philosophy to its rightful position, shrugging off the persecution he has endured from mainstream academic philosophers. He has devoted himself to helping countless students, both at his regular college courses, and especially in his private academy, to explore their own minds and attain a higher understanding of reality, often leading to profound personal transformation. Pierre has remained a genuine seeker of wisdom, a lover of the Logos, continually challenging others and himself to delve deeper into the mysteries of mind and reality.

Pierre is also a very funny man, but you also have to be quite sharp to get his humor, which he often uses as a gauge of one's understanding. He can also be very frustrating, driving people crazy when he strikes the heart of their pathologies. On more than one occasion I have had to calm the unprepared, which has been especially interesting when they happen to be academics who are experts on Platonism. Others who are ready for the moment may break into tears as they take advantage of the opening in mind and allow the flood of new understanding to fill and transform them. Unlike egomaniacal gurus who proclaim that your enlightenment depends solely upon submitting to their will, Pierre helps you awaken to the latent beauty, power, and wisdom within yourself, which is ultimately emanating from the One.

Pierre has been able to utilize profound ancient philosophical texts to help people not only with the more obviously spiritual aspects of their journey, but also in what would generally be considered more practical ways. By facilitating the capacity of participants to identify and dissolve (or at least attenuate) the false beliefs that have repeatedly caused them so much trouble in their daily lives, he has offered a powerful means of purification leading to a much fuller life, while helping to prepare for what awaits us beyond this particular existence.

While walking with Pierre through the center of town in Liverpool, UK several years ago, we noticed a very long lineup leading into a bookstore. When I asked one of the people waiting

in line what was happening, he responded that they were waiting to meet a famous “spiritual” author, a channeler who apparently allowed his body to be hosted by dead celebrities. (Why is it always Elvis, or Marilyn Monroe, or JFK?). Here we were walking with a genuine spiritual teacher, and yet no one noticed, being captivated as they were by the mere appearance of spirituality, which has been cleverly crafted through the misapplication of the power of marketing.

If we are seriously spiritual, then we must also be rational, and if we are fully rational, then we must inevitably be spiritual. As things stand in “Western culture”, however, many of those who consider themselves to be spiritual tend not to be very rational, and may even shun rationality as being antithetical to the spiritual life. Conversely, those who consider themselves to be rational tend to adhere uncritically to what amounts to nothing more than positivism in the guise of scientific empiricism, which is not at all rationally or scientifically defensible. It is also one of the key contributing factors to our current world crisis.

It seems impossible for today’s universities to suddenly transform into bastions of rational spirituality, and yet we are greatly indebted to innumerable scholars for translating and making accessible ancient philosophical texts. But how can we bridge the necessity for rigorous scholarship with the deeper purpose of applying (as well as revising, adapting, and further developing) such teachings in our personal lives? Pierre, along with select others scattered across the globe, has provided a great example of how this can be achieved. We can be sure, in any case, that we need not allow the *living practice* of philosophy (Platonic or otherwise) to be left to wither away in the modern university, with its pressures to conform and retain employment. Philosophy guides us in our search for objective truth, but it is also meant to be personally transformative in the process. Philosophy is personal, and no amount of misguided bureaucracy or academic denial can ever change that.

I have been fortunate to share many intense, beautiful moments with Pierre over the last decade. for which I shall always be grateful.



“Can we Understand Parmenides Poem?” by Kenneth Callen King (December 29, 1986)

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this paper to Dr. Pierre Grimes who, acting as a philosophical midwife, guided my study in a series of private discussions.

Parmenides of Elea (c.500 B.C.) wrote a poem in the Epic Hexameter of Homer and Hesiod. (poem follows this paper) Thus he was appealing to their audience and introducing philosophy in a religious context, in competition with them. The poem contains one of the earliest extended discourses on Being and Truth. Much of that was copied out by Simplicius in his Commentary on the *Physics* of Aristotle.

Heidegger, writing in *Being and Time*¹ places the Poem, “at the beginning of the ontological tradition which has been decisive for us.” Discussing the third fragment,

“*To gar auto noein estin te kai einai*”

he gives the meaning as follows,

“Being is that which shows itself in the pure perception which belongs to beholding,” Heidegger continues, “and only by such seeing does Being get discovered. Primordial and genuine truth lies in pure beholding. This thesis has remained the foundation of Western Philosophy ever since.”

In the past Century there has been considerable interest in the poem and there have been several translations of and commentaries on the fragments,² (the original poem having been lost leaving only those fragments which had been copied by various writers in the course of history.)

Three factors seem to have stimulated interest in the Greeks, and Parmenides in particular. First a general interest in ‘Being’ probably stimulated by Hegel’s *Science of Logic*, second, the writing of Nietzsche’s *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, and third, publication of Hermann Diels’ *Fragments of the Presocratics* (1903).

Although there is considerable interest in the poem, there has been difficulty in understanding it, that is seeing how it’s parts fit together into an intelligible whole.

In the first fragment there is an outline of the main body of the poem beginning at line 28,

“It is right for you to learn all things,

¹ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1962, pp 133, and 215.

² I found Taran’s *Parmenides* (Princeton 1963) most usable for text, translation and commentary. My favorite translation was Wheelwright’s. Conford (*Plato and Parmenides* is only partial as is Raven’s. Kathleen Freeman’s *Ancilla to the Presocratics* contains a complete translation. Mourelatos Commentary, *The Route of Parmenides* has some interesting data in it about Epic poetry, and contains a complete text. However he only translates selected passages. I also looked at Guthrie’s commentary in his *History of Greek Philosophy Volume II*.

Both the calm heart of well rounded truth,
and the opinions of mortals among which there is
no persuasive truth.”

This sentence clearly indicates two parts of the poem, by the word ‘both’. It is followed by a notoriously ambiguous sentence, the first four words of which may be translated in two ways.³ One was as continuing the discussion of the opinions of mortals, the other as adding a new topic to be learned, and thus indicating a third part.

All translators and commentators read it as continuing the discussion of the second part and assert that there are two parts to the poem. But apparently the two parts do not fit together into an intelligible whole.

The commentators’ frustrations are most succinctly expressed by J.E. Raven of Cambridge who writes, “We should not waste time in the hopeless attempt to reconcile the two parts.”⁴

I will show that there is a third part, distinct from the two above mentioned, which has been overlooked, and which enables us to render the whole intelligible.

There will be two benefits from the demonstration. First, when we see that the Poem can be understood, we will be better able to appreciate Parmenides’ position in the History of Philosophy, and secondly, upon reflecting on the error mentioned at Fragment 8 line 50-59, we will come to appreciate how it is that so many have failed to understand Parmenides Poem.

The commentators agree on the following divisions:⁵

Prologue: Fragment 1

Part I : Fragments 2-8 (to line 49)

Part II : Fragments 8 (from line 50) - 19.

³ In line 31, “all’ *empeis kai tauta*” each of the words is ambiguous, having the possibility of referring forward or backward. When one looks in the Lexicon for examples of the phrase used in Epic poetry, one is directed to examples such as Hesiod’s *Works and Days* 178 where speaking of the iron race, he says, “But notwithstanding, even these shall have some good mingled with their evils.” This use is concessive. It probably influenced translations of the first four words in line 31, for Taran, Raven, and Mourelatos all translate them with the concessive sense. I looked at the line from the structuralist viewpoint, that is how it functioned to indicate the actual structure of the poem, therefore I chose the other translation.

⁴ G.S. Kirk & J.E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, Cambridge, At the University Press, 1962, Pages 284-85.

⁵ Conford (p 30) says, “The Way of Truth and the Way of Seeming (as we may call it) are the two divisions of the poem.” In this he is in agreement with the others. Wheelwright labels the two parts, ‘the Way of Truth’ and ‘the Way of Opinion.’

I will discuss Fragment 8 (to line 49) first, as it is the main discourse on Being and Truth. Then I will discuss the commentator's part II and introduce my distinction of part III. Finally, we will return to a consideration of the Prologue.

Fragment 8 begins with the goddess telling the youth,

“There remains but one myth of the way, Is.”

Myth is different for Archaic Greece than for modern Europe, it is not “what some people used to believe,” but rather as Jaeger says,

“Myth and heroic poetry are the nation's inexhaustible treasure of great examples: from them it derives its ideals and its standards for daily life...myth for the early Greeks, was the supreme idealizing factor.”⁶

As myths occur in the Epic poems of Homer and Hesiod, presenting a heroic archetype, so in the philosophical epic of Parmenides the Way of Truth is revealed in a myth which becomes the philosopher's archetype in his quest for Being.

She begins her myth by discussing its signs,

“On this way there are many signs, that Being is ungenerated, and indestructible, complete, unique and both calm and perfect. It neither was nor will be, since it is now altogether, one, embracing.”

First, let us consider the *signs*. As signs of spring anticipate the spring but are not the spring, so signs of being anticipate being but are not Being. Thus Being is discussed but not directly spoken of, the goddess uses signs and a simile.

Being is one. Not one among many but unique. It has no beginning, it is unborn, so it does not become. It is timeless, since it neither was nor will be, and being timeless, it never will be destroyed. It simply is.

As for the signs, “complete, unique, calm and perfect,” she says later (at line 29) that,

“Remaining always the same and in the same place by itself it stays fixed where it is, For strong Necessity holds it in bonds of limit which constrain it on all sides. Natural Law forbids that Being should be other

⁶ Werner, Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*,” translated by Gilbert Highet, New York, Oxford University Press, 1965, Page 41.

than perfectly complete. It stands in need of nothing for if it needed anything at all it would need everything.”

Clearly, something which stays fixed where it is, is calm. It is asserted that being is perfectly complete and we shall see later that it must be unique, for there is no not-being so that there could be anything apart from Being.

In the passage just quoted the goddess mentions ‘bonds of limit.’ What is the nature of these bonds of limit? Are they spatial or non-spatial?⁷ Many read it as spatial and treat being as a spatial whole. We will soon see that this is reinforced by a literal reading of the simile of the well-rounded sphere. There is a fallacy of equivocation involved here. One might say, since Being is limited, and whatever is limited in a spatial whole, that Being must be a spatial whole.

But there is another sense of limit which includes the idea of perfect completeness and standing in need of nothing. This sense of limit does not imply a spatial whole.

Consider a Bach Fugue. It is perfect as it is, it needs nothing and would be incomplete if one subtracted from it. It would also be ruined if one added to it. The same idea may be seen in other works of art, painting and sculpture for instance. One would not add to or take away from Michelangelo’s sculpture or Leonardo’s painting. It is therefore this sense of limit which I say fits here, rather than the spatial sense.

The goddess uses the idea of limit to introduce the simile of the well-rounded sphere,

“Since there has to be limit, Being is complete on every side, like the mass of a well-rounded sphere, equally balanced in every direction from the center. Clearly it cannot be greater in any direction than in any other, inasmuch as there is no not-being to prevent it from reaching out equally, nor is it the nature of Being to be more here and less there. The all is inviolable. Since it is equal to itself in all directions, it must be homogeneous within the limits.”

The use of the word ‘like’ indicates that we have a simile, not a literal statement. When we say “the King is like a shepherd,” we do not mean that he literally is a shepherd, but rather we indicate some likeness in the two roles, such as care for a flock. To take Being as a spatial whole is to read the simile as a literal statement.

⁷ Mourelatos (p 28) and Guthrie (p 38) have interesting discussions of ‘*peirata*’. Taran (p 150ff) distinguishes logical vs. spacial senses of ‘limit.’ He also points out, regarding the simile of the sphere, that “Plato most probably did not take the comparison to imply that Being is spherical. Aristotle probably interpreted the comparison as implying the material existence of Being as a sphere.”

Aristotle, writing in the Physics (207s 16) says,

“Whereas Melissus speaks of the Whole as unlimited, Parmenides offers a more acceptable view in declaring that the Whole is limited and extends equally in every direction from the center.”

He thus read the simile as a literal statement and so have subsequent philosophers, for instance Sartre in *Being and Nothingness*, writes about “the density, the uniform and spherical plentitude of Parmenidean Being.”⁸

Since “there is no not-being to prevent it from reaching out equally,” Being cannot be a spatially limited whole, literally a sphere. For then outside of Being would be not-being.

The simile of the well-rounded sphere indicates the homogeneous oneness of Being, “not more here nor less there” but rather all ‘continuous.’

When we consider the 4th Fragment of the poem we can see that it carries on the idea of continuity.

“Gaze steadfastly at things which, though far away, are yet present to the mind. For you cannot cut off being from being: it does not scatter itself thruout the universe nor does it gather together.”

If Being were literally a spherical whole it would ‘gather together,’ but it does not do so. ‘Gaze’ is gazing with the mind, not the eyes. We can see this when we consider the 3rd Fragment which I have re-translated.

Heidegger, following the first sentence in Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*,⁹ which he renders as ‘the care for seeing is essential to man’s being,’ thinks the fragment is about beholding. But I disagree.

As I translate it, Fragment 3 reads,

“For Intellection and Being are the same.”

This connects Being to Intellection, that is the act of perceiving with the mind. *Noein* has a range of meaning according to the lexicon. It ranges from perception by the senses to intellectual perception.

⁸ Jean Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, Translated by Hazel E. Barnes, New York, Philosophical Library, 1956, page 613.

⁹ Heidegger, op. cit. page 213

Mourelatos writes, “*noein* functions in Parmenides not as a psychological but as an epistemic term...it expresses the incisive and sure apprehension of what-is or truth.”¹⁰ This kind of apprehension occurs in mathematical and dialectical insights where one is judging by reason. The goddess has encouraged the youth to judge by reason and the *mythos* has become a *logos*, a trustworthy rational discourse.

At line 50 of a Fragment 8, the goddess pauses to discuss the opinions of mortals. This is where commentators mark the beginning of the second part of the poem.

“Here I bring to a close my trustworthy rational discourse concerning truth. Learn next about the opinions of men, as you listen to the deceptive ordering of my words. For men have established the habit of naming two thought-forms; therein they have erred, because the unity of the forms is not rightfully named.”

I have read *mian* as unity¹¹ rather than as one, because what is overlooked in a duality such as night and day or male and female is not one of the terms, but the unity that binds them together.

The poem continues,

“They have distinguished contraries in form and signs and assumed that they were separate from one another. On the one hand, there is the fire of the upper sky, gentle, rarefied, and everywhere identical with itself: on the other hand there lies opposed to it utter darkness, dense and heavy.”

We have an example of distinguishing contraries, in the distinction of light and night. Contrast the sunny sky on a clear day with the darkness of a cloudy night. The error is not in the distinction, but rather in the assumption of **separation**.

F.H. Bradley writing in Appearance and Reality discusses distinction and separation,¹²

“What we certainly do not find is a subject or an object or indeed any other thing whatever, standing separate and on its own bottom. What we discover rather is a whole in which distinctions can be made but in which divisions do not exist.”

¹⁰ Alexander P.D. Mourelatos, *The Route of Parmenides*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1970, page 164.

¹¹ Mourelatos (p 83ff) concurs with the translation of *mian* as unity. Wheelwright translates it as ‘one’-of-which, indicating that the error of mortals was in naming one of the contraries.

¹² F.H. Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1966, page 128.

How often do we see the assumption of separation made, with male and female, black and white races, the generation gap. Those who erroneously make the assumption of separation ignore that which unifies the contraries, the whole in which distinctions can be made, but in which divisions do not exist.

At Fragment 8 line 60, the goddess introduces a correction to this error. She introduces the third part of the poem, “the probable order of all things.”

“I tell you the probable order of all things
so that no opinion of mortals will ever
surpass yours.”

She is going to discuss the order (*diakosmon*) of all things. Since it is merely probable, it does not reach Truth but it is such that ‘no opinion of mortals will ever surpass yours,’ that is, it is in the mean position. She does not say that he will be able to keep up with mortals as if his was just another opinion alongside theirs, but rather so that no opinion of mortals will ever surpass his. His account will stand out from theirs, because he will always be able to point out their error and correct it.

First I will show that subsequent Fragments may be included in the third part as having the unique feature of pointing out that which unifies the contraries.

Then, I will relate the third part to the *Timeaus* and the ‘likely story.’

It will be easiest to see my point is we consider first Fragment 10:

“You will come to know the nature of the (upper) sky
and the signs of the sky, and the unseen works of
the pure bright torch of the sun, and how they came
into being.
You will learn the nature of the round eyed moon,
and its wandering works.
You shall know also the encompassing heaven, whence
it arose, and how Necessity grasped and chained it to
hold the limit of the stars.”

I have purposely isolated the three structural elements. The three sentences begin the same way, but we can distinguish them because of elements contained in them. The first mentions the upper sky and the sun, reminding us of one of the contraries in the opinions of mortals. The second mentions the moon which wanders about the earth at night, reminding us of the other contrary. But in the third sentence a new feature is mentioned, “the encompassing heaven” which embraces both light and night in one cosmos.

The pattern repeats itself throughout Fragments 9-18 in which contraries are mentioned but that which binds them into a unity is pointed out.

For instance, we have mentioned male and female as another pair of contraries which often are assumed to be separate, considered biologically we see something different. In Fragment 18 18 we read,

“When woman and man mix the seeds of love together
the power that results from the mingling of different
bloods, if it preserve harmony, fashions a well-formed
body.”

Each person then has a body which is a product of both male and female seed. So we see in a biological model what we had seen before in the cosmological model, that where mortals distinguish contraries and assume them to be separate, the ‘man who knows’ can point out that which binds them into a unity. Parmenides is called ‘the man who knows,’ a mean between the ignorance of mortals and the wisdom of the goddess, and so beside the revelation of the Way of Truth and the brief comment about the error of mortals, he carries with him the account of the probable order of things.

Those who distinguish the Way of Truth and the Opinions of Mortals and contraries, assume them to be separate and do not perceive the probable order of things as a mean between the two. They reason that since there is no truth those accounts are not different from the other opinions. It is a different case in the Timaeus.¹³ For there we find the analogy:

“As Being is to becoming, so Truth is to opinion.”

Whatever is perceptible by the senses, never really is but is always becoming. So that in speaking of the perceptible universe, Timaeus proposes that,

“We ought to accept the tale which is probable
and enquire no further.”

Those who confuse Being and becoming, likewise confuse truth and opinion. Indeed modern philosophers think that Being is the being-of-beings, or the being of phenomena and that accounts of phenomena can contain Truth. This is the main thrust of phenomenology and transcendental logic and the Cartesian quest for Certainty. So as I said such thinkers would not find a merely probable account better than the opinions of mortals ‘among which there is no persuasive truth’ and so they wonder why Parmenides bothered to write about the opinions.

¹³ Plato, *Timeaus*, Translated by the Rev R.G. Bury, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1961, page 53.

We can see therefore that the third part contains some hints at 'saving the appearances' and therefore places the Poem in the Tradition of Plato's Timaeus with its likely story. This has generally been overlooked.

Indeed Heidegger projected a section in Being and Time in which he was to discuss "Why the phenomenon of the world was passed over....in the case of Parmenides."¹⁴ If Fragments 9-18 were merely more erroneous opinions, and not saving the appearances, then Heidegger would be right in saying the phenomenon of the world was passed over. But as we claim, it is a case of saving the appearances, then we conclude that Heidegger overlooked it, and wrongly asks why the phenomenon of the world was passed over.

Beside the philosophical and scientific dimension, there is also, pervading the poem and especially the prologue, a religious and moral dimension. But it is a rational religion not one of faith, it is a revelation by a goddess of a teaching concerning truth and being, with an injunction to carry the tale to others.

Being is described in the poem in the same terms used by Diotima in the Symposium¹⁵ to describe beauty. For there she describes 'the final object' as "Always being, neither coming to be nor perishing, neither waxing nor waning..." When Being is perceived it is perceived as Beauty. Thus as Socrates is initiated into the mysteries of Love and Beauty by Diotima, so Parmenides is initiated into the mysteries of Being and Truth by the Goddess.

The poem is in the epic style of Homer and Hesiod and contains phrases which echo their poems.¹⁶ But Parmenides is introducing philosophy in his poem and so some of the images have been transmuted. This would have a dramatic effect upon the hearers of the poem who would associate the words with the old poems but find them used in a new way. We already saw that they would be amazed at his ability to point out the errors in their accounts and to correct them and they would see him within the context of Greek religion, only presenting a rational system. Indeed, the system that he presents is unparalleled in religious history.

The prologue describes a journey from the halls of night and the cities of men, into the light, where the youth meets a goddess.

The youth does not go alone, but is escorted by mares and a chariot and maidens who lead the way, having been sent forth on the way by *dike* and *themis* (justice and right order).

¹⁴ Heidegger, op. cit. page 133.

¹⁵ Plato, *Symposium*, Translated by W.R.M. Lamb, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1961, page 205

¹⁶ Mourelatos gives the most data on the style of Homer and Hesiod, including (p. 8) a list of parallel constructions. Taran cautions us in his commentary regarding echos of Homer and Hesiod against assuming that a phrase is always used the same in Parmenides and his predecessors.

Mourelatos¹⁷ tells us that the Homeric host owed certain duties to his guest, to provide a vehicle and guides, to describe the signs along the way and to give directions about which road to take. All of these occur in the poem.

The youth is referred to as 'the man who knows' and we have already seen that he is thus a mean between mortals and the goddess. Indeed, his journey is a link between the two, the completion of the link is symbolized by the goddess taking his hand and welcoming him. She subsequently sends him back to the cities of men where he is to carry with him the myth. So in this way too, he links the goddess and mortals.

The chariot rolls on two whirling wheels which turn round an axel. Here a two is held together by a one. Likewise, the two doors of the gate are embraced by one lintel and a stone threshold. If one were mesmerized by a dualistic vision he would write volumes about the two wheels and two doors as evidence of the dualism of truth and opinion, and ignore the axel and the lintel and threshold which unite the two wheels and two doors.

In Hesiod the gates of night and day are in the underworld,¹⁸ but in this poem they are in the light. This is an example of transmutation of symbols. We must beware saying that because Hesiod put the gates in the underworld, that is where they must be.

Dike also was originally in the underworld but later came to be located in Olympus. She personifies Justice and it is only because the youth has himself been just that he has come to her gate and that the maidens may persuade her to open the doors of the gate.

The goddess who instructs the youth begins by saying, "It is right for you to learn all things," so there is no knowledge withheld. This puts the poem in contrast to the Judeo-Christian tradition in which partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is the original sin. It is in fact the only religious piece which reveals a rational teaching, not dependent on faith.

We began by saying that the first Fragment ended with two lines which could either indicate the continuation of the second part of the poem ('but nevertheless even these you will learn') or the addition of a third topic ('and in the same way also these you will learn'). Our analysis has distinguished the third part, the probable order of all things. Therefore the decision about the lines is for the addition of a third topic. This is reinforced by the use of a different word for 'learn.' The prior word was '*puthesthai*' which indicates to learn by hearing, a mode of learning appropriate to hearing a revelation about Being and a criticism of the opinions of mortals. The word in line 31 is '*matheiseai*' which indicates to learn by study, the proper mode of learning for studying the probable order of all things. My translation of lines 31 and 32 of Fragment 1 is,

¹⁷ Mourelatos, op cit. page 17

¹⁸ Hesiod, *Theogony*, 748ff. In Hesiod *the Homeric Hymns and Homeric*, translated by Hugh G. Evelyn-White, Cambridge Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1977, page 133.

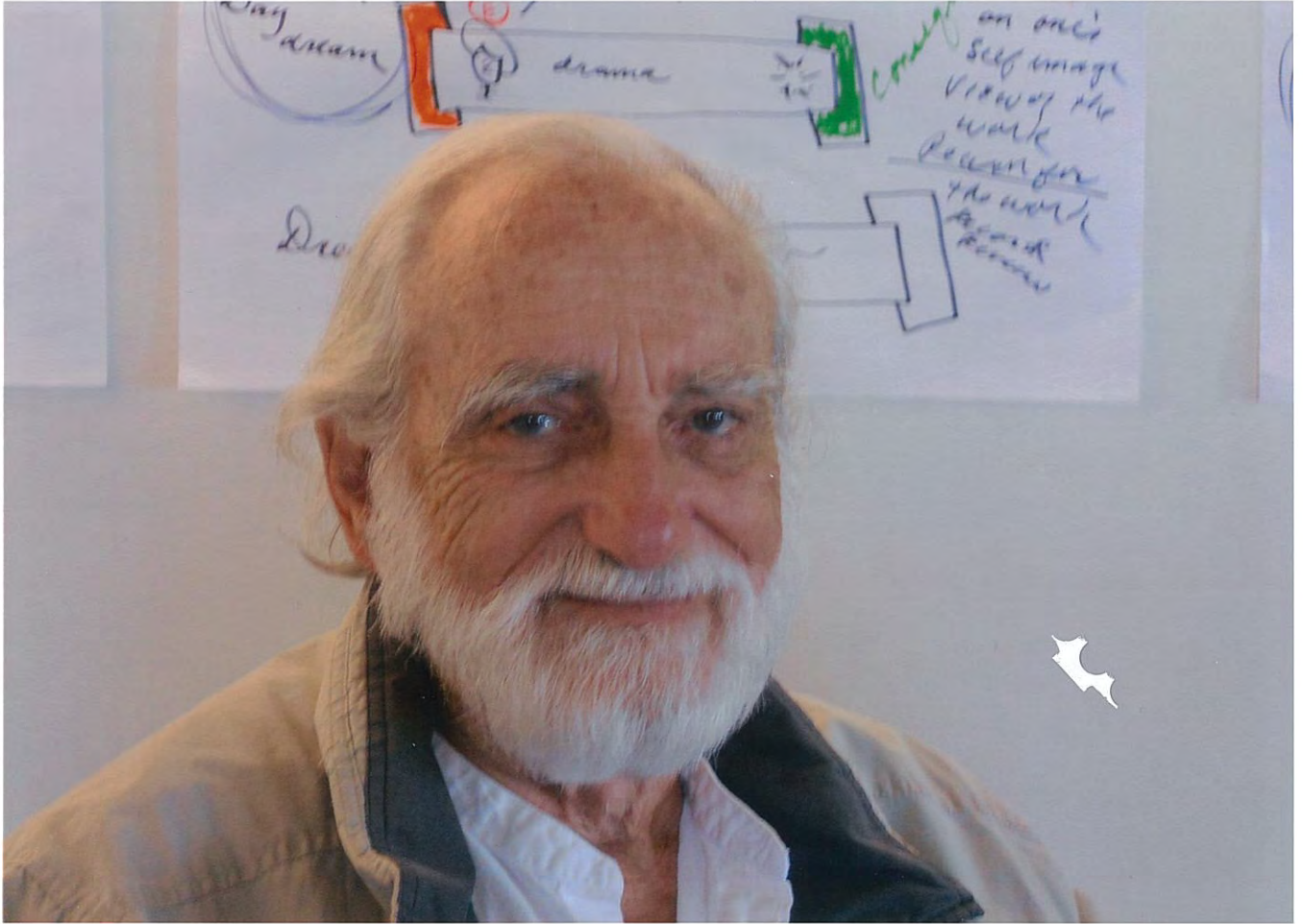
“And in the same way also, you will learn these things,
how the appearances rightfully appear to be, all being in the
midst of each.”

Mortals have opinions about the appearances, and then there is ‘how the appearances rightfully appear to be’ which I identify with the probable order of all things, or the third part of the poem. ‘All being in the midst of each’ is to indicate not that any thing is, but that there is nowhere that Being is not. No thing may be taken as existing separately and independently, so no thing is. But there is nowhere that Beauty is not. This is a rational mystery.

I conclude this paper on the Poem, having shown that it can, in fact, be understood, when we distinguish the third part which stands as a mean between the first two. I have indicated that Parmenides rightfully is regarded as standing at the beginning of the ontological tradition of the West, but that following Aristotle, he has been little understood. I have also indicated that there is the role of saving the appearances which has been overlooked. We also noted that the poem serves to introduce philosophy, and the philosopher, for the youth would appear to his hearers as one who was indeed wise, since he could easily point out the errors in their thinking on whatever matters, and could even show them how to correct their errors. And he would appear to them just, since he was guided by *themis* and *dike*. And when he spoke to them of the Way of Truth, the meter of his recitation would remind his hearers of Homer and Hesiod and so put his discourse into a profound religious context.

So as I said, he would appear to them to be wise, whereas in fact he would be in that mean position between ignorance and wisdom, in the role of the philosopher.

By this paper I hope to have shown that the poem can be understood and that it would be worthwhile to return to the roots of our Ontological tradition and seek to understand it anew. For neither those who believed they were carrying on the Western Ontological Tradition which began with Parmenides nor those who have opposed it such as the logical positivists have rightly understood these roots. As a result we find two camps, one making absurd assertions about Being, and the other rejecting what is essentially a strawman. It is no wonder that Metaphysics does not flourish in the 20th Century. No, it is time to return to the roots and reconsider carefully, and with proper attention, perhaps a rational ontology may yet flourish.



“PARMENIDES POEM”

translated by Kenneth C King

I

The mares which bear me, as far as my spirit could reach escorted me, when they went guiding me onto the much sung way of divinity, which bears the man who knows thru all cities;

On it I bore myself, for on it the much discerning mares bore me, galloping with the chariot while maidens led the way.

The axel, blazing in the nave, sent forth a panspipe sound (for it was hard pressed by whirling wheels on both sides)

When hastening to escort me into the light, the sun maidens left the halls of night, throwing back their veils from their faces with their hands.

There are the gates of the ways of both Night and Day

They have an embracing lintel and a marble threshold.

They are aetherial, but closed by great doors.

And Much-avenging Justice holds the keys for their alternating bolts.

The maidens having appeased her with soft words, wisely persuaded her so that she quickly threw back the bolted bar from the gates for them.

And the gates flying open made a yawning chasm. Bronze axels revolving alternately on bolts in hollow pipes fastened by spikes.

Then straight thru them the maidens guided the chariot and mares along the highway.

And the Goddess greeted me graciously, taking my right hand in hers and speaking words in this way, addressed me:

“O youth, accompanied by immortal charioteers and the mares which bear you to reach our dwelling, welcome, since no evil fate sent you forth to come this way (which is indeed far from the paths of men) but Order and Justice.

It is right for you to learn by enquiry all things

Both the calm heart of well-rounded truth,

and the opinions of mortals, among which there is no persuasive truth.

And in the same way also you will learn these things,

how the appearances rightfully appear to be, all being in the midst of each.”

II

Come now, I will tell you,

and you having heard the myth carry it away.

These are the only ways of inquiry for thought,

the one that it is and that it can not not be,

it is a way of persuasion, for it attends upon truth.

The other, that it is not and it is right not to be,
this I point out to you to be a deluded way,
for neither could you know not-Being
for that is impossible,
nor could you point it out.

III

For both Intellection and Being are the same.

IV

Behold things absent, yet certainly present to mind;
for one will not cut off Being from clinging to Being,
neither scattering it wholly throughout the cosmos nor combining together.

V

It is impartial to me, where I shall begin
For I shall come back there again.

VI

It is right both saying and thinking that Being is,
for it is possible to be,
but Not-Being is not possible.
I bid you ponder these.
Now from this first way (I hold you back),
but next from this,
on which mortals knowing nothing
wander two-headed;
for in them helplessness guides the wandering mind in
their hearts;
they are borne violently along,
alike deaf dumb and blind, amazed,
uncritical crowds by whom
Being and Not-Being are thought to be
the same and not the same,
it is the backwards turning way of all things.

VII

For never shall this be demonstrated,

that Not-Being is
and from this way of enquiry hold back your thought,
nor let habit force you down this much experienced way
guiding aimless eye and echoing ear and tongue,
but judge by reason
this much contested refutation spoken by me.

VIII

And still a solitary myth of the way remains, "is";
and on this way there are very many signs
that Being is unborn and indestructible,
complete, unique, and both calm and perfect;
it neither was at sometime, nor will be,
since it is now all alike, one embracing;
for what birth will you seek out for it?
How and from what place did it grow?
Nor will I allow you to say, 'from Not-Being'
nor to think it,
for it is unsayable and unthinkable that 'it is not.'
And what necessity would stir it up
later rather than earlier to grow,
starting from nothing?
Thus either Being rightfully is altogether, or it is not.
Nor will the force of persuasion ever allow
anything to come to be out of Not-Being
On account of that neither being born nor perishing have
been released.

Justice having loosened their bonds, but She keeps them.
The decision is in this way, 'is' or 'is not';
One must decide then
that the one way is unthinkable and unnamable,
for it is not the way of Truth,
so that the other is and is true.
But how could Being become? And how could it be generated?
For if it were generated, it is not,
nor is it, if at some time it will be.
Thus genesis and unheard of death have been extinguished.
Neither is it separated, since it is all alike
nor is it anymore here, which would hinder it from holding together,
nor is it quite full of Being.
For this reason, it is all continuous,

for Being clings to Being,
but it is unmoving in the limits of great bonds.
It is without beginning or ending,
since genesis and destruction have been driven very far away,
forced back by the persuasion of truth.
The same, which both remains in itself
and stands fast by itself, in this way remains;
for mighty Necessity keeps it in bonds of limit,
she restrains it all around.
On account of order,
Being is not other than perfectly complete.
For it is not lacking,
for if it were, it would be lacking everything.
And intellection is the same as that on account of which
there is intellectual perception,
for in what is expressed you will not find
intellection without Being.
For nothing else either is or will be apart from Being,
since the Fates bound it to be complete and immobile;
to it all names have been given such as mortals have
assigned believing them to be true,
both coming to be and destruction,
to be and not to be,
thru change of place and exchange of bright color.
But since there is finally a limit it is perfected,
from all sides resembling
the mass of a well rounded sphere
reaching out from the center equally in every way;
for being neither greater here nor lesser there is right;
for neither is there Not-Being, which might hinder it
from reaching the same,
nor is Being such that there might be more of Being here
or less there, since all is inviolate.
For it is from all sides equal; reaching alike in
limits.
In this mark you I pause in my persuasive speech and
intellection about Truth,
but learn from this, the opinions of mortals, hearing
the deceitful order of my words.
for they decided to name two thought forms,
the unity of which is not rightfully named,
in this they have wandered,
and they distinguished contraries in form and signs

assuming them to be separate from one another,
on the one hand the bright blazing flame of fire, being
gentle, very light, with respect to itself the same in every place,
but the other is not the same;
but that is in itself the contrary
dark night, close and heavy in form.
I will tell you the probable order of all things
so that no opinion of mortals will ever surpass yours.

IX

But when indeed all things had been named Light and Night and these (distributed)
according to their powers, both for these and those,
all is full alike of light and of invisible night,
both equally,
since neither of the two has a share of Not-Being.

X

And you will see the bright upper air,
both its nature and all the signs in it,
and the invisible works of
the clear bright light of the sun,
You will learn about the nature and wandering works of
the round eyed moon.
You will also see heaven embracing them,
that in which it grew
and how Necessity guided it and fettered it
to hold the limits of the stars.

XI

How earth, sun and moon,
the bright upper air and inseparable Milky Way
and heaven and outermost olympus
and the burning power of the stars
were stirred up to come to be.

XII

For the denser regions are filled with pure fire,
while those that come after with night,

and a share of light is let loose among them;
In the midst of these is the Goddess who steers all things;
for to each she begins abominable birth and mixing sending
women to mingle with men and the opposite, men to women.

XIII

First of all the gods She contrived Eros.

XIV

Shining by night with borrowed light,
wandering about the earth.

XV

Always looking toward the sun's rays.

XVI

For as the blending of the much wandering limbs is,
so mind comes to men.
For it is the same what the nature of the limbs apprehends
both to each and to all,
for the fullness is intellection.

XVII

On the right boys, on the left girls.

XVIII

When woman and man blend the seeds of love together,
the power forming from opposite blood in the veins,
by preserving proper proportion, shapes a well-formed body.
Now if the powers fight when the seeds are blended, they will
torment the growing embryo by the conflict of double seed.

XIX

Thus mark you according to opinion, these grew and now are
and afterward having grown from this will be competed, and
to these men have given a name as a sign.

Contribution to a Friday Night Noetic Society, Inc. meeting by Rod Wallbank

Greetings friends, two turns of events have prompted me at this time to set down these following items which I am sure you will find of interest. The first was a question which I was asked by you, Mark, a number of years ago when I was reading Plotinus' writings, and the question was or had to do with what I have found of interest in those writing? The second event came about while I was reading Proclus' writings, and Cary was leading his meditation group. I was running over with what I was seeing at the time as perhaps a rational meditation.

So to share with you some of the wonders of these great men let me at this time pull from the latter some elements which I find reflective, involved in the ascent of the soul and are seemingly involved in a hierarchical *encounterment*, if you will, by the soul in that ascent.

The format that I will use is to first give the quote, then to underline the idea that I am focusing on, next to give the page number of the text that I am pulling the material from, next to give the page number of the Greek or Latin text, as is the case with the last few pages of Proclus' Parmenides commentary, and finally to set the words at the bottom of each section which I have underlined so that they can be easily noticed for further reflections.

This collection is by no means meant to be comprehensive, it is the ideas I discovered on an initial reading of the writings. Similar terms, and others, are found in and as I said, I have found in, the writings of Plotinus. The others I refer to focus on other states encountered in the soul's ascent.

Therefore to begin, a raising of thanks to these great men of the past, to the divine whose friendship we so long for, and to all friends who seek the truth.

I shall begin with the order I have set these ideas down in my notes, and therefore from the Proclus' *Theology Of Plato*:

For the gods ... govern all thing... by ... pre-assuming in themselves the measures of the whole of things, producing the essence of everything from themselves, and also looking to themselves, they lead and perfect all things **in a silent path** (ἀψόφῳ κελεύθῳ), by their very being, and fill them with good,

Page 52 Proclus' Theology of Plato

ἀψόφῳ κελεύθῳ

T. Taylor trans.¹

¹ I have omitted the reference for the Greek text in Proclus' Theology as I did not have at that time my own 'Bude' text and did not wish to write in the library copy. All of these references are from the Saffrey/Westerink Bude edition. It takes some trouble to line up the two texts, Taylor and the Bude, as they are off in alignment.

To those however who hasten to be conjoined with the Good, knowledge and cooperation are no longer requisite, but collocation, a firm establishment and quiet (ἡρεμία) are necessary.

Page 78 Proclus' *Theology of Plato* ἡρεμία

T. Taylor trans.

But it is necessary that divine faith should be uniform and **quiet** (ἡρεμον) being perfectly established in the port of goodness.

Page 80 *ibid.* ἡρεμον

If, however, you are willing, prior to these things we will recall to our memory that Plato denominates that virtue fidelity which conciliates those that disagree, and subverts the greatest of wars, I mean seditions in cities. For from these things faith appears to be the cause of union, communion and quiet (ἡρεμία). And if there is such a power as this in us, it is by a much greater priority in the gods themselves.

Page 81 *ibid.* ἡρεμία

Let us now therefore, if ever, abandon multiform knowledge, exterminate from ourselves all the variety of life, and in perfect **quiet** (ἡρεμία) approach near to the cause of all things. For this purpose, let not only opinion and phantasy be at rest (ἡρεμία), nor the passions alone which impede our anagogic impulse to the first, be at **peace** (ἡσυχία); but let the air be still (ἡσυχος) and the universe itself be **still** (ἡσθλον). And let all things extend us with a **tranquil** (ἀτρεμεῖ) power to communion with the ineffable. Let us also, standing there, having transcended the Intelligible (if we contain anything of this kind,) and with nearly **closed eyes** (μεμυκός) adoring as it were the rising sun, since it is not lawful for any being whatever intently to behold him – let us survey the sun whence light of the intelligible gods proceeds, emerging, as the poets say, from the bosom of the ocean; and again from this divine **tranquillity** (γαλήνη) descending into intellect and from intellect, employing the reasonings of the soul, let us relate to ourselves what the natures are from which, in this progression, we shall consider the first God as exempt. And let us as it were celebrate him, ... as unfolding into light the whole Intelligible and Intellectual genus of the gods, together with all the supemundane and mundane divinities – as the god of all gods, unity of all unities, beyond the first adyta – as more ineffable than all **silence** (σιγή), and more unknown than all essence, -- as holy among the holies, and concealed in the Intelligible gods, ...

Page 139 *ibid.* ἡρεμία, ἡσυχία, ἡσυχος, ἀτρεμεῖ, μεμυκός (μύω), γαλήνη, σιγή

... through which he elevates souls and conjoins them to the mystic plenitude of the Intelligibles. For this triad opens the celestial path, being established under the celestial circulation and exhibits the self-splendid appearances of the gods, which are both entire and firm, and expand to the mystic inspection of intelligible spectacles as Socrates says in the *Phaedrus*. For *telete* precedes *muesis*, and *muesis*, *epopteia*. Hence we are initiated [*teleiounmetha*] in ascending, by the perfective gods. But we view **with closed eyes** (μυσούμεθα) [i.e. with the pure soul itself,

muometha] entire and stable appearances, through the connective gods, with whom there is intellectual wholeness, and the firm establishment of souls. And we become fixed in, and spectators of [epoptumen] the intelligible watch tower, through the gods who are the collectors of wholes.

Page 279 ibid.

μνούμεθα

And as he is good, but not the good itself, so likewise, he is difficult to be known by the natures posterior to him, but is not unknown. He is also celebrated in mystic language, but is not perfectly ineffable. You may see however, the order of things, and the remission in them proceeding in a downward progression. For the good indeed, is exempt from all **silence** (σιγῆς), and all language. But the genus of the intelligible gods rejoices in **silence** (σιωπή), and is delighted with ineffable symbols. Hence also, Socrates in the *Phaedrus*, calls vision of the intelligible monads the most holy of initiations, as being involved in **silence** (σιγωμένην), and perceived in an arcane (ἀπορρήτως) manner. But the vision of intellectuals is indeed effable, yet is not effable and known to all men, but is known with difficulty. For through diminution with respect to the intelligible, it proceeds from **silence** (σιγῆς) and a transcendency which is to be apprehended by intelligence alone, into the order of things which are now effable.

Page 390 ibid.

σιγῆς, σιωπή, σιγωμένην, ἀπορρήτως

... After an admirable manner therefore, the fabricator of these divine names, has at one and the same time conjoined the Saturnian peculiarity, and the first monad of the unpolluted triad. For the union of the first father with the first of the unpolluted gods, is transcendent and hence this inflexible god is called silent (σιγωμένος) by the gods, is said to accord with intellect, and to be known by souls according to intellect alone, ...

Page 406 ibid.

σιγωμένος

Next from Proclus' *Commentary on the Timaeus of Plato*, Thomas Taylor trans., are these same terms plus others.

But say 'that when found it is impossible to speak of him to all men' perhaps indicates the custom of the Pythagoreans, who had **arcane** (ἀπορρήτους) assertions about divine nature, and did not divulge them to all men. For as the Elean guest says, the eyes of the multitude are not strong enough to look to truth. Perhaps also this may be said which is much more venerable that it is impossible for him who has discovered the maker and father of the universe to speak of him to certain persons such as he has seen him. For the discovery was not made by the soul speaking, but **closing her eyes** (μνούσης), and being converted, to the divine light. Nor was it made by her being moved with her own proper motion, but through being **silent** (σιωπώσης) with a **silence** (σιωπήν) which leads the way [to union]. For since the essence of the other things is not naturally adapted to be spoken of, either through name, or definition, or through science, but is seen through intellection alone, as Plato says in his Epistles, in what other way can it be possible to discover the essence of the Demiurgus, than by intellectual energy? And how when having thus

found it, is it possible to tell what is seen and explain it to others through nouns and verbs? ... we speak indeed about them, but we do not speak of each of them itself .. able ... to speak scientifically ..., not intellectually. For this is ... to discover them ... the discovery is a silence (σιωπώσης).

T. Taylor page 255 vol. I, bk. II άπορρήτους, μούσης, σιωπώσης, σιωπήν, σιωπώσης
Diels page 303 vol. I.

For as it has a sense of itself with itself, so likewise it has a motion in itself, and circulating about itself, and both these, according to the similitude to its paradigm. For in this there was intelligence converging to itself, life converted to itself, and knowledge not subsisting according to transition, nor according to a distribution into parts, but self perfect and united to intelligibles themselves. For such is the intellect which is there, energizing prior to energy, because [according to the oracle] it has not proceeded, but abides in the paternal profundity, and in the adytum according to the god-nourished **silence** (σιγήν).

T.T. page 463, vol. I, bk. III σιγήν
D. page 92, vol. II

... for the impartible is allied to intellect; but that which is primarily partible to soul. But a point and a line are things of this kind. Hence a right (straight) line is very properly ascribed to the soul, and afterwards a circle, which we say are simple lines. But a point is ascribed to intellect. For from thence as from a certain adytum, the reason of the soul presents itself to view, unfolding the impartibility of intellect, and announcing its **occult** (σιγωμένην) and ineffable (άφραστον) union.

T.T. page 115, vol. II, bk. III σιγωμένην, άφραστον
D. page 243, vol. III

Animal itself also produces them; for it contains the one cause of all winged, of all aquatic, and of all terrestrial animals. But it produces them with **silence** (σιωπής) by its very essence, and intelligibly. For the demiurgic speech receives indeed the paternal **silence** (σιγήν), but the intellectual production, the intelligible cause, and the generation which subsists according to energizing, the providence according to existence.

T.T. page 355, vol. II, bk. V σιωπής, σιγήν
D. page 222, vol. III

Thus also of discussions, some indeed are agonistic, others are enunciative, and others are in a certain respect media between both. Some, indeed, being adapted to intellectual **tranquility** (γαλήνη), and to the intellectual energy of the soul; but others to *doxastic* energies; and others to the lives that subsist between these.

T.T. page 18, vol. I, bk. I γαλήνη
D. page 21

... but it is possible for him to hinder us more or less from the enjoyment of a **quiet** (ἥσυχον) life; after the same manner also, the connexion of the body at one time disturbs the soul, and at another, remits the tumult. The soul however, does not even become **tranquil** (γαλήνη), till erudition accedes. ... Hence it very reasonably follows, that when the physical stream is diminished, **tranquility** (γαλήνη) and order takes place about the soul.

T.T. page 460, vol. II, bk. V ἥσυχον, γαλήνη

D. page 350, vol. III

And now finally from Proclus' *Commentary on Plato's Parmenides*, Morrow/Dillon trans., again these terms.

So whether we hear of some '**intellectual calm**' (γαλήνη) being celebrated by the wise or a 'mystical heaven' or 'Paternal **silence**' (σιγή), it is plain that the One transcends all these states, being beyond both activity and silence (silent.) and rest, and all those symbols of stability which are celebrated in the realm of beings.

M./D. page 522 γαλήνη, σιγή

Cousin page 1171

When a man is anticipating the appearance of the divine, he must exert himself to stir up the divine spark within him in preparation for participating in higher beings; but when the illumination from above is at hand he must be **silent** (ἡρεμεῖν), and this is what Socrates does. Having aroused himself for the reception of these men's insight, having by his words unfolded and exhibited his fitness for partaking of it, he stops speaking and begins to receive the midwifely instruction that they give.

M./D. page 143 ἡρεμεῖν

Cousin page 781

... or how else are we to become nearer to the One if we do not rouse up the one of the soul which is a kind of image of the One, by virtue of which the most accurate of authorities declare that divine possession most especially comes about? And how are we to make this one and flower of the soul shine forth unless we first of all activate our intellect? For the activity of intellect leads the soul towards a state and activity of **calm** (ἥρεμον).

M./D. page 425 ἥρεμον

Cousin page 1071

Now going further and having arrived there she comes to rest in the One-Being and she approaches the One itself and becomes single, not becoming inquisitive or asking what it is not and, what it is, but everywhere **closing her eyes** (claudentem), and contracting all her energy and being content with unity alone.

M./D. page 602 claudentem

Cousin-Steel page 520











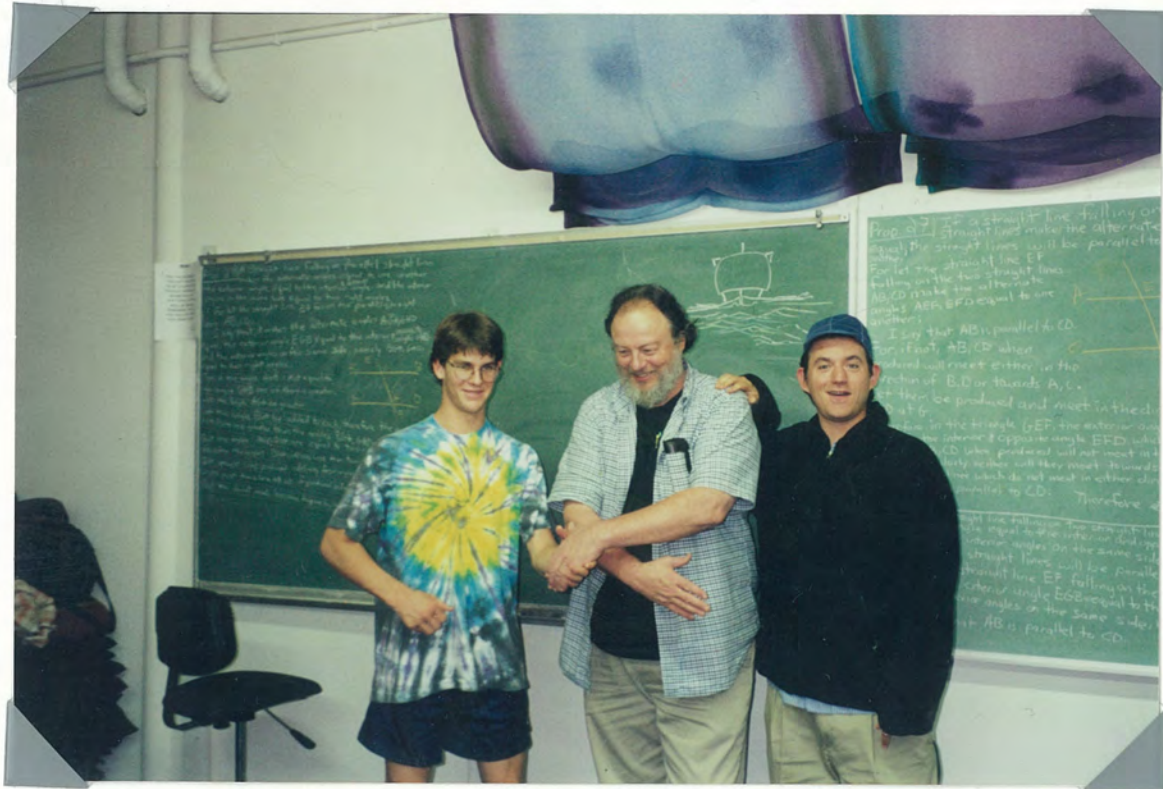








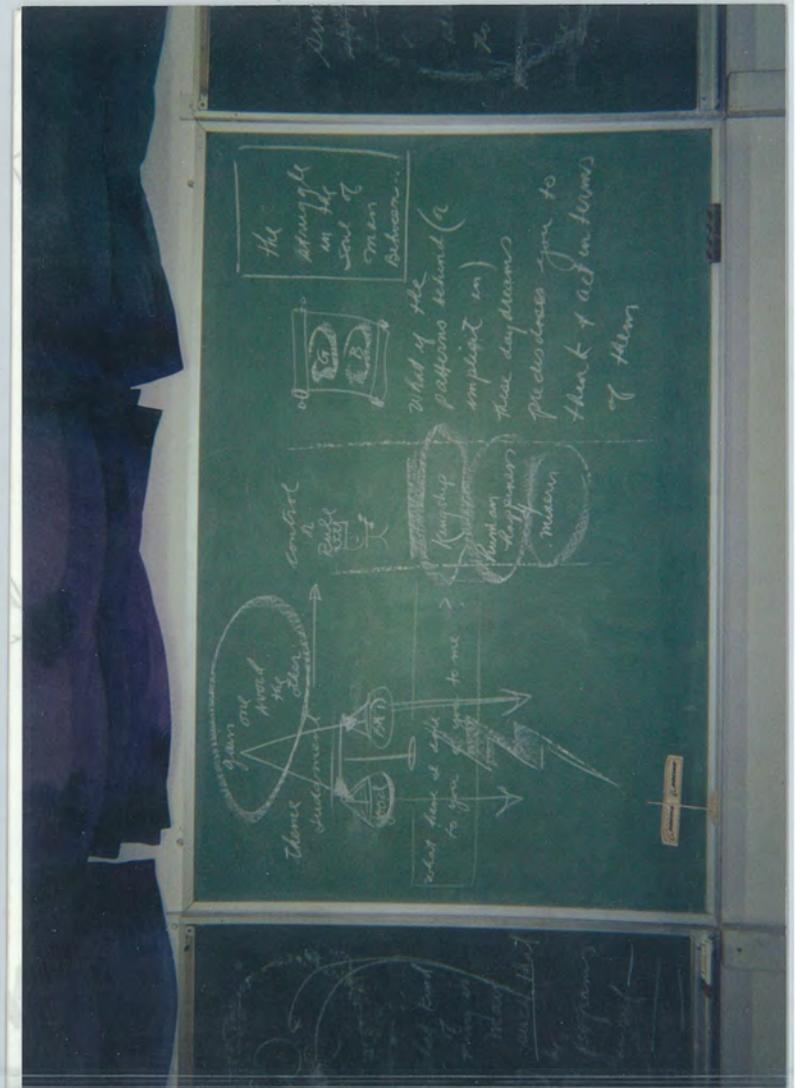
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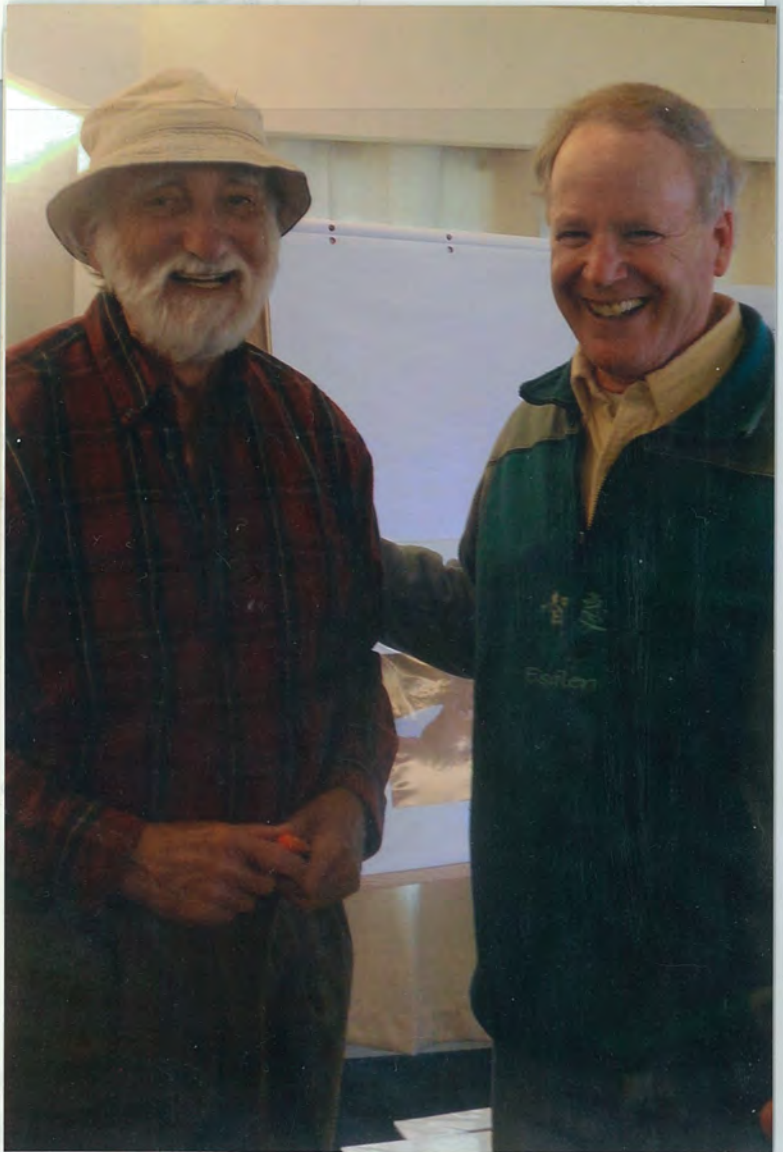
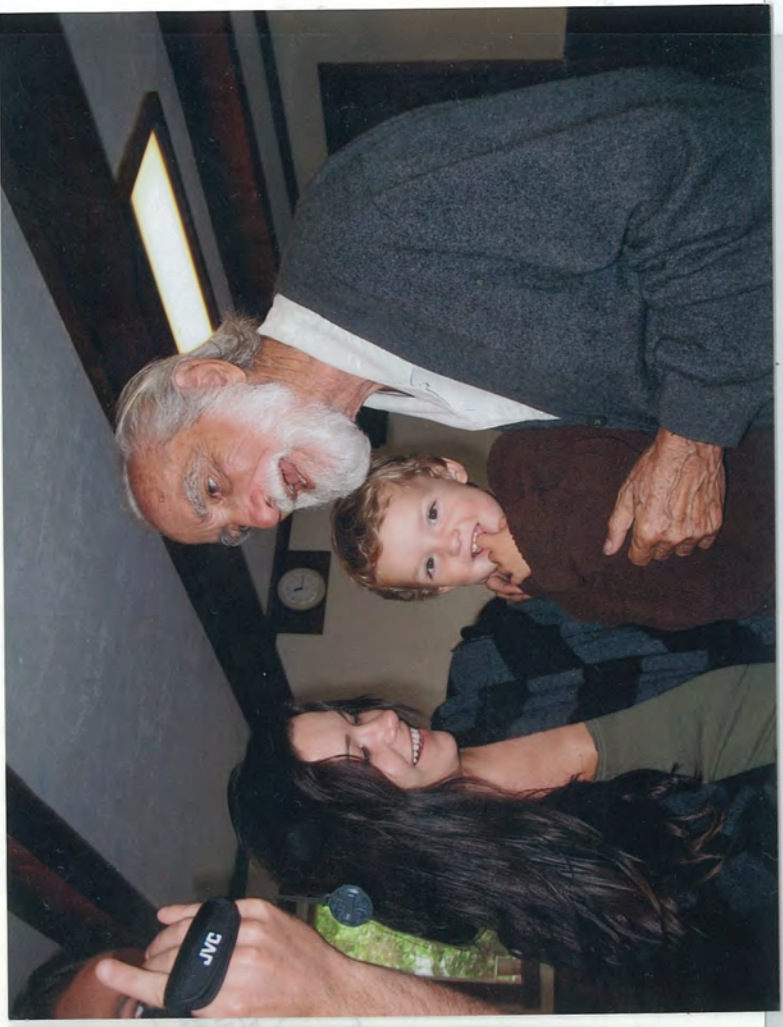


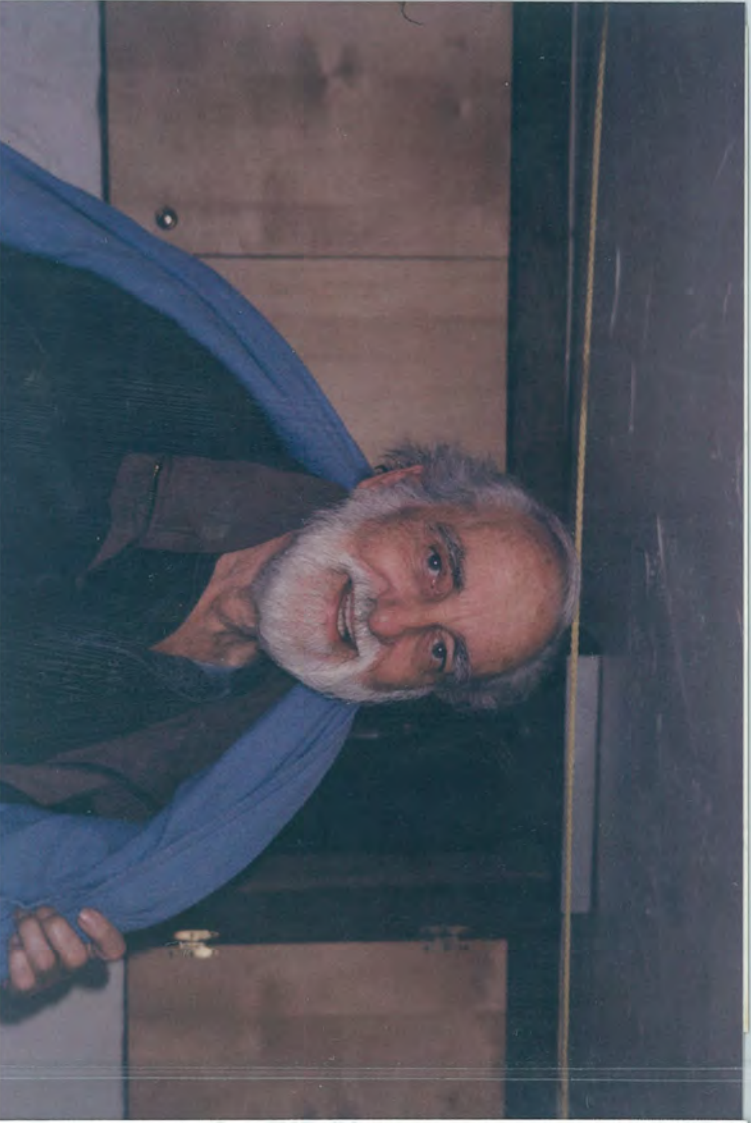












A Tale and a Request

Once it was common to find people coming together to discuss what they themselves had discovered, learned, and witnessed about life's mysteries; - one of which was that somehow we have come here and exist among other existing things rather than not exist at all. Indeed, it was in those days that men and women did not think it blasphemy to delve deeply into their sacred texts for insights into the mysteries of the divine. Since there was no need among them to doubt the logos there was little need to accept others' interpretations unless, of course, their own understanding brought them to confirm them within their proper context. Their faith in their understanding had nurtured them and brought them together in an uncommon bond for they were linked together as those are who, when sharing one another's company, can rejoice that they are among those who can clearly express the convictions of their heart. In a similar way they were benefited when they were puzzled as puzzled can be by what they had discovered and shared together; for that did not cause them to be at odds with one another nor did it cause them to separate into hostile camps by surrendering themselves to beliefs that would settle, prematurely, their puzzledom.

Thus, it was natural that they would come together to reflect on a teaching that while it was known to be old and familiar to all present did contain parts worthy of the deepest respect and it was such parts as these that they had, unknowingly, ignored and one such part became the object of their study. It caused them to reflect in ways that they were unaccustomed; not because it came from a source they had believed they could put aside as finished but because it brought them to wonder if another deeper level of meaning might be present in a work whose meaning they thought they had sufficiently grasped. Indeed, it was a simple idea and one that can be shared by all and the wonder is whether its meaning had been, or is, grasped by anyone. For the idea was from John 10:35 that for those to whom the word of God came are Gods. Certainly, a profound utterance and one whose meaning is as challenging as it is profound. Surely, you might be one who might want to participate in such reflections and discussions as did those who have become acquainted with it. For, if so, might you not find it beneficial to discuss its significance to the Hellenic, Hebrew, Gnostic, and other spiritual systems that are certainly no strangers to the divine?

All responding will be invited to a Symposium, Write: the Noetic Society, Box 101, Huntington Beach, California, Zip 92640

Walter Willis
11/19/46

A Tale of a Monk, a Philosopher, and a Scholar

There was once a scholar who had a vast knowledge of ancient languages, and he was also known far and wide for his continuous study of the writings of the sages. Indeed, although poor, he repeatedly refused various offers of employment because it would take him away from his beloved books and leave him with too little time for his reflections. As a result of this singular dedication his possessions were limited to what he could carry in his back pack. He would often be seen studying at a variety of places seemingly indifferent to his circumstances. He was not without friends and a fair number would welcome him into their homes; for they knew not many men could recite from memory long passages from profound works and engage in serious discussions about their meaning, and all the while tolerating opposing opinions with equanimity and in a spirit of fairness.

Among the scholar's friends was a philosopher with whom he would often test his understanding, and it was not unusual for them to ask one another if they thought the art of contemplation just might give them a deeper perception into the heart of their enquiries.

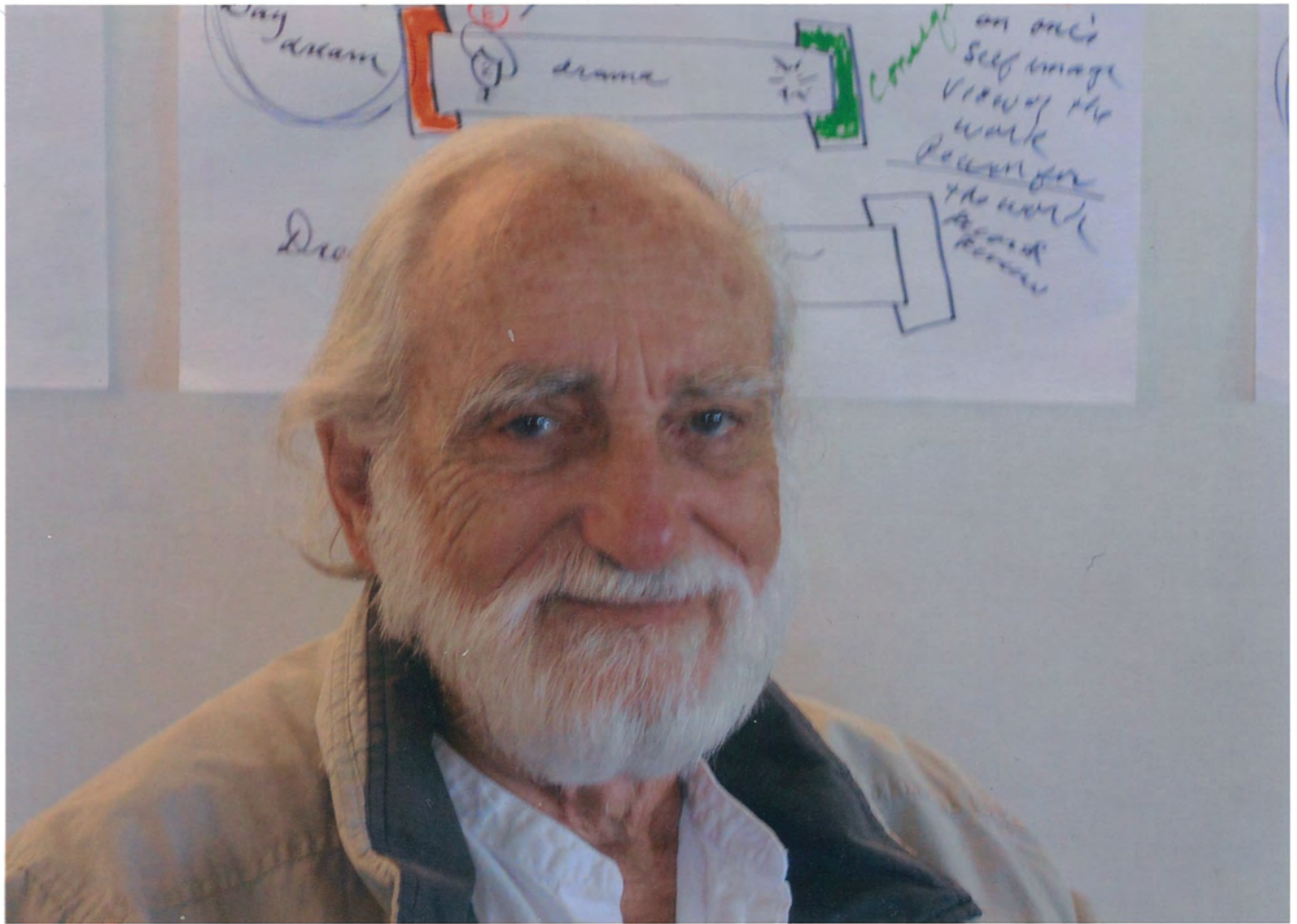
One day a wandering monk opened a temple in their city and it became evident to all that he was neither a stranger to the writings of the sages nor unfamiliar with the reflections of philosophers. Thus, inevitably, the three met one day and discussed very profound matters, and at the close of the talk the monk invited the scholar and the philosopher to practice meditation with him, and he told them they could bring their friends with them. The philosopher agreed but the scholar said he needed more time to consider the matter.

After a period of time passed the scholar visited the monk and told him of his wish to become a monk. Discussions took place and soon the monk was convinced that the scholar did understand that truth was not a matter of words but of direct experience, accordingly, the monk accepted the scholar into his religious order. However, the scholar changed his mind, picked up his back pack, and wandered off. He returned once more, made the same decision, was accepted again, and again walked off. The third time he asked for admittance the monk refused and would not allow him into the temple until the scholar showed more sincerity and dedication than he previously had. For the monk reasoned that it would be folly for the scholar to try for the third time when he hadn't understood his previous failures.

When the philosopher met the scholar he asked him why he had changed his mind about becoming a monk. The scholar said he was afraid the monk would, sooner or later, insist he devote more time to meditation and temple duties and so he would be forced to choose between knowledge and truth. Rather than make such a choice he left. The scholar then asked the philosopher if he could go along with him to the temple and participate in the explorations and discussions. The philosopher said he could but only if the scholar first told the monk that he didn't want to become a monk.

You have just been asked to speak your mind to each of these men in turn. What will you say?

Tommy James, OMA
12/8/83



Daydream



drama



on one's
self image
view of the
work
Reason for
the work
Reason

Dro

