

*In Memory of Pierre Grimes*

*November 16, 1924 – June 2, 2024*



It brings great sadness to share with you that Pierre Grimes passed on to the spiritual realm on Sunday, June 2, 2024 from complications after surgery for a ruptured appendix. He was 99 years old, in his 100<sup>th</sup> year and passed peacefully at home, surrounded by his treasured books and loved ones.

He is survived by his loving wife Nancy, 6 children, 16 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren, and by hundreds of current and past students and associates who have been and continue to be impacted by their encounters with him, his teachings, writings, video lectures and philosophical discussions.

Pierre was a man of many qualities, facets and attributes. His power of seeing with the mind was matched with his love of, and devotion to, wonder and reflection, his compassion and endless patience, his playfulness, humor and joy in life, his sincere greeting of, "How's your world?" and his generosity and ever readiness to say, "How about a cup of coffee?" when anyone had a personal or philosophical dilemma that needed exploring.

He was a man of principles and distinction, born in Brussels, Belgium and raised in New York City. He volunteered for the Army at age 17 to join the fight against Fascism during World War II. His military citations include a Purple Heart, Bronze Star with an Oak Leaf Cluster, American Campaign medal, citation medal with two campaign stars and a bronze arrowhead attachment for the European, African, Middle Eastern Campaign, World War II Victory medal, Army Good Conduct medal, the Army of Occupation medal and the Army Presidential Unit Citation with an Oak leaf.

His experiences during the war as well as a book given to him at the end of the war by a friend from his unit, "The Essence of Hinduism" by Swami Nikhilananda, set him on the life-long path of exploring the Mind and the nature of Reality.

At the end of the war he attended St. Johns College in Annapolis for 4 years. Here is where he encountered and fell in love with the thought and literature of the ancient Greeks - Homer, Parmenides, the Pre-Socratics, Plato. Upon leaving St. Johns he met with Joseph Campbell who told him of a new school opening up in San Francisco that was offering the kind of philosophy Pierre was interested in. This was the American Academy of Asian Studies, which became a fundamental part of what came to be known as the San Francisco Renaissance. Pierre moved with his family to San Francisco and went on to receive a degree from San Francisco State College and his Master's and PhD from The American Academy of Asian Studies, then a graduate school of the University of the Pacific.

During his time at the Academy of Asian Studies Alan Watts offered him a teaching fellowship. This is how Alan describes Pierre in his autobiography "*In My Own Way*": "Pierre devised an encounter group on a metaphysical level. The process seemed extraordinarily therapeutic both for Pierre himself and for those who worked with him. 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." It is also at The Academy that Pierre was fortunate to study with native spiritual teachers, including the Taoist, Gi-Ming Shien, the Tibetan, Lama Tada, and the Indian, Haridas Chaudhuri.

Pierre moved his family to Orange County, CA when he was offered a teaching position in Philosophy at Orange Coast College and then Golden West College. He was the only Philosophy Instructor at Golden West for quite a few years, which provided him the total freedom to design his own classes and curriculum. He wrote plays that students performed, brought to life two platonic dialogues in drama productions that were filmed. He started a tradition of Friday night philosophy explorations that still continues. Pierre taught at Golden West College for fifty years. He was also a professor of philosophy at the University of Philosophical Research and the Holmes Institute, the divinity school of the

Church of Religious Science. After being invited by Michael Murphy in the late 80's to conduct a seminar at Esalen Institute Pierre continued to conduct yearly week-long seminars exploring dreams for over twenty-five years at Esalen, as well as conducting many meditation/philosophical exploration retreats at various southern California locations, including The Institute of Mentalphysics in Joshua Tree, Krotona Institute in Ojai, The Besant Lodge in Los Angeles, and the Zen Mountain Center in Mountain Center.

Pierre continued to be a student of Eastern thought by attending many Zen Sesshins with Zen masters who either had centers in the Los Angeles area or visited from Japan, including Myzumi Roshi, Yasutani Roshi and Koryu Roshi.

In 1982 the Son (Zen) master Chong-An of the Chogye Buddhist order of Korea invited Pierre to join him in creating a center that would combine Buddhism and Platonic philosophy. This became Opening Mind Academy and part of Chong-An's Virtue Mountain Temple. Chong-An gave Pierre the name Hui-An, conferred on him the title of Master Dharma Teacher and he was sealed as Chong-An's Dharma Successor. Chong-An was later sealed as Myo-Bong, the Patriarchal Dharma Successor of Venerable Hye-Am, the 33<sup>rd</sup> patriarch from Lin Chi.

Pierre began exploring dialectic as a mode of psychotherapy during his years of counseling alcoholics at a rehabilitation center in San Francisco during the early 1960's. He authored two articles, "Alcibiades" and "Vinodorus," published in The Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol, 1961 and 1964. Both were written as Socratic dialogues presenting this explorative process as a mode of psychotherapy. This was the very beginning of what developed into the philosophical counseling movement as well as of what he called Philosophical Midwifery. Pierre was a founder, along with Lou Marinoff, and Board member of the American Philosophical Practitioners Association.

He founded the Noetic Society in 1976 for the study of dialogue and the exploration of dialectic, where he began demonstrating and teaching Philosophical Midwifery, the Socratic dialectic method he developed for understanding the problems people face in their struggle to attain excellence in life. The Noetic Society continues to this day, exploring Homeric, Pre-Socratic, Platonic, Neo-Platonic as well as texts from eastern mystical traditions via Pierre's method of "explicatio du texte." The Noetic Society also continues to explore and practice Philosophical Midwifery and Pierre's method of dream exploration.

Pierre has authored numerous books and articles that can be accessed via The Noetic Society website , [www.noeticsociety.org](http://www.noeticsociety.org) Many videos of his lectures, seminars, and interviews are in the Internet Archive linked to the Noetic Society website as well as on YouTube.