



Supplemental information for the teachings of

A Time Line for MYSTICISM

Presented by Richard Rohr, OFM at the conference January 2010

2500 BC: First appearances of a sense of a loving personal relationship with God: India and Egypt, Owen Barfield's "Original Participation".

2000-1200 BC: Abraham, Jacob, Elijah in Israel, Early Hinduism.

500 BC: "THE AXIAL AGE" according to Karl Jaspers.
BUDDHISM is born, Socrates in Greece, Plato, the Upanishads in India.

200 BC: Patanjali, Yoga Sutras in India, Jewish. Apocalypticism, Book of Psalms, Song of Songs.

30 BC: Philo of Alexandria, a Jew in the Diaspora.

Jesus of Nazareth (First non dual teacher for the West.)

Paul's Letters, John's Gospel, "Present and final participation" is

promised and exemplified, which thrills Western civilization!

2nd Century: Clement of Alexandria first uses the word *mysticus*/hidden.

3rd Century: Origen (Father of the Church), Plotinus (Roman philosopher).

4th Century: Basil and the Gregorians in Turkey, Evagrius Ponticus, Augustine, Cassian, Macarius the Great, Desert Fathers and Mothers in Egypt, Syria, Cappadocia/Asia Minor, and Palestine, Trinitarian thinking is possible and highly valued. (“Principle of three” allows non dual thinking.)

6th Century: Benedict (organizes the possibility), Pseudo Dionysius (apophatic).
Gregory the Great (a way of seeing), Buddhism, Lao-Tzu and TAOISM (Tao-Te-Ching) both spread in China.

7th Century: John Climacus, Maximus the Confessor: “HESYCHASM” gives Orthodox Christianity a strong mystical basis. “theosis”/divinization.
Zen Buddhism in Japan and Tibetan Buddhism.

8th Century: Rabia (Islamic woman in Iraq), Sankara in India.

9th Century: Little happening in Western Christianity, except for Celtic monks.

10th Century: Symeon the New Theologian in the East.

12th Century: Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, Aelred of Rievaulx, Bernard of Clairvaux, Hildegard of Bingen, William of St. Thierry, Monastery Based.

13th Century: EXPLOSION OF MYSTICISM: Francis and Clare, Rumi, Meister Eckhart, Beguines and Beghards, Bonaventure, Gertrude, Mechtilde, Hadewijch, Giles of Assisi, Angela of Foligno, Raymond Lull, Richard Rolle, many Franciscan Hermits, German Dominicans Henri Suso and Johannes Tauler, Ibn'Arabi (Sufi master teacher).

14th Century: Jan Ruysbroeck, Gregory Palamas, Hafiz, CLOUD OF UNKNOWING, Julian of Norwich, Catherine of Siena, Catherine of Genoa, Walter Hilton, Thomas a Kempis.

15th Century: Nicholas of Cusa (coincidence of opposites), Francisco de Osuna, Kabir (both Hindu and Sufi holy man), Nicholas von der Flue.

16th Century: THE FINAL SUPERNOVA! Ignatius of Loyola, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Francis de Sales, Jacob Boehme, Erasmus. Yet most church reformations are born of extreme dualistic consciousness.

17th Century: CRISIS and DECLINE: PIETY AS A SUBSTITUTE/REASON AS A SUBSTITUTE “The Enlightenment” as the triumph of dualistic thought. “The Desert of Non-Participation.” Still Brother Lawrence, George Fox, Blaise Pascal.

18th Century: Jean Pierre de Caussade, Baal-Shem-Tov, John Wesley, Seraphim of Sarov, Emmanuel Swedenborg, HASIDIC JUDAISM, William Blake.

19th Century: Therese of Lisieux, Charles De Foucauld, Henry David Thoreau and William Wordsworth (“nature mystics”).

20th Century: REDISCOVERY of “Participation” Friedrich von Hugel, Gandhi, Evelyn Underhill, Thomas Kelly, Howard Thurman, Suzuki, Bede Griffiths, Rainer Maria Rilke, Elizabeth of the Trinity, Martin Luther King, Alan Watts, Simone Weil, Thomas Merton, Thich Nhat Hanh, Rinzaï Zen, Martin Buber, Etty Hillesum, Dag Hammerskjold, Anthony de Mello, Ken Wilber, Gerald May, Ramana Maharishi, Teilhard de Chardin, Hugo Enomiya-Lassalle, Abraham Heschel, Tagore, Ruth Barrows, John Main, Eckhart Tolle, Bernadette Roberts, Paramahansa Yogananda, various rinpoches and gurus, Henri Le Saux, Karl Rahner, Helen Keller, Mother Teresa, Dalai Lama. (Admittedly an arguable and incomplete list, that some will find fault with on one issue or another).

What is emerging is a MAJOR FIRST TIME INTERFACE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST, the “two hemispheres of the Body of Christ”. A rediscovery of non-dual thinking, acting, reconciling, boundary crossing, and bridge building--based on inner experience of God. “Second Axial Age?” Yes, some is immature, some is syncretistic, some is ungrounded, some not integrated, but the steps toward maturity are always and necessarily immature.



Supplemental information for the teachings of

James Finley, PhD

Passing Through the Narrow Gate

1. → God goes first in creation. Reality Itself giving reality to all that is real. “God’s non-distinction from all things that is their very reality.” Our capacity to know and say yes to who God calls us to be as manifestations of God. The God-given Godly nature of ourselves in the God-given Godly nature of the world. The cosmic dance. The castle of the soul. What is.
2. → God passes through the gate, awakening us to where God already is within us. A God-given awareness of our God-given Godly nature. These awakenings evoke desire for more daily, abiding awareness of the life at once God’s and our own.
3. ← Desire prompts us to pass through the gate into habitual awareness of God one with us in all things. The gate is so narrow that nothing contrary to love fits through. We pass through the gate through which God perpetually passes into us in a process

of conversion, attitudes of faith, love, and hope anchored in daily practice of lectio divina, reflective prayer. A life of holiness filled with hope. The Purgative way into illuminative way from all opaque to translucent to divine light visitation.

4. → God passes through the gate, awakening us to who we are in God; the urgency of love; not to wait until we are dead to live in God living in us. This awakening evokes desire for infinite union with the infinite.
5. ← We pass through the gate, now so narrow that nothing less or other than God can fit through. Dying to all that is less than God as the basis of our security and identity. Disidentification with the finite as having the final say in who we are. Meditation embodying this process of infinite love translating us into itself, drawing us through the gate into infinite union with the infinite. The illuminative way. The visitation leading to an invitation leading to union.
6. →← The transformation in which we and God simultaneously disappear as other than each other. Transubjective oneness. Trinitarian mysticism. The unfolding fullness of the God-given, Godly awareness of the God-given Godly nature of ourselves, others and all things.
7. →← Post enlightenment living. Passing with God through the gate into places in ourselves / others that are still unawakened, still confused, afraid. The Christ consciousness, the bodhisattva, compassion as union and fulfillment in process. Any claim to union other than ordinariness, any ordinariness is not infinite, gets stuck. All things in God, God in all things.



James Finley, PHD lived as a monk at the cloistered Trappist monastery of the Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky, where the world-renowned monk and author, Thomas Merton, was his spiritual director. He leads retreats and workshops throughout the United States and Canada, attracting people who seek to live a contemplative way of life in the midst of today's busy world.



Richard Rohr, OFM is an internationally known author and spiritual teacher, a Franciscan of the New Mexico province and founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation. He considers the proclamation of the Gospel to be his primary call and the related themes he addresses include Eco-Spirituality, Scripture as liberation, the integration of action and contemplation, community building, peace and justice issues, male spirituality, and the Enneagram.



Cynthia Bourgeault, PHD serves as Principal Teacher for the Contemplative Society and an adjunct faculty member at the Vancouver School of Theology. She is passionately committed to the recovery of the Christian contemplative path and has worked closely with Fr. Thomas Keating as a teacher of Centering Prayer, Fr. Bruno Barnhart, and other Christian contemplative masters.

