Chapter 8.

**SAMADHI AND SUFI MYSTICISM.**

The Christian concept of mystic life, as we saw in the last chapter, may be summarised in the saying, "we dwell in Him and He in us, because He has given us His spirit." Almost this same belief is found to be expressed in different terms if we study the early sufis.

Margaret Smith has argued that the conception of God in the Quran, which formed the basis of Sufi mysticism, was a simple notion like that put forth by St. Paul in Christian mysticism. Ephraim, the Syrian Sufi, according to Smith, for instance, believed that God is the only reality. But this idea further led the Sufis to pantheistic notions.

The seed of pantheism was inherent in the teachings of Ephraim. He asserted that the one single reality of God has clothed itself in all the forms that we see in the world. God is the sole truth (al-Haqq), and the Sufis are 'people of truth' (abal al-Haqq).

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+ Smith, Margaret., Studies in early mysticism in the middle east, Macmillan and co., 1931, p.248.
Like the Christians the Sufis also believed that the soul was like a mirror which has become rusty and clouded by sin due to its contact with the material world. It is remarkable to see how much this idea of the soul is similar to that of Patanjali and his commentators, who also have compared the jīva for rather the buddhi to a distorted mirror. Further, the steps of 'purgation' prescribed by the Sufis are very much comparable with the Yoga view of removal of impurities from the mind.

The Sufis, as Palmer* has pointed out, were intoxicated by drinking 'the wine of life in the cup of love'. It is love for God, who is all beauty. It may be said that the Sufis took a middle path between pantheism and the deism of the Quran. Theirs is a cult of beauty. Palmer sees in the cult of the Sufis a combination of the Hindu paths of Jñāna and Bhakti. The present writer feels that their approach is similar to the Bhaktiyoga or the Bhāgavata dharma as we find it described in the Bhagavadgītā. This can be confirmed from the fact that Sufism affirms the existence of one God, who is the friend and the Lord of all individual souls.

This view of the present writer is also held by Ramaswami Sastri in his study of Vedanta. Vedanta, Sastri points out, stands for non-duality of the \( \text{atman} \) and \( \text{Brahman} \). The sufis also believe that the absolute unity can be realized as the \( \text{haqq} \). Sufism may thus be called \textit{advaita} in a fresh garb.

Roma Chaudhuri has also arrived at the same conclusion. She says,

"Sufism, which is one of the most important branches of Islamic philosophy, is specially interesting because of its similarities to some systems of Indian philosophy, particularly to Vedanta advaitism."

Sufism, as a branch of Islamic philosophy, must have its roots in the concept of God described in the Quran. The God of the Quran is based on a practical need of the devotees, and their aspirations. The soul has a natural and eternal relationship with God. The Quran speaks of a personal God who can comfort the suffering human beings. The philosophical conception of the ultimate reality as a formless absolute Brahman can not

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satisfy the needs and urges of an aspirant or devotee.

As remarked by Hosain+, the description of Al Quran reveals a personal God ready to help you as a companion. He is compassionate and considerate. In many passages of the Quran Allah is represented as an absolute sovereign working according to his Will in solitary grandeur like a master works for the protection and the well-being of his slaves. As brought out in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics++, the God of Islam possesses immense kindness, mercy, and friendship towards all the creatures.

God is to be known by service (ubudiate), humility (taalim), friendship (yari), and love (ishg). The Quran teaches us to develop the quality of love for all in order to attain to eternal union with God, who is the ultimate reality. The Quran teaches a message of love. In fact, every religion, as sister Nivedita+++ would have us believe, contains a message of

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++ Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, 1925, p.775.
love. The attitudes like maitri, karuna, etc., advocated by the students of samadhi may be specially mentioned here. The advocacy of these by all mystics everywhere in the world, as our discussion so far brings out, points to the essential unity of approach of all of them. This is a finding of great importance which our inquiry into samadhi and mysticism has yielded.

Husain * has discussed the concept of God in the 1st chapter of the Qur'an in detail. He says that God is here described as a Cherisher, Sustainer, merciful, and compassionate. He is also called the Lord of the Day of Judgement, Rabbil Asmeen, which means 'the cherisher' is the first attribute of God. Another aspect of God is Ar-Rahman ir Rahim, meaning merciful. The self-supporting system of the universe is a proof of God's rehmat or merciful nature. It is also believed that everyone is bound by the consequences which one's deeds have earned. This is the Islamic form of the doctrine of karma accepted by all schools of Indian philosophy including Yoga. This belief implies that everyone is responsible for one's salvation.

Tawhid is the fundamental theory of

Divine unity. There are three main schools of the Sufis regarding the interpretation of this theory. The Zahir or 'simple cult' believes that God, who is One Holy essence, brought all things from 'nothingness' into 'thingness'. All things, according to them, are dependent on Him for their existence. This attitude corresponds to the Quranic Surate:

"Praised be God who created the heaven and the earth and brought into being darkness and light".

The second school, which is perhaps the most influential of the three, argues the concept of 'Hamah az ust' which means 'all is from that'. This may be called the Islamic counterpart of the famous Hindu saying: "Tattvamasi". The third sect, as pointed out by Marquette+, believes in the statement: "The infinite, when it gets limited, becomes known by names".

About these schools Eliade++ writes,

"They believed that the man who is in communication with God develops a sort of magical heat. He burns with the heat of asceticism. Such a man is called 'sahib-Joash'."

Eliade has also described many miracles that are commonly displayed by such mystics.

Dr. M. Hafiz Syed has studied the devotional practices of the Sufi mystics. The devotee, he says, always assumes for himself a status of a servant of God. God's Grace is needed for obtaining prophetic vision. Contemplation (mushahadat) is most essential for it. Contemplation is possible only through soundness of intuition and power of love. God in his pure absolute nature is called Zat. Known through his Attributes, God is called Islam-e-sifat. Meaning of Islam can be truly understood only by intense meditation on the divine attributes.

The discipline of a Sufi mystic, according to Dr. Syed, includes the following five parts:

1) Prayer five times a day.
2) A full month's fast every year.
3) Pilgrimage called Haz.
4) Mental repetition of the name of Allah, and
5) Meditation on God's attributes.

Meditation is divided into three parts.

1) Meditation on the teacher (Tasawwur-e-shaikh).
2) Meditation on the Prophet (Tasawwur-e-rasul).

3) Meditation on God (Tasawwur-e-Allah).

The discipline that a Sufi undergoes for God-realization would appear hardly different from that undergone by a Hindu Yogi or a Christian mystic or a Zen Buddhist. The basic attitudes all of them try to develop and the enlightenment or understanding they reach in the final stage are, as one would observe, the same. There is neither any difference in the goal to be reached nor is there any conflict between the various methods. Perhaps all the difference between them is only a product of their milieu and the words they use for expressing their experiences. They are all God's men exhibiting the same qualities in their behaviour and thinking. Yet, as there may be many paths leading to a place, so there may be many religions and sects forming the whole body of mysticism.

There is one very important point to be remembered here, namely, that although there may be many religions, true religious experience or true mystic achievement never shows any variation. It is one and the same.

This, the present writer wants to emphasize, is the main import of our endeavour so far. Let us see how far this holds true on a further examination of Sufi mysticism.

Like the Hindus the Sufis also speak of two aspects of God, namely Tanzih or nirguna, and Tashbil or
saguna. Jhavery has summarized the fundamental tenets of Sufism in the form of the belief that the human soul, an emanation from God, will finally unite with God, and that in order to achieve this connection it must break all its connections from the extrinsic objects, thus living constantly in a state of detachment. By detachment and meditation alone one can have the ecstatic trance in which union with God is realized.

Two aspects of ecstasy are recognised in Sufism. The negative aspect means getting rid of one's individuality. The positive aspect means abiding in God. The ultimate mystical knowledge of the Sufi is called marifat. Realization of ultimate truth is called hassiqat.

The word Sufi has been derived from safa meaning purity. Thus Sufi means an individual of highest purity. According to another derivation, the word is derived from suf meaning wool. The Sufis generally wear rough woolen clothes as a sign of asceticism and renunciation.

It is one of the fundamental pre-suppositions of Sufism that Prophet Muhammad received from God a two-fold revelation. The first is called book-knowledge

+ Jhavery, Muhab, Mantrashastra: a comparative and critical study, Ahmedabad: Sarabhai and co., 1944, p.113.
(ilm-i-Safina), and the second heart-knowledge (ilm-i-Sina). Like all other sects of Islam the Sufis also claim their origin from the Prophet. Their teachings have their roots in the Quran. But they show a diversion from the orthodox views.

Abu Hasim of Kufa (A.D. 779), who is regarded as the first teacher of Sufism, drew his inspiration from the Prophet and the Quran. In addition to the Quranic principles, Sufism shows, as pointed out by Dara, an influence of Christian and Buddhistic views. For instance, the idea of purgation of vices is originally a Christian idea. The use of a rosary by the Sufis might have been taken from the Buddhists.

The historical development of Sufism shows five distinct stages. They are:

1) The early period — up to two centuries after Abu Hasim.
2) Later developments — up to four centuries after Abu Hasim.
3) Period of reconciliation with Islamic orthodox views—
4) Spanish development of Sufism.
5) Period of Persian Sufism.

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The early period:

This represents what is called the old Sufism. It was generally associated with quietism and asceticism. Its main exponent was Hasan of Basra. He believed in the consequences of sin as described in the Quran, and taught that asceticism and remuneciation would be rewarded in the Heaven. During this stage Sufism had much influence of orthodox views. The chief teachers of this period were: Ibrahim, Abu Ali Shadda, Da'ud of Tayy, Fudayl Iyad, and Rabia. They all advocated observance of complete silence, and emphasised the importance of remuneciation.

Later development:

This is called the period of new Sufism. Outside influences started showing themselves during this period. The hold of early orthodoxy was weakened. The Sufis accepted new ideas from Bridal mysticism, Buddhism, Vedanta, Neo-Platonism, and gnosticism. They also started giving new interpretations of the Quranic sayings. New speculations were given a place in the thinking of the sect. It was more or less a period of renaissance. Its pioneers were: Ma'ruf al Harbhi, Abu Sulayman al Darani, and Dhul Nun al Misri.

Gnosticism (marifat), which meant intuitional knowledge of God arising from spiritual insight,
received a respectable position during this period. There also was a strong belief in pantheism.

**Period of reconciliation**:

Here an attempt was made to give a place to the orthodox theology of the Quran in the new Sufism. This tendency was propagated by Abul Hasan al-Jullabe al-Hujwiri through his famous book 'Revelation of the mystery' (Kashf al-Majub). The process started by him was brought to a final conclusion by Abu Hamid Mohammad al-Gazali. Watt+ ranks Gazali as the Greatest Muslim after the Prophet Mohammad. He points out that like Descartes Gazali also came to doubt the infallibility of sense perception. His great contribution, according to Watt was that he brought orthodoxy of Islam and the new ideas of Sufi mysticism into a closer contact without a contradiction.

**Spanish Sufism**:

This was a product of the 12th century A.D. Its propounder was Ibn Arabi, who put forward the concept of 'perfect man' (Insan-i-Kamil) together with the idea of harmony of design in the structural similarity of the microcosm and the macrocosm. Nasafi was another great Sufi who further elaborated the unity of design.

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Persian school of Sufism:

Faridu'din Altar, Jalal ud'Din Rumi, and Shaikh Sadi were three great Sufi saints who flourished in the 13th century A.D. Rumi has written many books of repute, describing the basic principles of Sufism. The language of birds, and Masnavi were the most widely recognised among them. He was the founder of the order of the dancing Darvishes. Sadi was a mystical poet. He wrote the well known book 'Guliyan'.

Another Sufi of this school was Abdu'l Karim ibn al-Jili. He put forward the idea of the 'perfect man'. He wrote the famous work of Sufism 'Al-Insanu'l Kamil' (The perfect man). Abdu'r Rehman Jami was another notable Sufi of this school.

John Campbell Oman+ and Jhaveri ++ have described many sects of the Sufis belonging to all the above five periods in the history of Sufism. Oman has pointed out that these sects differed, not in their general outlook on life, but mainly according to their conception of Godhead and the details of the path.

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Thus we find that before the time of the Prophet Mohammed there were two primitive sects akin to the later Sufis, respectively called Mesohaiouns and Ischrachaious. The former were wandering monks, while the latter emphasised contemplation. They distinguished between what they called the 'Alam-i-misal' (the world of reality) and 'Alam-i-khiyal' (the world of the unreal). Their practices included audition, meditation, and contemplation. There is a striking similarity between these and the threefold vedantic way of shravana, manana, and nididhyasana.

Similarly, in Persia there were two sects in existence in the first century of the Christian era, which later divided into five Sufi sects. The first was called 'Hululi' (the inspired), and the second 'Itthadai' (the Unionists).

The Dervishes form an important sect of Sufism. They had 12 different orders as follows:
1) Awaisi
2) Kwani
3) Adhami
4) Bustami
5) Saquati
6) Quadiri
7) Rifai
8) Nurbakshi or Surhavardi
9) Rubrawi
10) Shazili
11) Maulawi, and
12) Badawi.

In India there have been four main orders of the Sufis. They are: the Chistis, the Quadiris, the Surhawardis, and the Naqshbandis. They are named after their first initiators. Women have no place in these orders except in the last named one.

As already mentioned earlier, all the orders of Sufis recognise four main aspects of the discipline, namely, *ubudiya* (service), *tasliya* (humility), *yari* (friendship), and *ishqa* (love). Wahid Hosain* has pointed out that the last named technique, namely, that of love, is clearly influenced by the earlier bridal mysticism of the Christians. The concept of God as a lover was, in all probability, a later addition to the Sufi concept of God as the pure, perfect, and holy being. This principle has great similarity with the Vaishnavite conception of Lord Krishna, the lover of the Gopis.

As pointed out by Srimiwasachari, the Allah is looked upon by the Sufis as abiding love in loneliness before creation. Creation brings out the soul as a radiation of divine love, which is all pervasive. The Sufi's soul ultimately plunges into love and gets absorbed into the ecstasy of union, just as wine and water mix up into each other inseparably. In this respect there is hardly any difference between the mystic experiences of Rabia of Basra and St. Teresa, or between those of St. John of the Cross and Jami. This is because, when the individuality of the soul is destroyed by mystic vision there is complete God-intoxication.

Thus the Sufi saint Jami says in his Lawa'ih:

"Unification is not merely believing Him to be one, but in thyself being one with Him."

The Sufi mystic is so inebriate with God like a bulbul that all the joys of the earth are immaterial for him. Even he realises that his external senses like the eye or the ear are of no avail to behold the beauty of the Lord.

We shall, at this stage, examine the special features of the teachings of some prominent Sufi mystics with a view to study if there is anything common to them all which we can call the essential characteristics of Sufism, so that a comparison of it can be made with the samādhi state of Hindu Yoga. These prominent Sufis are: Rabia, Dhu'l Nun-al-Misri, Bayazid-al-Bistami, Al-Hallaj, Hajwiri, Ibnul Arabi, Faridu'Din Attar, Rumi, and Abu Hamid al-Gazali.

Rabia:—

We find her story described by various authors like Harding+, Dara++, and Roma Chaudhury++. It may be said that Rabia was the Sufi counterpart of Mira of the Hindu legends. She exemplifies, apart from pure love, the soul's efforts and God's Grace. She was born in a very poor family, was ill treated by her master, and had to undergo a multitude of hardships. But her whole life was filled completely by pure love for God. She used to say that God was her mihrab, and the path leading to Him was her Qilba.

Margaret Smith + calls Rabia 'the second spotless Mary', and says that she wanted to light a fire in the paradise and pour water on the hell. She did not worship God for fear of hell or love of paradise. She worshipped Him for His Beauty alone, and out of pure, unconditional love.

_Dhu'l Nun-al-Misri:_

He defined a Sufi as "he whose language is the reality of his state". A Sufi, according to him, must have no worldly possessions. The goal of life, he said, was to search for the missing identity of soul and God. He propounded the principle of Fana, or ultimate spiritual experience that all is God. The main part of his teachings was 'gnosis' or spiritual insight. He taught that gnosis is different from knowledge, because knowledge comes from sense-perception, while insight comes from the heart. Gnosis gives certainty, whereas knowledge may be shown to be false, and may thus have to change.

His theory of gnosis reminds us of the Buddhist prajñā, or the viveka-khyati of Yoga. The state of Fana, it must be said, is the Sufi version of jivanmukti.

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Bayazid - al - Bistami :-

He left his home early in life and visited many Sufi saints, doing penance for over thirty years. His teachings are reflected in his saying, "For thirty years the High Allah was my mirror, but now I am my own mirror".

Bayazid was a firm believer in 'Fana' and much of the spread of this principle is due to him. He found the lover, beloved, and love fusing into one. So he taught that man is identical with God. We do not have an experience of this truth because of the veil of ignorance. For having a clear vision of the truth we must control the lower nature. Love, according to him, was the means for union with God, but he argued that true love was a God's gift, as was God's Grace. The final union is achieved in the state of ecstasy, which puts an end to all obstructing and limiting thoughts. He distinguished between haquiquat (truth) and marifat (gnosis), and said that the former was the real goal and the latter, only a means.

The ultimate state, as Bayazid viewed it, was called fana-al-fana, or total annihilation of the ego feeling.

If we go through these views of Bayazid, with a background of the Vedanta views, then the fact stands out very clearly that Bayazid is speaking like
a thorough Vedantin, who puts realization of the Ultimate reality above everything else. The identity of views is very strikingly similar. It proves what we have said earlier, namely, that the experience of the mystics who achieved the ultimate state was the same everywhere in the world, howsoever their expressions of words may have varied.

Al-Hallaj:

His teachings are recorded in the book 'Kitab-al-Tawasim' written by him. His main contribution in this work is the concept of sainthood. He argues that God has two natures, namely, evolution and involution. This doctrine is very much similar to the Indian view of aṣristi and samhāra. From these two processes which are shown by all creation including man, Hallaj propounded the theory of 'perfect man'. He recognised the importance of free will in the achievement of fana.

Hujwiri:

His mystical ideas are recorded in his work 'Kashf-al-Mahjub'. He speaks of two kinds of knowledge, the human knowledge, and divine knowledge. His main contribution was the uncovering of eleven veils on the path leading to fana. These veils are to be uncovered one by one. They are: - i) gnosis (marifat), ii) unification (tawhid), iii) faith, iv) purification, v) prayer, vi) alms, vii) fast, viii) companionship, ix) pilgrimage,
x) the veil of technical knowledge of *ilm, marifat, shari'at, and hagiqat, and xi) the veil of audition (*sama*).

The idea of these veils and their uncovering has had a profound influence on the nature of the discipline followed by the Sufis for attaining to *fana*.

**Ibn'l Arabi:**

His main works are: *Fatwah-al-Makkiyya* and *Fususul Hikam*. He says that creation of the world by God was out of the logical necessity of knowing Himself. His descent in the form of the world took place through five steps, which were: i) essence, ii) attributes, iii) actions, iv) similitude, and v) sensible objects.

Man's ascent to the union with God was effected through the following steps:

i) search of reality underlying the fleeting world of objects. ii) disciplining the body and mind for the journey towards union with God. iii) travels to sacred places and the places of saints. iv) service to humanity and to the world. v) love for all. vi) seclusion and thinking in solitude. vii) knowledge of the true nature of the self. viii) ecstasy ix) revelation x) union with the absolute in direct experience. and xi) absorption or *fana*.

If a Hindu mystic goes through these
stages listed here even with a cursory look, can he ever miss the feeling that he is in the company of an intimate co-traveller of the same path leading to the same goal? Not at all; we must say, if he is a man of samādhi.

Farīdū'-Dīn Attar:—

His name is famous for the poem Mantiq -Al- Tayr, explaining a spiritual pilgrimage of birds, in which he has shown allegorically the process of the mystic union of man with God. The union is effected when one realizes that there is really no duality of any kind in this world. This is the Vedantic theory of "Jīvo brahmaiva nāparam" in a Sufi garb.

Jalal-ud-Din Rumi:—

He is very highly regarded for his famous work 'Masnavi'. He was the founder of a sect of Darvishes called Moulevιs, and was responsible for introducing music and dancing into Sufism. Devotion, according to him, is the first step to love. The greatest expression of love is to be found in stillness and silence.

As observed by Dara+, Rumi defined the ideal of human perfection in terms of the principle of 'harmony with the universal reason' which, he said, is the

first emanation from God.

Shyamji\(^+\) has said about Rumi that he had received instruction in spiritual principles from a Hindu teacher. We find in Rumi's writings the idea of rebirth, which is alien to the Islamic beliefs. Rumi himself used to say that he had died and taken rebirths hundreds of times. Rumi, thus offers a notable example of how there was a lot of give and take among the mystics belonging to different religious faiths.

Abu Hamid-Al-Gazali :-

He was one of the most important Sufi saints who tried to reconcile the principles of Islamic religion with the experiences of the Sufis. Gazali, it may be said, was more impressed by the way of knowledge or direct experience, like the Jnyanayogis of India, rather than by the path of blind faith or devotion. He argues, very much like a Hindu sanyasin or a Buddhist bhikkhu, that poverty is an adornment of a Sufi, patience his ornament, and trust his dignity. Like a Vedantin he used to say that enlightenment and freedom come all of a sudden like a flash, and not through a slow process of going through intermediate stages.

\(^+\) Shyamji, "sulana Rumi (Hindi), Sadhan, Sambh-Usheshanka, Mathura, 1977, p.42.
From our discussion so far of the lives and teachings of the prominent Sufi mystics we may safely conclude that there is hardly any difference between the Sufis on the one hand and mystics belonging to the Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian religious faiths, regarding the outlook on life, goal of human life, and the sure and simple means for the attainment of that goal. The present writer would like to argue that this unity of approach is mainly due to the fact that the ultimate state reached by them all is one and the same. That is the state of samādhi, described by us earlier as samādhi of no return, or jīvanmukti.

They are all free from the clutches of avidyā, and their understanding of the nature of the self and its relation to the world is of the same order. Hence the inner experiences of all the mystics who have reached the state of samādhi are the same. They all live in the same inner world, although their outer world of tradition and faith may show a wide variety.

We shall now try to bring out the inner unity of the mystic experience more clearly by noting some more facts about Sufism.

The mystic who has reached the ultimate state of gnosis is called an 'Arif' by the Sufis. He is, to be sure, a man of God.
As pointed out by Margaret Smith,
"mysticism consists in the spiritual realisation of a
grandeur and a boundless unity that humbles all self-assertion. It dissolves the self in a wider glory."

It is one of the presuppositions of
mysticism all over the world that the soul can perceive
reality in a peculiar way of its own, and that the soul is
inherently of a divine nature, and is made of the same sub-
tance as God.

Mysticism expects that every one of us
should speak right, think right, and thus act right. As for
the right action, the Quran (35.11) lists ten such actions
which not only the mystic but every one of us who wants to
have emancipation must follow. These actions are regarded
as the essence of the spiritual path by all pious people
in the world, irrespective of their religious faiths. This
way of discipline is common to all mystics of all times. It
forms the common ground on which all mystics seem to stand.
The ten right acts mentioned by the Quran are: i) search
after God, ii) search for wisdom, iii) society of the wise,
iv) obedience, v) renunciation, vi) piety, vii) submission,
viii) reticence, ix) vigilance, and x) temperance.

+ Smith, M., Studies in early mysticism, Sheldon press,
1931, p. 2.
This list of right acts given by the Quran hardly seems to show any change if we see the prescriptions in this regards appearing in other religious faiths. It forms an important aspect of mysticism everywhere. Men of samādhi, for instance, have recommended the same pattern of behaviour for a student, by using words like śādhyāya, satsanga, vairāgya, shaucha, mauna, and so on. There is no wonder, therefore, that mystic experience every where is undifferentiated.

Palmer's remarks* in this respect are very pertinent. He says, "Remuniciation and knowledge are like a tree. Knowledge of God or the ultimate reality is the root. Remuniciation forms the branches, and all good principles and qualities are the fruit". The present writer is in complete agreement with this simile of Palmer, on the basis of the findings of the present study.

The Quran says (2:109.), "He is with you wherever you are", or further, "Wherever you turn your face, God is there" (57:4.). This is truly an experience of all the mystics, whether they are Hindu, or Buddhist, or Christian or Sufi.

The union of man and God, which is regarded as the highest state of a human being in Sufism, has two aspects, one positive, and the other negative. Negatively, it means fana, or annihilation of the separate existence of the self due to merger in God, and positively, it means persistence of the self eternally in God, called baqa.

Nicholson\(^+\) has pointed out many intermediate stages on this path of union with God. The first step in that direction is becoming a \textit{zahid}, or one who has renounced the world of enjoyment and has adopted solitude for the sake of contemplation. Then he becomes an \textit{Arif} or an adept. Then he immerses himself in the love of God and becomes a saint, called \textit{wali}. When a saint is gifted with inspiration and miracles, he becomes a \textit{nabi}, or prophet. An apostle who is entrusted with a message of God is called a \textit{Rasul}.

Nicholson has argued that a \textit{Wali} or Imam is a divine man in communion with God. He does not put Muhammad in this category. But that may be a highly controversial point.

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In order to effect the final unitive stage a Sufi is advised to practise a kind of japa which is called dhikr. This is of two types: in dhikr-e-jali one repeats the name of the Lord (Allah) loudly, while in dhikr-e-khafi the name is repeated without making a sound. It may be said that this is exactly like the vashika and upasana varieties of japa according to mantrashastra.

In advanced stages of khafi the student shuts his eyes and fixes the attention on the breath. While breathing out he utters (inwardly) "La-ila-ha" and while breathing in, the words "il-al-lah" are uttered. Thereby the student fills his mind completely with the idea of God, driving away all thoughts about the world of external objects. The similarity of this kind of dhikr with the "Soham" recitation or "Hamsajapa sadhana" of Hindu Yoga is very striking. That shows that not only the basic attitudes but also the procedures of sadhana are also similar in all mystics, whatever their superficial differences.

Dhikr may be practised individually or in groups. The Quadris recite the name of Allah and His attributes in a loud voice. Similar is the case of the Chistis. They assume a particular posture for this purpose. This posture is similar to what they call Vajrasana pose in Yoga practices. Dhikr is to be practised until it leads to 'tauhid' or union with God.
Before we close this chapter on Sufism we shall try to bring out the opinions of some well-known writers on the similarity between the teachings of Hinduism and Sufism.

Syed, for instance, has said that "it is very striking that some aspects of the Sufi and Hindu conception of God are similar. The Sufi concept of God called 'Wajjud' is similar to Advaita or non-duality, while the concept of 'Shuhud' is like that of the Vishishtadvaita school. The similarity of ideas of these two schools on both sides is pretty deep according to Syed. This reminds us of the truth of the Vedic saying "Ekam sadviprah bahudha vadanti", which means, "The same single truth is expressed differently by different sages".

Swami Tejasananda has remarked that the viewpoints of the Hindus and the Sufis are fundamentally the same. They both show a common faith in the scriptures, and in an all-pervading basic reality of Allah or Brahman. Both share equally the universal outlook as expressed in the Bhagavadgita. Even the idolatry in Hinduism has its counterpart in Islam in the black stone at Mecca.

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+ Syed, H.M., Elements of Islamic Sufism, Prabuddha Bharata, Vol. 58, 1953,
Arthur Osborne* has brought out the fact that the Islamic idea of creation of the universe from nothingness is very similar to the Hindu idea of the universe as a manifestation of Him. Thus a man realising his own true nature comes to realize the voidness of things of experience. "The form reminds us of the formless". The Sufis teach in secret what the Hindus teach openly. The am-al-Haq of Hallaj is the Indian advaita in spirit. Even the methodology of the two appears to Osborne the same. Salik and Nagarjuna are, in fact, speaking from the same plane.

It is hardly necessary to multiply examples. The facts stand out from our study so far that samādhi as a state of actual experience is what is common to the Yogis of India, Zen Buddhists, and Christian and Sufi mystics. They all form one single universal family. Their inner state is one and the same in spite of the diversity in their historical, geographic, or linguistic backgrounds.