Chapter 9. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

After having studied the concept of samādhi so far in all its details, and compared it with the experiences of the Zen, Christian, and Sufi mystics, it falls to us in this chapter to sum up the various findings recorded in the course of our inquiry, with a view to present the final picture regarding samādhi.

As pointed out at the outset, samādhi, which used, for many centuries, to be a subject of interest for an extremely small number of persons, has, during the past two decades, started attracting very wide attention. The reasons for such a sudden revival of interest, as noted earlier, are very peculiar and interesting. Had the psyche-delic drugs not been invented during the post-war advances of science, then perhaps samādhi and the Indian Yoga would have remained, as we have observed, little known notions.

The widespread growth of interest in the state of samādhi has mainly prompted the present writer to undertake the present inquiry, especially the comparative study of the experiences of the masters of samādhi and the mystics belonging to various religious faiths all over the world.

From an etymological study of the word 'samādhi', an interesting fact came to light,
namely, that the word *dhyāna* was more in use in the earli-
est Sanskrit writings for conveying what was later asso-
ciated with the meaning of *samādhi*. Various meanings of
the words 'samādhi' and 'dhyāna' were studied, which brought
out the interchangeability of these two terms.

But the difference of meaning of
these two terms became crucial in later times. Moreover,
two very different senses in which the word 'samādhi' has
always been used were noted. A confusion arising from the
failure to distinguish between these two meanings has been
brought out and clarified. The word 'samādhi' indicates a
state of concentration which may come and go, and also a
state called *sahajāvasthā*, which is once and for all. The
need to understand clearly what the word is meaning in any
particular context, whether it is being used in the former
or the latter sense, is stressed in our discussion.

Remembering this crucial fact, a
study of the concept as discussed by Patanjali was under-
taken. Vyasa's definition of Yoga as *samādhi* has been consi-
dered in detail. This has been followed by a study of *samā-
dhi* as a state of the *chitta*, its main varieties, the subtle
differences between them, and the three stages through
which this state of concentration is achieved. The differ-
ence between *samapatti* and *samādhi* has been explained.
While studying the preparatory conditions that ultimately culminated into the state of samādhi, it was found that chittaśuddhi or purification of the mind was the most essential pre-condition to samādhi. The impurities of the mind and the various means recommended by Patanjali for their removal were discussed. The practice of dhyāna as a purifier of the mind was discussed. This was followed by a detailed discussion of the significance of the bahirangas of yoga, namely, yama, niyama, asana, prānāyāma, and pratyāhāra, for bringing about the śāta state of samādhi. An account of the physiological studies regarding asanas, prānāyāma, and TM of Mahesh Yogi, and some substitutes for it, has been offered.

A confusion among the commentators of Patanjali regarding the true meaning of the definition of prānāyāma has been pointed out, and the way in which it can be removed is shown. This may be regarded as an important contribution to the proper understanding of prānāyāma.

The importance of prānāyāma for the state of samādhi lies in the fact that it arouses the dormant power in man called āndalini through kevala kumbhaka. Hence it was thought necessary to study the process of awakening of this dormant power and its relation to samādhi. Various views regarding this power
expressed in ancient and modern literature have been studied. Its location in the human body, and the phenomena associated with its arousal have been explained. An explanation is offered as to how the awakening of the Kundalini leads to the state of samādhi.

The present study of the concept of samādhi has led the present writer to conclude that samādhi is a state of psychological perfection. This very important conclusion has been elaborated on the basis of the behaviour of a sthitaprājña in daily life as described in the Bhagavadgītā. The study of the psychological state of a man of samādhi has revealed the important fact that samādhi puts an end to avidyā, which is ignorance of the true nature of the self. This in turn leads to an end of the psychological effort for bridging the imaginary gap between 'what is' and 'what should be'. This is one of the most remarkable facts about samādhi brought out by the present study.

The behaviour of a man of samādhi is further shown to be characterised by a complete freedom from tensions of all kinds. This finding is of great importance to the man of today, who is full of so much of uneasiness, feeling of insecurity, and lack of trust, in spite of the great discoveries he has made in science.

Samādhi is further shown to lead to balance and
equipoise in meeting the problems of daily life. It is truly a state of ethical and psychological perfection of man --- a state which every religion has always strived to bring about.

These findings about the concept and the state of samādhi, important as they are in the conflict-torn world of today have been confirmed by comparing the state of samādhi with the ultimate state reached by mystics belonging to the faiths of Zen Buddhism, and Christianity, and Sufism. After studying at length the nature of the mystic experience as brought out in the writings of the prominent mystics belonging to these three faiths, the present writer has come to the conclusion that what is common to all of them is the unmistakable state of ecstasy and joy which comes about as a result of various kinds of discipline including devotion, service, renunciation, purification of the mind, and union with God.

Samādhi may be attained by various methods like bhakti, karma, and jñāna. These paths are usually taken to be different from each other. But actually the difference is only apparent, and not real, because the inner state of all the adepts is the same. It does not show any marked difference. This fact has been clearly brought out in the present study on the basis of an examination of the teachings of the Zen masters, the Christian

The inner state of St. Teresa is hardly different from that of Rabia or Mira. Their times and geographical places were very different, but their inner experiences of reality, of the ultimate truth, of God, were just one and the same. This is so very true, so the present study reveals, of all the mystics, irrespective of whether they were Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, or Sufis.

The unity of experience of them all issues from the fact that reality, whatever its nature, is one and the same everywhere. The state of realization of the ultimate reality is also one and the same. And what is more important, the outward expression in daily life and behaviour of that realization is also the same in all cases. Whether one is a Hindu Yogi, or a Zen Buddhist, or a Christian or Sufi mystic, one shows the same qualities such as love for all humanity, inner peace and complete satisfaction, and complete freedom from vices like greed, envy, and ego-feeling.

Annihilation of the ego, to say the least, is one of the unmistakable marks of the mystics of all shades and sects. Outwardly they may be Hindus or Buddhists, or Christians or Sufis, but inwardly they are all men of
samādhi, or, to say the same thing, they are all men of God.

These are in short some of the observations and conclusions which stand out as a result of the present study.

If a summary may itself be summarised, the findings of the present study may be expressed in one single sentence in the form of the following hypothesis:

"Samādhi, as a state of self-realization, is the common thread running through the inner experiences of all the highly accomplished mystics of the world, irrespective of their religious, geographical, or social backgrounds."

This hypothesis would seem to be supported by a study done earlier by Maslow\(^+\) of what he called the 'self-actualizing people'. He has noted some qualities common to them all, such as, correct perception of reality, very comfortable relations with the world, and having spontaneity, mystic experience, deep loyalty to and affection for the human race, and the quality of detachment and solitude.

We have found these very qualities in common in all the mystics. The present study suggests one

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step further, namely, that the unity of the inner experience of the mystics may be explained on the basis of the inner state that is common to them all, that is to say, the state of samādhi.