

The Concept of Anand (Ecstasy) in Sikhism

Jaidev Singh Kohli*

* 41 Brockington Crescent, Nepean (ON) K2G 4K5, Canada. Email: jaidev_kohli@yahoo.ca

Ecstasy is phenomena of 'whole', and not of any - or even aggregates of parts. In material "whole" it is called "Natural frequency". In energy 'whole' is termed as resonance. In living whole, we call it ecstasy. It is specially referred to mind, ecstatic state of mind. Four variables are recognized in man - mind, physique, self, surroundings (m`n, q`n, Awpw qy DMn) and the spirit that transcends as well as emanates this "whole man". Intellectually speaking, ecstasy in man can be brought by changing the intensity of one's surroundings. In reality it changes in balance of all four variables. Every man has a unique combination that can bring about ecstasy of whole organism, combination being different each time, as nothing stays the same with the passage of time. Ecstasy is an art, not a science. It is an art that deals with a unique whole of man because every man is by himself, and different, from every body else.

The art of ecstasy is something which each person has to figure out himself by experimentation. Nobody can teach except basic fundamentals. Yet, it is an essential stage in search for Sat Naam, truth of a book, a situation, an enterprise, or even of universe. In finding truth of a book one has to pass through certain stages like intellectual comprehension, discrimination of bright nucleus in the body of composition, building a sectional whole around these nuclei, and reaching a state of ecstasy intuiting a single whole of the total.

Ecstasy is state of integral psychosome, mind, body and environment. In that state man is in his natural psychosomatic rhythm and in *sehajic* resonance. Resonance is a technical term in electrical engineering which refers to state of circuit when it is sending out high frequency radio waves. Mind, body and environment, (mn, q`n qy DMn) is the total circuit of man through which his consciousness moves. Like there is natural frequency of a physical material, there is a natural rhythm circuit of all living beings. Yogis have made a dogmatic assertion of having discovered laws that govern the living circuit and codified it in an intricate system of Yoga. Nevertheless, this yogic science, if one may call it a science, still is in the realm of occultism. Its worth consists in its great sales value to gullible intellectuals and pseudo-intellectuals of Europe and particularly North America.

Ecstasy is the dance of life of living beings, rhythmic ebb and flow of life coming into resonance of the living being. It is known that Bhai Lehna used to dance in ecstasy around a small flame He used to worship in His room. In such state, it is flash of knowledge in human mind that causes mental upsurge towards intuition, flight of consciousness into unknown and a phenomena of revelation in a person. Flash of knowledge, intuition and revelation are the goals towards which ecstasy moves. *Soojh*, *Boojh* and *Darshan* are Nanakean terms to express the above idea in Sikhism. The highest ecstasy is integrative that involves the whole circuit and not any differential part of it. In man total circuit consists of mind, body and environment, mind being the impulsive, directional and controlling centre. All factors must be dynamically balanced before psychosome comes into natural rhythm. The immediate cause of ecstasy is the sound of Word or the inarticulate voice of a remembered word.

WHAT HAPPENS: Dynamic balancing of total circuit is essential before natural rhythm is attained. Opposition of personality, push and pull of the four variables can cancel each other when dynamic and symphonic balance is achieved. Mind is relieved of psychic burden of subconscious suppression, inhibitions and their consequent neurosis and psychoses. Weight of thought becomes free, takes wings and flies away into

regions of natural home (

inJ Gr). Every being has natural ideas it yearns for. This is where he is perfectly at home and it is the goal. When reached, it gives fullest satisfaction and happiness. It is the inner craving of total psychosome, result of mind, body and environment yearnings. The direction of this pull is unique, it is an extension of life as one lives. It cannot be changed unless one re-orientes either mind, body or environment really and substantially.

One who goes into ecstasy by reciting or even listening to *Japji* gets into natural rhythm, his consciousness moves out into freedom and ecstasy. Widespread religious fervor is all over the world, billions are spent on religious institutions, has its basis in this mechanism of ecstasy. Religious word brings people into that state easily. Any newer knowledge that will penetrate into, will be in line with his own present appreciation. It has to be deep rooted appreciation, and not just a surface veneer. Religious word acts as a *mistral* to their living and is the easiest method of intuiting knowledge in line with their own cravings of the heart. To the truthful, surely it can bring spirituality, but orientation towards Truth, *Sachiar*, must come first through change of thought. Ecstasy will follow, never precede, such mental change, if spirituality is the goal.

Ecstasy of Mind (

m~q): It is simply not true that a state of ecstasy brings out spiritual Anand in everybody, it will depend upon his own basic appreciation of mind or experienced pleasures of psychosomes. In *Sikhi*, mind is classified into "Durmat, (durm~q) Manmat (mnm~q), or Gurmat (gurm~q). Direction and intensity of flight of consciousness into freedom of ecstasy is determined by one's personality. In basic pure ecstasy there is negligible directional impulse, which is provided by knowledge content of Will of individual. Without directional impulse, value of ecstasy is fatuous, may even prove to be harmful to the person. The fact of consciousness becoming free creates a sense of ecstasy, but it does not prove de facto that it has moved into "freedom of super-consciousness". Whoever achieves this has attained spiritual bliss.

Ecstasy without purpose and direction is like joy-ride in an aeroplane, and leaves one vacant at the end of flight. Purposeful man goes out thousands of miles does have a current of anxiety in his mind, over and above the pleasures one drives from simple movement. There is a strain of anxiety and of expectations in his mind. Is he or is he not going to receive knowledge he is seeking? Intuition is the end of all purposeful ecstasy, and anxiety and tension is relieved only on its accomplishment.

The term ecstasy, or *anand* has been associated, for a long time, in Indian mind, with satisfaction of fleshly hungers. A debauch describes the satisfaction of an erotic experience in the same language as Sages would describe on achievement of ecstasy after a religious practice. A gourmand is in state of Anand after he has had a full meal; a poet reaches out to "seventh heaven" after he has described beauty of a *apsara*. Love, whether divine or worldly, is expressed in the same language, using same words. There are people who can see deep spirituality, in between the lines, in descriptions of Waris Shah or Diwan-Hafiz. The connotations gathered around words, 'ecstasy' and 'anand' are so vulgar that average person cannot attach any other significance to these except as an extension of vulgarity describing his everyday life's emotions. Heaven is more of a dreamland which underfed, under-nourished population deprived of the usual, as well as un-natural, erotic satisfaction, can dream of. Ecstasy for all these people is an extension of their own everyday desires and longings, not a positive grasp of any new situation, or brilliant flash of new idea, joy of experiencing a new living, or an integrating flight towards new philosophy.

Ecstasy is not the end result of a spiritual experience, but only an indication that spiritual experience is possible, if one preserves in it long enough, appreciates it in the right way, and is able to give it directional impulse through knowledge and orientation.

Awareness content will develop certain appreciation towards which the total being yearns and longs for. Under the influence of this longing, consciousness listens to newer knowledge. The psychosomes must be in correct orientation before one starts on ecstatic excursion and reach out to Infinite. Ecstasy and emotional exuberance alone are not enough, quality of mental content of individual is essentially important. One has to perceive a mental picture of Japji before one can expect to reach *Sat Naam*.

