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**METBOLISM IN THE LIVING CELLEXPLAIN THE THREE MAIN ASPECTS OF  
SPIRITUAL LIFE I.E. DEVOTION, BEAUTY AND SUBLIMITY**

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**Introduction**

How wonderfully Prof. R.D.Ranade revealed his spiritual experiences with the spirit of science and how He interrelated biological terminology with deep philosophical conception and then he presented the results in a rational and blissful manner. There are three aspects in the pathway to the God - they are Devotion, beauty and sublimity. Prof.R.D.Ranade observed that devotion is anabolic, beauty is metabolic and sublimity is catabolic emotional ecstasy<sup>1-6</sup>. In life science, there are biochemical reactions known as metabolic reactions in human body which constitutes of anabolism and catabolism. If we go through the scientific meaning of anabolism and catabolism we will come to know that metabolism is the set of chemical reactions that happen in the cells of living organisms to sustain life. These processes allow organisms to grow and reproduce, maintain their structures, and respond to their environments<sup>7</sup>. The word metabolism can also refer to all chemical reactions that occur in living organisms, including digestion and the transport of substances into and between different cells, in which case the set of reactions within the cells is called intermediary metabolism or intermediate metabolism. Metabolism is usually divided into two categories. Catabolism breaks down organic matter, for example to harvest energy in cellular respiration. Anabolism uses energy to construct components of cells such as proteins and nucleic acids. In Greek, Metabolism means (metabole - change, meta + bolien, bolien means to throw) ; Anabolism means (ana - up, bolien - to throw); Catabolism means ( kata - down and bolien - to throw).

**Aspects of Spiritual life**

The observations of Prof.R.D.Ranade regarding devotion was that devotion is a Religious zeal; the willingness to serve God or religious observance ; prayers (usually spoken silently) ; feelings of ardent love ; unison of a devotee with the God ; way of escape from death ; supreme virtue ; bhakti is entirely a '*sui generis*' ; Bhakti stands above the three Gunas ; surrender in our devotion and unless we resign ourselves completely to the power and will of God, no great achievement in Spiritual life is possible.

**'Atha ataha bhaktim vyakhyasyomah'**

"Prof.V.H.Date, a great realized saint emphasized the importance of Narada Bhakti Sutra in his mystical way that "Bhakti (devotion) alone is the royal road to the realization



of God. Of course the nature and the content of this Bhakti must be learnt from a powerful master who in the present is Narada himself<sup>8</sup>.”

Here a question arises in our mind that how Narada himself is the powerful master, also is there any secret behind this and why is He declaring that devotion alone is the royal road to the realization of God? Here is the answer to this- Narada had learnt this secret of devotion by his spiritual teacher Sanata kumar and he had given the work to Narada to spread the devotion and to acknowledge the seekers who are interested in the Spiritual path. The main message of the writer is that the spiritual teacher is responsible for a main base or centre of devotion , that is why Narada is said to be the powerful master.

Prof.R.D.Ranade mentioned the characteristics of a Spiritual teacher in his book ‘Mysticism of Maharashtra’ in the words of great Saint Ramadas. “Guru is that he possesses immaculate Self-knowledge, and the satisfaction of a determinate life in the self. To add to these, he must have extreme dispassion, and his actions should be beyond censure. With him, spiritual discussion must be a constant pastime; for him, the distinguishment between the false and the true must always take place. He uplifts the world and becomes the exemplar for the various kinds of Bhakti. He who leads people Sadhanaward and establish Sadhana on a firm footing- he alone can be called a Guru. Inwardly, there must be Self-illumination ; outwardly, there must be devoted Bhajan, whereby alone he leads his disciples to spiritual happiness..... Hence knowledge, dispassionateness, devotion, rightful conduct, Sadhana, spiritual discussion, meditation, morality, justice and the observation of the mean constitute the chief Characteristics of a Guru<sup>9</sup>.”

According to great Saint Ramdas it is clear that there are mainly ten characteristics that should be in a Guru (spiritual teacher). These are -

- 1 . Knowledge.
- 2 . Dispassionateness.
- 3 . Devotion.
- 4 . Rightful conduct.
- 5 . Sadhana.
- 6 . Spiritual discussion.
- 7 . Meditation.
- 8 . Morality.
- 9 . Justice.
10. Observation of the mean.

If we deeply analyze the life of Prof.R.D.Ranade from the beginning till end and simultaneously follow the path of devotion then we will find that He was endowed with all these ten characteristics by the grace of his spiritual teacher Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj who was just like the Spiritual teacher of Narada. So Prof.V.H.Date justified



it in his words “Devotion in other words, is to Prof.R.D.Ranade as to Jnanadeva, the key to and the guarantee for acquiring the kingdom of God<sup>10</sup>.”

Now the writer would like to highlight the **Devotion** characteristic of Gurudev R.D.Ranade. How he started the Spiritual career and how he ended it as a great devotee (Bhakta) of the highest order in the spiritual path.

I would like to present my own story when I went to Nimbali first time in my life in 1977. I went there with my Spiritual teacher Prof.V.H.Date. Once while walking with Prof.V.H.Date and his other devotees near Nimbali Railway Station, I happened to meet an old man who was sitting at the railway station, I thought to ask him some queries about Gurudev as he was very old and he must know Gurudev. After asking him whether he knew Gurudev or not then he answered me that he was the servant of Gurudev and he used to do so many works of Gurudev. I never saw or met Gurudev, so I asked him about the personality of Gurudev, how He was. The old man told me that you are the disciple of Prof.V.H.Date, Gurudev was just like him, He had exactly the same personality. I went straight forward in front of Prof.V.H.Date and I looked at Him as if He was Gurudev R.D.Ranade and I recalled my memory when in 1976 when first time I saw Prof.V.H.Date in a dream in which in his whole body, I saw small pictures of Gurudev R.D.Ranade. From that very day, I experienced that both are the same, there is no difference at all. One more thing which was told by Prof.V.H.Date that He was initiated by Shri Amburao Maharaj and he started devotion by the grace of Shri Bhausahab Maharaj and he perused his spiritual life with Prof.R.D.Ranade by his holy company, so a question arose in his mind that who was his Guru. So, he went towards Gurudev and he asked him the question. And Gurudev answered him not make any difference among them, all are one and the same. So, without any doubt in my mind, I was totally satisfied that all God-realised saints are one and the same. In Nimbali, We usually went for walking with Him before morning bhajan and evening bhajan and Prof.V.H.Date used to tell us about the life of Gurudev R.D.Ranade while walking around. I would like to present some of the illustrations of Gurudev’s life as told by Prof.V.H.Date which show unflinching faith and devotion of Prof.R.D.Ranade.

1 . When Gurudev was a teenager, he was living in his village Jamkhandi and while going to school He used to visit a temple of Lord Hanuman and he used to repeat the *stotra* of Lord Hanuman while walking to the way to school. So, it shows that from his childhood, he was a devotee.

2 . In 1918, his mother and his first wife died, but He remained steadfast as Geeta says

“ *eehaiv tairjit sargo yesham saamyē sthitam mann nirdosham he samam brahm tasmaad brhamani te stitha.*”



Which means - Those who live in Samyavastha is like God, He has conquered the bond of birth and death ; he is innocent like God and remain steady in brahm. At that moment, Prof.R.D.Ranade says to God, ‘ You and I shall live together.’ If we want to know about this then we come to know how he narrated the ethico-mystical characteristic of such a sthitaprajna in His own words in his book ‘Bhagvadgita : philosophy of God-realisation “Round about him is moving the Brahamn ; wherever his eyes is cast he sees God. If he looks ahead of himself he sees God ; if he looks behind, he sees God. This is exactly how Jnanesvara has described the vision of God as experienced by Arjuna. In like manner does Tukarama speak about his own experience. Inside you can see God ; outside you will be able to see God. You can see God inside, outside, to the left, to the right, above, below and everywhere. *hari ha bhonve bhonvtala* is what Tukarama says in this connection. When you can see God in such a manner then alone you may be entitled to the name of a sthitaprajna. So far then about the mystical characterisation of the sthitaprajna<sup>11</sup>.

3 . Gurudev R.D.Ranade purchased a car only for the purpose to go for meditation not like other people who prefer luxury and comfort. It shows that devotion to God was the only duty of his life. He always used to go to any solitary place for meditaion. For example, He used to go to funeral ground, bank of Yamuna river and Bargarh Railway Station which was at a distance of about 50 miles from Allahabad and he used to meditate there whole night and come back at 10 am. Also, he used to go the nearby fields for meditation in Nimbal. Gurudev used to say that “ if anybody wish to increase his faith and devotion to God, then go and meditate on a funeral ground ; then you will come to know the hollowness of the samsara and the fullness of God everywhere.”

4 . When He was in Allahabad, a barber used to come to Him to shave His beard, once while shaving, He suddenly asked him to stop shaving and told him to sing a devotional song, the barber immediately stopped and started singing. After finishing the Bhajan, Gurudev discussed about the song and so many spiritual ponits with him and the discussion continued about one hour, and then He asked the barber to complete the shaving. It clearly shows that there is nothing superior than devotion to God.

5 . In Allahabad, His sister used to serve him very much, once Gurudev told her that - if you are tired then you may leave because God is with me.

6 . Gurudev’s Devotion, bhaav and love was not only towards God but also towards people; He always wished that people should be devoted towards God. He used to say that why people waste their so much of time and this nature of people grieves Him a lot. In such kind of situation ,once one of his close friends actually saw him weeping outside His house at Nimbal. He asked Gurudev why He was bursting into tears. Then Gurudev answered him that his innumerable souls in the world are living without devoting themselves towards God and He further told that ‘What would happen to

these poor creatures.’

Prof.R.D.Ranade explained the contribution to the psychology of mysticism in the words of great saint “Unless tears come out of our eyes in the contemplation of God, we cannot be said to have true devotion. Tears indeed are an index of love towards God.” Here we can see that Gurudev R.D.Ranade’s eyes were always in the contemplation on the vision of God. He used to forget himself while contemplating on the vision of God and love was generated for the sake of other people that are why tears used to come out of his eyes due to humanity. So, tears indeed are a reflection of love<sup>12</sup>.

7. In His last day of life, He went outside by car and meditated silently for 2 hours and initiated one seeker. He never used to do any work without the sanction of God. Not only this, He used to surrender each and everything to God. He had acute T.B disease, and once He told doctors that how fortunate were the T.B germs which were living inside His blood. These illustrations show his unflinching faith and devotion. According to Him, devotion and surrender towards God should be increased not only for himself but for the society, nation and humanity, and for this He devoted himself superiorly.

Again I want to attract the reader’s mind towards the metabolism topic in which it is said that devotion is like anabolism. Anabolic reactions use raw materials taken in by the cells to make more complex molecules such as proteins and phospholipids

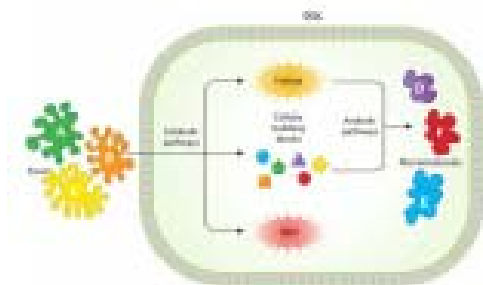
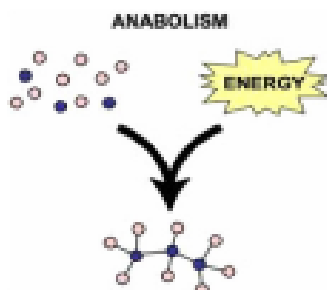


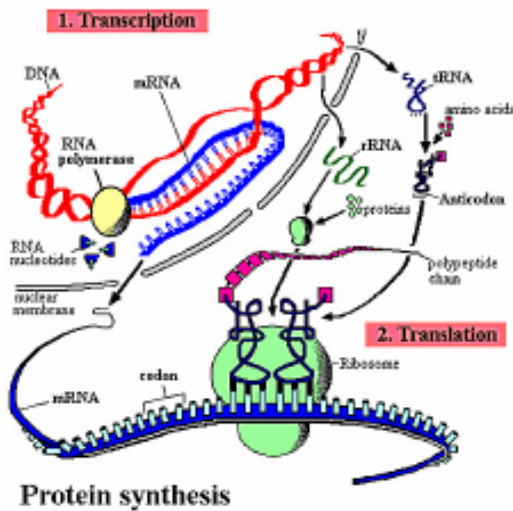
Figure 1: Contribution to a living cell which shows both catabolism and anabolism.

In this diagram raw materials taken in by the cells in the form of food - glucose, fructose, galactose, amoni acids and fats which are the end products of digestion and after absorption they are taken in by the cells (fig-1).



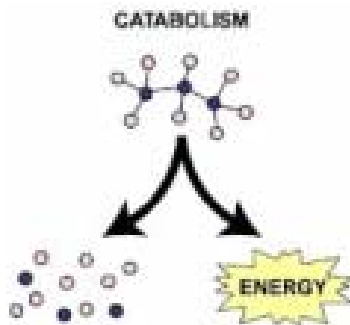
**Figure 2:** Anabolism requires energy which is released by catabolic reactions such as respiration which breaks down energy rich molecules such as glucose. Anabolism builds complex molecules out of simple molecules for example protein (fig-2).

Now protein synthesis is a complex process in which nuclear DNA, messenger RNA, ribosomes and transfer RNA actively take part (fig-3).



**Figure 3: protein synthesis**

Now here the writer is presenting the similarities between devotion and anabolism as Gurudev R.D.Ranade declared that devotion is anabolic process. “In devotion there is an upsurge of emotions or building up of an attitude of longing for God. It exalts or lifts us up to the divine region. By the power of intense devotion ‘the soul is being wafted upwards’<sup>13</sup>. Catabolism is exergonic phase in which complex food substances are oxidized or break down and combusted into simple molecules. Energy is released which is used in cellular activities (fig-4).



**Figure 4: complex substance breaks down into simple molecules and release energy.**

## Conclusion

As written previously that Catabolism is similar to sublimity. Prof.V.H.Date explained it in a very beautiful and scientific way in his book ‘Prof.R.D.Ranade and his spiritual lineage’ that sublimity is not phenomenal in character, but it is the attribute of the vision of God, the sensibility of the perceiver may not remain constant. There will be the cleavage between the seer and the scene, the relative dependence of the seer upon the scene or vice versa. The feeling of dependence which arise on account of the seeing of the sublime. Sublimity humbles down or conquers the mind of the aspirant. Why it is a break down process. He quoted an example of Abraham - ‘I am nothing, but dust and ashes before thee, O Lord.’ Sublimity is metaphysical in character in which sublime nature dominates the mind of man. Psychologically it plays a subservient role. In the sublime vision of God, feelings of fear, reverence, bliss, joy, wonder and love arise in the aspirant. For this, devotee should have pure mind, pure intellect and sanctification of soul. There are three main features of sublimity so far as metaphysics is concerned. They are Conquest of mind by Nature, Infinitude and the Divine.



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