

THE EVOLUTION OF ENERGY TRANSFORMATION MODELS IN BIODANZA

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Abstract

This article explores the evolution of the concept of “energy” within the methodological system of Biodanza, developed by Rolando Toro Araneda. It analyses the transition from symbolic or spiritual models to a paradigm centred on bodily, affective and biological experience. It examines Toro's methodological decision to avoid references to chakras or other esoteric systems, favouring instead the universal language of Vivencia and the Biocentric Principle.

1. A semantic and methodological transformation

In Biodanza, the term ‘energy’ is not used in an esoteric, mystical or metaphysical sense, but as a direct expression of life in motion: an experience lived through the body, emotion, contact and human encounter.

Rolando Toro deliberately avoided the use of the concept of “spirituality”, choosing instead terms such as transcendence, understood not as spiritual elevation, but as a profound integration of Being in connection with the totality of life.

This semantic transformation reflects a profound change in the way we understand the evolutionary processes of consciousness and identity: no longer as abstract transcendence or the activation of “energy centres”, but as bodily, affective and relational integration.

2. Overcoming symbolic models: the case of the chakras

One of the central points of the methodological evolution of Biodanza according to Rolando Toro was to “interpret the energetic processes in living systems”. Quoting Rolando Toro, *“The biological model of energy used in Biodanza is based on the concept of the cyclical transformation of substances that enter the body through food and oxygen in the air. This cyclical transformation was described by Krebs. The accumulation and release of energy in the organism is processed through ATP (adenosine triphosphate) molecules”* (1)

‘The concept of energy used in Biodanza corresponds to that of contemporary biology, which includes the concepts of ATP (Krebs cycle), and the mechanisms of oxidation-reduction, homeostasis and feedback systems.’ (2)

“The cyclical models of Biological Energy Transmutation and the models of Contact, Encounter and Caressing in Biodanza share a systemic structure in which energy is fed back, preserving the ultra-sensitivity of the system (homeostasis) and generating increasingly differentiated functional structures capable of ecological self-sustainability (transtasis).” (3)

From this point of view, it would be inconceivable for the Biodanza System to consider adopting the chakras as an interpretative model of human experience. Although Toro himself, in an overview of different energy models, recognised the cultural richness of these systems, citing them among the theoretical antecedents of energy transmutation models in his texts, where he describes their structure,

based on the refinement of the primordial Kundalini energy to achieve, through the successive chakras located in the body, absolute consciousness: the thousand-petalled lotus.

Toro believed that their inclusion would be inconsistent with the fundamentals of the methodology for several reasons:

- Non-universality: chakras belong to a specific spiritual tradition (Hindu/Buddhist), which is not shared by all cultures.
- Risk of abstraction: referring to invisible energy centres can distance us from experience, i.e. from concrete, emotional and embodied experience.
- Methodological inclusiveness: symbolic or esoteric language could exclude those with scientific, secular or simply different views.

Biodanza, on the other hand, does not interpret what is experienced through external maps, but relies on the transformative power of the vivencia in the “here and now”, without the need for additional concepts.

3. From spirituality to lived transcendence

Transcendence, in the context of Biodanza, does not refer to a religious experience or a connection with the supernatural, but to an integrative experience of unity with oneself, with others and with the surrounding environment. Transcendence is experienced in the body through dance, contact, music and emotional resonance. This approach is part of the Biocentric Principle, according to which life – in its biological, emotional and relational dimensions – is the central and organising value of the entire system. In this sense, “energetic transmutation” in Biodanza is an experiential rather than a theoretical process: centres are not stimulated, energies are not channelled, and predefined levels of consciousness are not activated. Instead, a gradual and natural awakening of vitality, affectivity, pleasure and connection is promoted.

“Through an experiential reorganisation of identity, using various forms of integration such as fluidity, contact, encounter, caress, trance and existential challenge, Biodanza induces accelerated effects of transmutation, concentration and expansion of energy in human beings.” (4)

4. Energy transmutation in Biodanza: the five lines of vivencia, an embodied and evolutionary model

In Biodanza, instead of any external symbolic map, we find the five lines of vivencia: vitality, sexuality, creativity, affectivity and transcendence. These lines represent areas of expression and development of identity and constitute an organic, interconnected system based on vivencia. Each line stimulates biological and psycho-affective functions without the need for conceptual or diagnostic interpretation.

The lines of vivencia are not ‘lay chakras’ or Western equivalents of energy centres. They constitute an experiential map, concrete and universal, which can be experienced by anyone, regardless of their beliefs or culture.

“Starting from the concept of genetic programming, the distinct forms or channels of energy appear, from the outset, to be highly differentiated in their instinctive structure. According to our hypothesis, vital energy would be channelled into five lines of manifestation.

These lines would be:

1. Vitality

Mechanisms of integration, survival, playful impulses

2. Sexuality

Sexual impulses of pleasure and orgasmic mechanism

3. Creativity

Creative expressive mechanisms

4. Affectivity

Gregarious impulse of cohesion and solidarity with the species, altruistic impulses of kindness, clemency and self-giving

5. Transcendence

Impulse to integrate ever broader totalities. Impulse to merge with unity and cosmic harmony

These energetic potentials are expressed when they find specific ecological factors in the environment.

(...) Energy transmutation is, therefore, a biological process that occurs through the encounter of genetic potentials with the environment, generating increasingly complex semantic structures that are fixed through RNA (memory). (...)

Energy transmutation occurs through the growth and mutual feedback of the five lines of genetic potential, a mechanism triggered by ecofactors, whose semantic charge is variable.

This model aims to demonstrate that biological and semantic systems belong to a single larger system, which is the human organism in integration with its environment. (5)

5. Conclusion: the energy of feeling

The evolution of energy transmutation models in Biodanza has undergone a profound redefinition through the vivencia method. Rolando Toro has developed a system that does not depend on religious doctrines or abstract energy models, but is based on what can be experienced in the body and in human encounters. In Biodanza, energy is not a force that must be “activated” or “channelled”, but a direct manifestation of life itself that pulsates in every gesture, emotion and relationship.

To quote Toro: “Intellectual knowledge does not produce existential change. Only vivencia has this power”.

I am infinitely grateful to Rolando Toro for his enormous desire for research!

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Notes and Bibliography:

- (1) Rolando Toro Araneda, Theory of Biodanza, Chapter V - Models of Energy Transmutation, Volume 1, IBF-CIMEB, Biodanza Study Centre Rome, p. 199
- (2) Ibid., p. 202
- (3) Ibid., p. 185
- (4) Ibid., p. 202
- (5) Ibid., p. 203