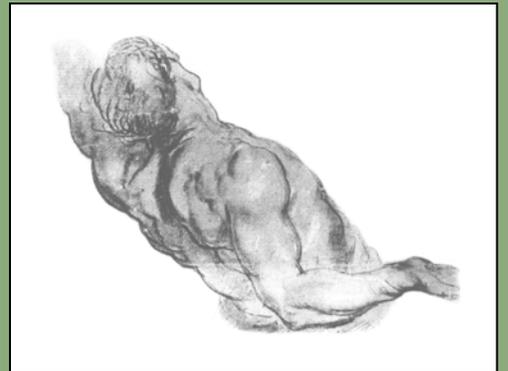


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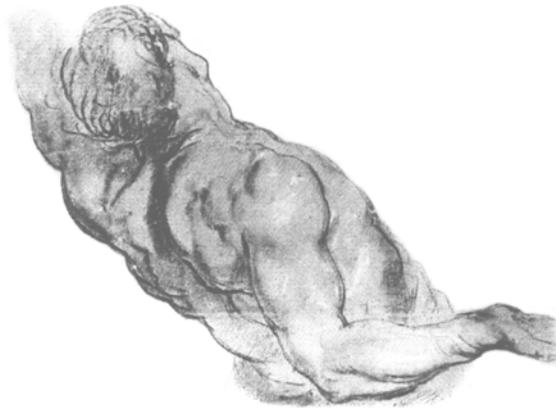


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A Tribute to David Boadella and
Energy & Character

Silvia Specht Boadella



David Boadella

Depth-Psychological Roots of Biosynthesis

David Boadella, D.Sc.hons, M.Ed., B.A.

Silvia Specht Boadella, Ph.D.

Abstract

Biosynthesis has depth psychological roots, is centered in the humanistic tradition of psychotherapy which is process oriented, and has deep connections within the transpersonal tradition. The body-psychotherapeutic aspects are common to all three. This article emphasizes the roots of Biosynthesis in character-analysis and its extensions, in the British psycho-dynamic tradition, and in the sign-oriented approach of attachment theory.

Keywords

Attachment theory - Biosynthesis - Depth-psychological roots in Biosynthesis - Transpersonal tradition

Biosynthesis is a form of somatic and depth-psychology oriented psychotherapy founded by David Boadella and developed further by Silvia Boadella, Ph.D. and the International Training Faculty of Biosynthesis over the past thirty years.

David Boadella was a trainee and analysand of Dr. Ola Raknes, who was a former member of the Berlin Psycho-analytical Institute and a member of the Scandinavian Psycho-analytical Association. Dr. Raknes was himself a trainee of Dr. Karen Horney and of Dr. Wilhelm Reich (see below).

Biosynthesis is connected to and is rooted in ten principle branches of psycho-dynamic and depth-psychological knowledge which are described below.

The economic theory of affect, drives, and psychic energy

This theory was first formulated by Freud in his early instinct theory. These early concepts of Freud have recently received strong corroboration from neuro-biological research (Allan Schore and Antonio Damasio) which have emphasised the importance of energetic and somatic processes as central to the understanding of consciousness. Similarly great support for the first instinct theory has come from the new discipline of neuro-psychoanalysis.

In particular the work of Mark Solms and Edward Nersessian has emphasised the energetic aspects of drives, as linked to motoric processes in the body these researches support the central role given in Biosynthesis to psychic energy, affective contact and motoric expression.

The topographical theory of psycho-analysis

Freud's concept of the id, the ego and the superego introduced a tripartite topology of consciousness. The distinctions of conscious and unconscious are related in Biosynthesis to the concept of implicit and explicit memory. Freud, who had trained with the embryologist Paul Roux, called his tripartite schema a "psychic embryology." A revised topological theory was developed by the British Object Relations School, in the work of Ronald Fairbairn (see below). In Biosynthesis, Freud's "psychic embryology" is related to the understanding of the morphogenetic organisation of the human body and the three related "lifestreams" of affect, behaviour and cognition. All modern emotion theory supports the understanding of the need for an integration, in healthy functioning, of these three principles, whereas their splitting and dissociation is related to forms of neurosis.

Freud described the ego as having ultimately a somatic basis. Paul Federn developed this somatic ego-psychology further. In Biosynthesis we distinguish motoric and perceptual ego functions. The concept of the superego was further developed in the British Object Relations School by Ronald Fairbairn and its connections with the theory of affects and drives has been well described by David Smith and David Boadella in their contributions to *Maps of Character*.

The dynamic theory of psycho-analysis

This theory dealt with the concepts of resistance and transference. The concept of resistance in Biosynthesis is supplemented by Sandor Ferenczi's understanding of the role of muscular tension in resistance and by Wilhelm Reich's related concept of muscular armouring. The concept of transference is similarly extended to include the concepts of Melanie Klein on projective identification and the concepts of the embodied transference described by Martin Dornes. Transference is understood in Biosynthesis to include processes of somatic resonance and vegetative identification which are forms of entrainment between persons that have been

studied in great detail by the neuro-biologist Allan Schore, who provides extensive psycho-physiological support to the concepts of Biosynthesis.

The theory and practice of character-analysis

The psycho-analytical understanding of character was first developed, on bases outlined by Freud, by Karl Abraham. The resulting characterology was further refined and developed by Wilhelm Reich, in the Technical Seminars which he led for the Austrian Psychoanalytical Association in Vienna, between 1924 and 1930. Reich's seminars on characterology were attended by Anna Freud whose book *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence* explores further some aspects of the concepts of character structure. Working closely with Reich was Otto Fenichel, a principle psycho-analytical theoretician in Vienna. After 1930 Reich and Fenichel moved to Berlin where Karen Horney, an analysand of Karl Abraham, attended the seminars on character. Karen Horney moved to America and became a prominent neo-Freudian. When Hitler came to power, Reich and Fenichel moved to Norway at the invitation of Harold Schjelderup, professor of psychology at Oslo University, and of Ola Raknes, a member of the Berlin Psychoanalytical Institute and of the Scandinavian Psychoanalytical Association. At the 13th International Psychoanalytic Congress in Lucerne, in 1934, Reich extended his character-analytic concepts to the understanding of affective energies in the vegetative nervous system and of the related muscular and respiratory tensions. His extended method he called after this "character-analytic vegetotherapy"; and this tradition was further developed by Trygve Braatoy, author of a classic book on psycho-analytical theory and by Dr. Nic Waal, an associate of the Menninger Clinic, who was director of the Institute of Psychiatry at Oslo University, as well as by Dr. Ola Raknes, who trained David Boadella.

Analytical posturology and clinical movement therapy

Independently of Reich, Felix Deutsch made connections between character process and movement patterns. He called his work "analytical posturology." Deutsch was a strong influence on the Hungarian psycho-analyst Bela Mittelman, who carried this work further. The American psycho-analyst Judith Kestenberg took their principles and developed them to what she had learned about expressive movement from the Hungarian movement specialist Rudolf Laban. Kestenberg related movement expressions of her clients to affective and drive states as understood in psycho-analysis and to character expressions as understood in analytical posturology. This was one of the roots of clinical movement therapy using depth- psychological principles. This tradition passed into Biosynthesis from four sources: Elsa Lindenberg, the second wife of Wilhelm Reich, a trainee of Laban's; Diana Jordan, a British trainee of Rudolf Laban, the clinical movement teacher of David Boadella; Liljan Espenak, a Hungarian trainee of Laban who also collaborated with Ola Raknes; and the Japanese movement teacher, Kazuo Ohno who creatively applied many principles of Laban in his work. Silvia Specht Boadella studied both with Elsa Lindenberg and with Kazuo Ohno and applied what she learned of movement therapy principles in a depth-psychological context, in the Biosynthesis Trainings.

Body-image and body-schema research

The Viennese Psychology Professor Paul Schilder, who was a teacher of Wilhelm Reich, developed the first psycho-dynamic and depth-psychological theory of the body-image.

He was influenced indirectly by the work of Pierre Janet and by the work of Henri Bergson on motoric memory. Schilder's insights were to become the mainstay of body-oriented psychotherapy, which influenced a number of psycho-analysts in the direction of more awareness of the role of the body in imagery and in consciousness. Schilder influenced Maurice Merleau Ponty in his concept of the habitual body. Later researches in this area demonstrated the importance of the body-schema as a process underlying the body-image. In Biosynthesis we work sometimes from the body-image to the body-schema and sometimes from the body-schema to the body-image. We use both of these to influence changes in the psycho-dynamic structure of the client.

Psycho-somatic therapy

Georg Groddeck, in Berlin, is often considered to be the father of German psycho-somatic medicine. He developed the concept of the „id“, which Freud used in his topology of consciousness. However, Groddeck's „id“ corresponded much more to the whole body. Groddeck was a close friend and colleague of Sandor Ferenczi

and, through Ferenczi, an important influence on Wilhelm Reich. Groddeck worked with the symbolic aspect of bodily processes and also directly with muscle tensions and with breathing patterns in his client and presented his work at the congress of the Deutsche Kollegium für Psychosomatische Medizin, in Dresden, in 1931.

A second form of psycho-somatic medicine, working more with classical principles of interpretation, was developed by the Freudian Franz Alexander. This tradition was continued in America by Flanders Dunbar, a prominent psycho-analyst. Dunbar was married to Theodore Wolfe, a specialist in psycho-somatic medicine, who became a close colleague of Wilhelm Reich once Reich moved to America.

The Deutsche Collegiums für Psycho-somatische Medizin contains many prominent doctors and psycho-therapists, associated with the name of Thure Von Uexküll, who have continued the depth-psychological understanding of the relationship between psyche and soma down to this day. Von Uexküll was influenced by Viktor von Weiszäcker, in the tradition of Groddeck, and has opened his understanding to what he calls "subjective anatomy" and to the methods of body-oriented psychotherapy. Essential literature from Biosynthesis is included among his references and Von Uexküll has explicitly supported Biosynthesis as a psychotherapy form which embodies many of the principles he had developed.

Pre-and perinatal psychology and research

Otto Rank, as a member of Freud's inner circle, focussed his attention on the depth- psychological understanding of pre-verbal states and in particular of pre- and peri-natal states. He understood, as did also Pierre Janet, that the formation of the personality pre-dates birth and that early non-verbal experiences can be recaptured in later life. The psycho-dynamic understanding of the importance of the period for later personality development was further developed by psycho-analysts such as Sadger, Phyllis Greenacre, Rank's Hungarian trainee Nandor Fodor, by the British psycho-analyst Francis Mott, who was a pupil of Nandor Fodor, and by the psychiatrist Frank Lake who was strongly influenced by the work of Mott. More recent work in this area has been carried out by the Italian psychoanalyst, Piontelli.

Lake was a close colleague of David Boadella in London in the early seventies. Biosynthesis works strongly with the understanding of the depth-psychological importance of this early period before birth and includes methods of working with this period, both symbolically and through body-oriented methods.

Neonatal research

One of the first psycho-analysts to study infant development at close hand was Wilhelm Reich, who set up an infant research clinic, in the USA, in 1950. Reich emphasised the importance for later psycho-dynamic development of the early contact between mother and infant, in the form of touch interactions, eye contact and the creation of empathic bonding. In the same year John Bowlby, a British psychiatrist, prepared for the World Health Organisation his report on "Maternal Welfare and Child Health." Bowlby had been very influenced by the work of Ian Suttie and of Michael Balint.

Bowlby's work focussed on the processes of attachment between mother and child and how personality development arose from this. He described four principal varieties of attachment, which are one of the bases of the Biosynthesis understanding of empathy. Bowlby's attachment theory was carried further in relation to delinquent and maladjusted children by the Scottish psychologist, Donald Stott. David Boadella completed his Master's Degree in clinical research based on the work of Bowlby and Stott, in 1960.

The study of parent-infant patterns was carried further in researches by Paul and Jean Ritter at the Peer Institute in Nottingham, based on the psycho-dynamic insights of Ian Suttie, and on the energetic insights in the infancy research of Wilhelm Reich. Biosynthesis includes many of these principles in its understanding of human development, since David Boadella was a co-worker at the Peer Institute between 1954 and 1963.

Following the early insights of Suttie and Bowlby, Margaret Mahler and Daniel Stern, Allan Schore and others have promoted the second wave of infancy researches which confirm many important depth-psychological principles. In particular from this second wave of infancy research has come the understanding of "affect-motoric schemas" of contact in early development, and this research confirms the early understanding in Biosynthesis of motoric fields of expression and experience, which are related to the development of the body schema, and to our emotional communications in relationship.

Developmental psycho-dynamics

The early psycho-analytical insights into affect and drive, which lay the basis for the understanding of psychic energy, was followed by the understanding that affect occurred principally in relationship to others, and that human energies were not only intra-personal but to a major degree inter-personal. The bases of relational psycho-dynamics were greatly carried forwards by the Hungarian psycho-analyst Sandor Ferenczi, from within Freud's inner circle, when he emphasised the primacy of the mother-child relationship in affecting mental health or unhealth and the importance of the therapeutic work providing a corrective emotional experience and not just an

interpretation of what had gone wrong. Ferenczi and Otto Rank together can be seen, in their collaboration in the mid nineteen-twenties, as the founders of "object relations."

Ferenczi's work was translated into English by the wife of Ian Suttie, a prominent British psychologist, who wrote his own book, "The Origins of Love and Hate." These relational insights were carried forward further in the work of the Scottish psycho-analyst Ronald Fairbairn, and his colleague and student Harry Guntrip, who together laid the bases of British Object Relations theory and in particular of the in-depth study of the schizoid personality, who retreats from relationships into his inner world. They in turn influenced strongly Donald Winnicott, a child psychiatrist, who also pioneered some aspects of body-oriented understanding of psycho-dynamic process. Winnicott and Bowlby became close colleagues and worked at the Tavistock Institute for Human Relations in London. It was at the Tavistock Institute, the headquarters of British Object Relations Theory, that David Boadella was invited to present the inter-personal theory of character-structure, as developed within Biosynthesis, in 1973.

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Biography

David Boadella (born 1931), B.A., M.Ed., D.Sc.hon, Psychotherapist SPV, UKCP and ECP. Studied education, literature and psychology. Trained in character-analytic vegetotherapy. Founder of Biosynthesis. He has spent many years in psychotherapeutic practice. He holds lectures worldwide, and is the author of numerous books and articles. He has been publishing the journal "Energy & Character" since 1970. In 1995 he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the "Open International University of Complementary Medicine". A selection of David Boadella's books: "Befreite Lebensenergie / Lifestreams" (Kösel / Routledge), "Wilhelm Reich: The evolution of his work" (Arkana).

Silvia Specht Boadella (born 1948), Ph.D., Psychotherapist SPV and ECP. Studied philosophy, literature, art history and psychology. Trained in Biosynthesis. Since 1985 she has undergone ongoing further training in "Psychosomatic Centering" (Robert Moore, Denmark). She spent four years lecturing at the University of Kanazawa (Japan). There she dealt intensively with Zen Buddhism and trained in Buto dance with Kazuo Ohno. Since 1985 she has had a psychotherapeutic practice for individual and group therapy. Since 1986 she has been a Biosynthesis trainer at an international level and director of the IIBS. She has published a book: "Erinnerung als Veränderung" (Memory as Change) (Mäander).

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