

The Manifold of Sense - Part II

By Sam Vaknin

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To say that emotions are cognitions is to say nothing. We understand cognition even less than we understand emotions (with the exception of the mechanics of cognition). To say that emotions are caused by cognitions or cause cognitions (emotivism) or are part of a motivational process – does not answer the question: "What are emotions?". Emotions do cause us to apprehend and perceive things in a certain way and even to act accordingly. But WHAT are emotions? Granted, there are strong, perhaps necessary, connections between emotions and knowledge and, in this respect, emotions are ways of perceiving the world and interacting with it. Perhaps emotions are even rational strategies of adaptation and survival and not stochastic, isolated inter-psychoic events. Perhaps Plato was wrong in saying that emotions conflict with reason and thus obscure the right way of apprehending reality. Perhaps he is right: fears do become phobias, emotions do depend on one's experience and character. As we have it in psychoanalysis, emotions may be reactions to the unconscious rather than to the world. Yet, again, Sartre may be right in saying that emotions are a "modus vivendi", the way we "live" the world, our perceptions coupled with our bodily reactions. He wrote: "(we live the world) as though the relations between things were governed not by deterministic processes but by magic". Even a rationally grounded emotion (fear which generates flight from a source of danger) is really a magical transformation (the ersatz elimination of that source). Emotions sometimes mislead. People may perceive the same, analyze the same, evaluate the situation the same, respond along the same vein – and yet have different emotional reactions. It does not seem necessary (even if it were sufficient) to postulate the existence of "preferred" cognitions – those that enjoy an "overcoat" of emotions. Either all cognitions generate emotions, or none does. But, again, WHAT are emotions?

We all possess some kind of sense awareness, a perception of objects and states of things by sensual means. Even a dumb, deaf and blind person still possesses proprioception (perceiving the position and motion of one's limbs). Sense awareness does not include introspection because the subject of introspection is supposed to be mental, unreal, states. Still, if mental states are a misnomer and really we are dealing with internal, physiological, states, then introspection should form an important part of sense awareness. Specialized organs mediate the impact of external objects upon our senses and distinctive types of experience arise as a result of this mediation.

Perception is thought to be comprised of the sensory phase – its subjective aspect – and of the conceptual phase. Clearly sensations come before thoughts or beliefs are

formed. Suffice it to observe children and animals to be convinced that a sentient being does not necessarily have to have beliefs. One can employ the sense modalities or even have sensory-like phenomena (hunger, thirst, pain, sexual arousal) and, in parallel, engage in introspection because all these have an introspective dimension. It is inevitable: sensations are about how objects feel like, sound, smell and seen to us. The sensations "belong", in one sense, to the objects with which they are identified. But in a deeper, more fundamental sense, they have intrinsic, introspective qualities. This is how we are able to tell them apart. The difference between sensations and propositional attitudes is thus made very clear. Thoughts, beliefs, judgements and knowledge differ only with respect to their content (the proposition believed/judged/known, etc.) and not in their intrinsic quality or feel. Sensations are exactly the opposite: differently felt sensations may relate to the same content. Thoughts can also be classified in terms of intentionality (they are "about" something) – sensations only in terms of their intrinsic character. They are, therefore, distinct from discursive events (such as reasoning, knowing, thinking, or remembering) and do not depend upon the subject's intellectual endowments (like his power to conceptualize). In this sense, they are mentally "primitive" and probably take place at a level of the psyche where reason and thought have no recourse.

The epistemological status of sensations is much less clear. When we see an object, are we aware of a "visual sensation" in addition to being aware of the object? Perhaps we are only aware of the sensation, wherefrom we infer the existence of an object, or otherwise construct it mentally, indirectly? This is what, the Representative Theory tries to persuade us, the brain does upon encountering the visual stimuli emanating from a real, external object. The Naive Realists say that one is only aware of the external object and that it is the sensation that we infer. This is a less tenable theory because it fails to explain how do we directly know the character of the pertinent sensation.

What is indisputable is that sensation is either an experience or a faculty of having experiences. In the first case, we have to introduce the idea of sense data (the objects of the experience) as distinct from the sensation (the experience itself). But isn't this separation artificial at best? Can sense data exist without sensation? Is "sensation" a mere structure of the language, an internal accusative? Is "to have a sensation" equivalent to "to strike a blow" (as some dictionaries of philosophy have it)? Moreover, sensations must be had by subjects. Are sensations objects? Are they properties of the subjects that have them? Must they intrude upon the subject's consciousness in order to exist – or can they exist in the "psychic background" (for instance, when the subject is distracted)? Are they mere representations of real events (is pain a representation of injury)? Are they located? We know of sensations when no external object can be correlated with them or when we deal with the obscure, the diffuse, or the general. Some sensations relate to specific instances – others to kinds of experiences. So, in theory, the same sensation can be experienced by several people. It would be the same KIND of experience – though, of course, different instances of it. Finally, there are the "oddball" sensations, which are neither entirely bodily – nor entirely mental. The sensations of being watched or followed are two examples of sensations with both components clearly intertwined.

(continued)

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The Exhaust System

By Kevin Schappell

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Your car's exhaust system carries away the gases created when the fuel and air are burned in the combustion chamber. These gases are harmful to humans and our environment. A frequent check of your exhaust system is a must to provide for you and your family's safety. Make sure there are no holes in the exhaust system or in the passenger compartment where exhaust fumes could enter. Let's begin by listing the parts of the exhaust system and their functions.

Exhaust manifold: The exhaust manifold attaches to the cylinder head and takes each cylinder's exhaust and combines it into one pipe. The manifold can be made of steel, aluminum, stainless steel, or more commonly cast iron.

Oxygen sensor: All modern fuel injected cars utilize an oxygen sensor to measure how much oxygen is present in the exhaust. From this the computer can add or subtract fuel to obtain the correct mixture for maximum fuel economy. The oxygen sensor is mounted in the exhaust manifold or close to it in the exhaust pipe.

Catalytic converter: This muffler-like part converts harmful carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons to water vapor and carbon dioxide. Some converters also reduce harmful nitrogen oxides. The converter is mounted between the exhaust manifold and the muffler.

Muffler: The muffler serves to quiet the exhaust down to acceptable levels. Remember that the combustion process is a series of explosions that create a lot of noise. Most mufflers use baffles to bounce the exhaust around, dissipating the energy and quieting the noise. Some mufflers also use fiberglass packing, which absorbs the sound energy as the gases flow through.

Exhaust pipe: Between all of the above-mentioned parts is the exhaust pipe which carries the gas through its journey out your tail pipe. Exhaust tubing is usually made of steel but can be stainless steel (which lasts longer due to its corrosion resistance) or aluminized steel tubing. Aluminized steel has better corrosion resistance than plain steel but not better than stainless steel. It is however cheaper than stainless steel.

Common Problems:

Well, the worst enemy of your exhaust system is corrosion... or more commonly known as rust. Rust is caused by moisture reacting with the iron in the steel and forming iron oxide. Moisture, or water vapor, is present in the exhaust as a by-product of combustion and the catalytic converter. Moisture can also come from the outside in the form of rain.

Short trips in your car can shorten the life of your exhaust system. When you shut down your engine whatever water vapor is in the pipes condenses and turns back into a liquid. On a short trip the water never has a chance to get hot enough to turn back into water vapor and just stays in the system and rusts away the pipes. If you drive for short distances consider replacing your exhaust system with stainless steel when the plain steel one rusts through. If you drive more than 15 miles at a time then you should not have to worry about this.

If you live in an area, which uses salt on the roads in the wintertime, make sure to wash the underside of you car with water every few weeks. Salt speeds up the corrosion process and getting it off as soon as possible will help stop the corrosion. Make sure you run the engine after washing to drive off all of the water on the pipes.

Noticing a decrease in your gas mileage? Your oxygen sensor could be going south on you. As time goes on the oxygen sensor begins to wear out and becomes less accurate. This sometimes results in a rich fuel mixture where your engine burns more fuel than is needed. Most of the time your check engine light will come on and alert you to a failing oxygen sensor. I suggest changing the oxygen sensor every 60,000 miles just to be safe. Even though your check engine light might not be on, you could be using more gas than is needed. Pay a few bucks and change the sensor, your wallet will thank you when you have to buy less gas down the road.

The next part in line to go is the muffler. Most of the time mufflers rust through and need to be replaced. There are allot of options out there for replacement mufflers. Some cheap and some expensive. It holds true... you get what you pay for. If you plan on keeping your car for any period of time, spend the extra cash and get an OEM muffler or a high quality name brand muffler.

On rare occasions the catalytic converter will become clogged and need to be replaced. Symptoms include loss of power, heat coming from the floor of your car, glowing red converter or a sulfur smell. Never let a mechanic tell you that you can do without the catalytic converter. Removing this component is illegal in most states and can lead to a hefty fine to the government if you are not careful.

That's about it for the exhaust system; just remember that rust is the biggest enemy to your exhaust system. Take the above-mentioned steps and your exhaust system will last a long time

Kevin Schappell maintains <http://www.carbuyersclub.com> where he gives advice on buying, selling, insurance, and financing. A mechanical engineer and car guy, Kevin has decided to spend his online time helping others learn about automobiles. To learn more about how your car works, Kevin has created <http://www.mycarwizard.com>.

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