

Sensation (sensation, ощущение; Latin *sensus perception, sensation, feeling*)

Psycho-physiological ability or the corresponding actual experience – action – process; biophysical and biochemical transformation of the information received from outside or one's own body into neuroelectric impulses which takes place in the sense organs. These electric impulses are later transferred to the corresponding area in the brain which, automatically ('neurophysiologically') evokes the corresponding experience. This kind of experience is short lasting and diffuse and is experienced as distinct only in exceptional cases [see **Gestaltization**]. It, normally, merges with the **perception** process. Sensation is, mostly, a neurophysiological process and, only, partially has psychological nature.

Sensation is always directed from outside inside. Not only the outer world, but also one's own body are external for the soul (psyche). Correspondingly, there are two main types of sensations: outer or extraceptive sensations (coming from the outer world) and internal or intraceptive sensations (coming from one's own body – organic sensations) [see also proprioceptive sensations].

Many plants have the functions that are close to those of sensation. The best known is the 'sensing' of sunlight by the sunflower. But this is not a real sensation. Sensation of the animate being is different from that of the plant since it processes the information which has no biological importance [see **animate being**].

Sensation is the beginning of the perception process. However, it can be considered as the lowest level of perception, the most primitive form of perception. For example, the perception of the most primitive species (single cell and the primitive multicellular organisms, and, maybe worms, too) is a direct contact perception and can be almost reduced to sensation. The individual receives information from the environment through senses, but such information is very vague and poor. It only shows that there is something outside there, but what that something is, the identity of that something is unknown and the image is not formed. However, this is enough for the simplest species because such information mostly adequately evokes the corresponding reactions of acceptance and avoidance (e.g. accepting 'something' which can be used as food and 'avoiding' something). In the case of humans such primitive feelings take place only in exceptional cases. For example, a sleeping person is woken up by a loud noise; the person senses some noise or receives information about the existence of some noise; accordingly, he/she

wakes up and raises her/his head; they also experience fear, caused by something unexpected and anxiety. But at the beginning, they only experience 'some noise' – vague, **Gestalt**-less noise. Moreover, the noise is experienced as one's own state (somewhere in the ears or eyes) rather than something in the outer world or external sensation is the same as internal sensation since the external sensation has not become differentiated from the environment, yet. The same happens with the visual perception of the person who was blind in the past, but has just started to see things after eye surgery. During the first minutes he/she only feels 'some light' in their eyes or head.

The human being and most highly developed animals have 5 external senses: sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste (These have many sub-types of sensations, like warmth – cold, roughness – smoothness; wetness – dryness; pressure, softness – hardness, etc). In addition, there are many internal sensations: sense of balance (which has the corresponding organ inside the ear), motion, hunger, thirst, pain, muscle fatigue, itching, burning, nausea, numbness ... In the case of human beings and highly developed animals, internal sensations (sometimes, also external sensations when they are not neutral) instinctively evoke more or less strong **sets** and, correspondingly, the **feelings** accompanying the given sensation and charging it with specific emotions. Most internal sensations are naturally related to negative feelings because the soul mainly receives warning signals about oneself from inside; however, if all the physiological processes are running healthily, then internal sensations are not at all needed. Because of being emotionally charged, even psychologists find it difficult to distinguish sensations from other psychological concepts and confusion often takes place. For example, it is wrong to link sensations with intuition.