

## **Lorik Q&A Karl Brunnholz**

1. We are taught that there are two divisions of mental direct perception - of a sense perception and sort of esp or clairvoyance or pre-cognizance. Is there a mental direct perception of a thought?

No, except for the mental valid cognition of thoughts in the minds of others in clairvoyance.

2. Is memory direct perception of a re-arisen thought?

It is a thought that has something past as its object and is listed as one of the cases of seeming DVC in the Lorik.

3. What is the object of clairvoyance?

Depends which kind of clairvoyance you mean, traditionally there are six types:

- a) The divine eye is to see all the forms in which all the various close and distant [beings] are reborn after their present bodies have passed away.
- b) The divine ear is to hear and understand all the various sounds, languages, and designations.
- c) The knowledge of [all] minds' specifications is to know all the more or less predominant thoughts and dormant tendencies of sentient beings.
- d) The knowledge of the body's miraculous powers refers to knowing how to blaze [with fire], [display] many, few, good, or, bad [bodies], walk on water, and sink into the earth. [617]
- e) Recollection of former states is to remember—starting from [beings'] present bodies—in which places they dwelled in former lifetimes and the accounts of any actions they committed.
- f) While being conscious of the progression of when certain afflictions to be relinquished through seeing and meditation have been relinquished and certain [others] have not [yet] been relinquished, one knows that one has attained the wisdom that they are exhausted and do not arise [again]. This is the knowledge of the termination of contamination.

6. Is a preta's perception of water as pus direct and valid?

Among the perceptual community of pretas and their conventional reality, yes. In general, human perceptions and the perceptions of any other kind of being are not better or worse or false or correct when compared to each other, because they are all just expressions of different habitual tendencies, which are all fundamentally flawed by ignorance. However, when the Buddha taught the dharma here, he mainly taught for humans and thus related his teachings to our perceptual and cognitive framework. Preta-dharma would surely be different in some respects ... But from a Buddha's point of view, all such perceptions are invalid.

7. What are the mental factors in terms of direct/indirect?

Do you mean DVC and IVC and which mental factors accompany those? Always the five omnipresent ones and from the rest, any given number/class depending on virtue/non-virtue etc. In general, it is said that non-conceptual minds have non-conceptual mental factors and conceptual ones have conceptual mental factors. There are no DVCs with conceptual mental events or IVC with non-conceptual ones. In other words, they always match in terms of being non-conceptual or conceptual.

8. Can the kleshas be direct or indirect or what?

Depends on the understanding of klesha, i.e., whether you talk about the raw energy of, for example, anger. That is non-conceptual (but not a DVC! of course, only its self-aware aspect is). If you have angry thoughts and conceptualize, the accompanying mental event is a conceptual klesha. However, the borderlines are sometimes extremely thin/slippery, since we are not talking about solid, neatly dimensioned things, but about different facets of our one mind that keep changing and fluctuating every moment, like ripples on a lake. So it's hard to say "this klesha goes from here to there and it is such and such" KTGR said that if you really fully understand the mental events, you are a Buddha.

9. Can we have a direct exp/perception of an emotion/klesha?

You CAN, it is the self-aware aspect of it, of the raw energy. That is what they talk about in Mahamudra and Vajrayana, looking at the essence of that klesha, which is neither afflicted nor pure - it is just the natural display of mind.

10. How does the innate view of the self fit in - it can't only be in the root klesha of ignorance, but must pervade the whole set of minds and mental factors, the whole range of skandhas. Surely there is an underlying ignorance throughout all of the mental factors, since we say that even feeling as the second skandha operates upon a false view of things for those of us that are not enlightened? Even direct perception must be tainted by this view, until it is yogic direct, correct?

Sure, all that we think and perceive is only possible due to basic ignorance and comes out of it, so you could say that the whole presentation of Lorig (except for yogic DVC) and mental events is a map that only makes sense in the country of ignorance.

11. What is the relation between valid and true and correct - is valid cognition correctly perceiving reality, i.e. as without essence/self?

Valid here depends on many levels: sense DVC and mental DVC are only valid among human beings on a conventional level, whereas yogic DVC is overruling

those and reveals them as invalid. And a Buddha's wisdom shows all yogic DVC of bodhisattvas on the bhumis to not have been the finally valid cognition. Obviously, sense cognition is based upon duality and ignorance, it does not cognize ultimate reality w/o self/essence. That is only possible for yogic DVC. But again, true and correct depend on the level you are talking about. Among ordinary humans, sense DVC is correct, true, but not for Buddhas.

*A Note on Perception:*

As for your question, any labeling is always conceptual. So the eye consciousness does not see "red", but it sees what we call red. It is said that for all mental factors there are two types: conceptual and nonconceptual. That means there is a nonconceptual form of discrimination accompanying an eye consciousness, which is hard to grasp (of course, this is because we can only discriminate conceptually). Roughly speaking, you could say that an eye consciousness that perceives red is different from an eye cons. that perceives blue, and there is always the mental factor of discrimination (one of the omnipresent ones), in that case by definition nonconceptual, since it accompanies a nonconceptual consciousness. Now, how exactly nonconceptual discrimination works - beats me. As Khenpo Rinpoche once said, "If you fully realize how all the mental events work and function, you are a Buddha ..."

12. What are the NAF's in terms of specific or generally characterized phenomena? Seems that since they are dharmas, they are specifically characterized? How are they experienced – by sense or mental consciousness? Direct or indirect? Are they not content of thought also?

They are specifically characterized phenomena, since they are things (not because they are dharmas, those include generally characterized phenomena too). As to what experiences them, there the problems start: since all of them are basically processes, sense DVC cannot experience continua per se, but only distinct moments. To talk about aging or impermanence (not just a single impermanent moment of something), for example, you have to make a connection between former and later moments, which no DVC can (by definition). Thus, they would have to be experienced by conceptual consciousness, which however contradicts them – since by definition they are things, as they are specifically characterized phenomena. That is why other schools just kick them out of their system or say they are mere conceptual imputations.

13. Can the content of a thought perform a function – create a similar thought or thought of a similar content? If so, is it a specifically characterized phenomena?

Here, it's the old problem of English/everyday language not being clear. The content of a thought in Lorig language is a generally characterized phenomena by definition. Thus it cannot perform a function. However, we strongly feel that it can, such as it being a big difference whether I think about my girlfriend or

Osama Bin Laden, or about kissing her as opposed to killing someone. However, Lorig says that it is the thinker/thinking mind that performs the function, basically the mental impulse/movement in your mind as opposed to what that movement carries. The confusion arises however since we do not usually differentiate between those two and they seem to be one and that's why we think/feel that thoughts - i.e. the blur of thinker and what it thinks of - perform a function.

14. I understand that it is not meant to be exhaustive, but the standard list of mental factors seems to be missing some very basic ones – hope, fear, sadness, sympathy, love, compassion, etc. Can you add them?

Sure, there are limitlessly many mental factors. The fifty-one are just the main ones in terms of the neutral, virtuous and nonvirtuous mental factors that lead to samsara or nirvana, respectively. Also, in the Mahayana list of the mental factors, “non-violence” is defined as “refraining from harming others out of compassion.” Thus, compassion is included here.

15. In what way is cognition different from consciousness?

In both Sanskrit and Tibetan, there are many words for mind. Most of them are equivalent, but are used differently in different contexts. In English translations, words such as cognition and consciousness are not necessarily used in their “normal” usage. An additional problem is that modern cognitive science, philosophy, and psychology all have their own ways of understanding and using these terms. However, in general, it seems important not to bring in extrinsic understandings of the terms used here, but stick to the definitions as they are given in the text.

16. If there can be a direct exp/perception of an emotion/klesha (as indicated above), then since this is by definition non-conceptual, is this only in the very first moment of mental cognition? Are only sense cognitions capable of producing non-conceptual klesha experiences? Can one think of something, then that generates anger and the first moment of that anger is non-conceptual/direct? How does this relate to the notion that only the first moment of mental cognition arising after a sense cognition can be direct, all subsequent moments are conceptual/indirect?

That direct experience lasts exactly as long as you can stay in that nonconceptual state of merely experiencing it (that's the whole point of Mahamudra). Usually, that doesn't work very well and concepts kick in very soon. You can have nonconceptual experience of a klesha at the same time as/triggered by a sense perception or a mental DVC, doesn't matter. If the primary mind is nonconceptual, the klesha is too and if not, not. Another way to say this is that it is the raw experience of the klesha as opposed to conceptualizing that experience (which we usually do immediately and then call that anger, but really it is lots of thoughts based on some experience that may have happened already a while ago; it may of course be parallel - experience of raw anger and concepts about it). As

for first moment of mental DVC, every sense DVC only triggers a single moment of mental DVC, but that does not mean that mental DVC becomes conceptual in the second moment. The first moment ceases and if the sense DVC continues, its second moment just triggers yet another single moment of mental DVC (mental DVC is by definition always nonconceptual). The first moment of anger IS usually nonconceptual, it is a matter of catching that experience or not. Usually we are always way behind and THINK, e.g. "I'm angry" or "That prick" or whatever. In general, anger and so on can accompany sense DVC, mental DVC, and conceptual mind. However, kleshas are NOT perceived by mental DVC, because it by definition only perceives outer objects (just as sense DVC). As the text says, anger and so on are experienced by self-awareness (in their nonconceptual forms). Then, concepts kick in and we spin into a story line about the initial direct experience of anger.

17. Is (wrong) view really a mental factor? Seems more like a state of experience that pervades all of the mental factors, in fact our entire experience. It really seems very different from the other root afflictions.

It just has many different coarse (e.g. there is a permanent atman, outer things exist independently) or subtle (e.g. subject and object are different) levels or conscious/unconscious views about oneself and the world. In the end, the most subtle kind of view just blends into basic ignorance or the basic sense of duality. Specifically, wrong views are not understood here as just any wrong views, but primarily as wrong views about karma (cause and effect), former and later lifetimes, and the true nature of phenomena.