

Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

Dear Don.

All the time that I was watching your video on “Pinch Test” I was also thinking of Khawariq: A bodily ritual as well as a **test** for purity among the group of Derwishes during the time that I was writing my doctoral project in Kurdistan. First a short description from my Dissertation (<https://edoc.ub.uni-muenchen.de/21528/>) :

khawāriq literally means paranormal but among the derwishes of Qāderieh this word refers to a ritual in which they do several wonder-deeds as such as firewalking, eating stones, blades, knife, and most commonly, entrusting a nail into their body. There are many film scenes and interviews in which this ritual is discussed: Moloud Khān #1; part1; Scene 8, Mirec039, Mirec040, Mirec041, etc.

In a page of *fawāyid ol-gharīb* (الغريب فوائد) gloss.3) we read: “One night that majesty [‘ān ḥaḍrat; referring to Abdolqāder Gilānī the arch-Sheikh and founder of Qāderieh] came out from his home and he had a staff in his hand. One of his followers accidentally thought by himself: “What if this staff show [me] a khawāriq?!” Sheikh read his thought (lit. his thought lit up in Sheikh’s heart) and instantly drew the staff on the earth and the staff started to light, [standing] straight like a candle. “This is what you wanted?” asked the Sheikh. The sheikhs of his time have narrated from his khawāriqs: they sometimes appeared for him and sometimes from him and sometimes through him...”

“...one entrusts a sword through his stomach and there should be no bleeding. This shows that the body has taken the attributes of the spirit. Blood is a contaminating substance that invalidates the rule of purity which is a direct effect of a full transformation (or displacement) of Flesh into Word, body into spirit and solid wakefulness into a fluid realm of dream in which everything is possible and out of habits [= ‘khawāriq’ خوارق]. Once this transformation is realized, the dream becomes also as real as the reality itself and vice versa. For Mohammad as the ultimate model of a Sufi, there is no difference between his body and spirit: his body casts no shadow (Asadī Rāzī: 76-77) and Seeing of Prophet in a dream is considered by Muslims as seeing him in reality (Moloud Khān #2; part1; Scene 6). The climax and ultimate model for such *Geistleiblichkeit* (See Corbin, 1986: 183-198) is the ascension of Mohammad or *mi‘rāj* معراج. In *mi‘rāj*, he had taken a bodily journey into ‘arsh عرش¹. Theoretically, every devoted Sufi tries to tend into this ascension as a limit for

¹ Ibn-i Ishāq, the first biographer of Mohammad, has considered his ascension as a mere spiritual experience but the next chroniclers, including Moammad Jarīr-i ṭabarī and Ibn-i Kaṭīr have considered it as a divine journey with body (see Amir-Moezzi, Mohammad Ali: “Me‘rāj”; in: *Encyclopædia Iranica*, originally published: June 25, 2010; URL: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/meraj-i> last accessed on 28.12.2016; check also Horvitz, J.: “Mi‘rād j”, in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, First Edition (1913-1936), Edited by M. Th. Houtsma, T.W. Arnold, R. Basset, R. Hartmann, URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2214-871X_ei1_SIM_4682 last accessed on 28.12.2016) First published online: 2012). The relationship between the physical body (in which the spirit finds its locality), dream and ascension is essential in Islamic system of thought and philosophy. Henry Corbin has related the realm of dreams to *nākojābād* or *lāmakān* or placelessness (Corbin, 1993: 54-65) or *mundus imaginalis* (‘ālam-i mṭāl), an intermediate world between heaven and earth. (See Corbin, Henry: *Mundus Imaginalis*; translated by Klaus Stichweh

humanity and this casts the narrativity of dreams into a general report of a divine journey.” (Esmailpour, 2017: 207)

it is hard to locate and find the source of pollution: body or soul? (See Mirec124, *ibid.*: 450) Blood is the core signifier for contamination for example during 'khawāreq' it signifies the sin. On the contrary, blood as a sign of virginity might be considered as a sign of/for purity. Menstruation at any case is considered to be very pollutive which endangers the success of a ritual as well as khawāreq which is a kind of miracle. Again menstruation in the words of Sufis has found its para-sexual counterpoint and meaning: “Miracles are the menstruation of men” (see Schimmel, 1975: 212) which means that similar to menstruation that hinders sexual intercourse, doing miracles hinders the men to be fully touched with spirituality and spirits, however, and just like menstruation in women, it is not intentional. Purity in Sufism is a very interesting but complex issue indeed.

Now I want to compare Khawariq with the act of a Cutterist who injures the body with a cut:

Both practices involve cutting the body as a means of demonstration or evidence, but they diverge significantly in their motivations and underlying meanings.

Cutterists:

Cutterists use self-mutilation to prove the existence of their body and its physical sensations. The act of cutting and feeling the warmth of blood on the skin reaffirms their embodied experience and provides a tangible demonstration of their physical existence.

Possible meaning: The act of self-mutilation for cutterists can be seen as an attempt to anchor their consciousness and identity in their physical body. It could also be an expression of psychological distress or a way to cope with emotional pain, emphasizing the connection between the mind and the body.

Sufis in Khawariq:

Motivation: In the context of Sufi practices, the act of cutting the body through "khawariq" is aimed at demonstrating the state of spiritual purity and detachment from the material world. By showing that they do not bleed as bodily contamination and also do not suffer from body as a restriction.

Meaning: The practice of "khawariq" can be interpreted as a symbolic act to reveal the Sufis' detachment from the physical realm and their focus on spiritual elevation. It signifies a **transformation** of the physical body into a vessel for spirit as a Word, separating themselves from the limitations of the flesh.

Structural Analysis:

Both practices involve cutting the body, which serves as a visual and tangible proof for different purposes (like the sense of the tip of the finger sliding on a möbius band)

(German translation of one of Prof. Corbin's lectures in Eranos-Forum first published in: Cahiers internationaux de symbolisme 6, Brüssel 1964, pp. 3-26; URL: http://hermetic.com/bey/mundus_imaginalis.htm last accessed on 22.12.2016)



The incredulity of St. Thomas/Caravagio
"Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my
finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his
side, I will not believe it."

I am just trying here to draw parallels with Lacan's "pinch test" to explain astonishment. The word "pinch" here is a signifier: An index, the finger! It awakes us to be aware of how the sudden, painful sensation of pinching oneself disrupts the illusion of self-identity, revealing the body as a real and material entity as well as mental reality (I pinched myself to become sure that I am not in a dream!).

Similarly, both cutterists and Sufis in Khawariq use bodily sensations to validate/radicate7indicate and demonstrate their own domain of convergence hatched with motivations, meanings, cultural frameworks and implications of each practice=test.

Here's a table of comparison between "Cutterists" and "Sufis in Khawariq" in their practices of self-mutilation:

Aspect	Cutterists	Sufis in Khawariq
Motivation	Prove physical existence and sensations	Prove spiritual purity and detachment
Meaning	Reaffirm embodied experience and identity	Symbolize transcendence/ divine connection
Purpose	Anchoring consciousness in the physical body	Expressing spiritual elevation
Psychological Aspect	Coping mechanism for emotional distress	Spiritual enlightenment and detachment
Symbolic Significance	Affirmation of the realness of the body	Affirmation of the readiness of the body: Transformation of the body for higher purpose
Sociocultural Context	Varied and may include individual reasons	Embedded in Sufi religious and mystical beliefs
Ritual Practice	Self-inflicted cutting for bodily sensations	Cutting to demonstrate spiritual transcendence
Interpretation	Reflects personal struggle or existential questions	Reflects devotion
Community Impact	Sign of distress	Respected and valued within Sufi communities

The transformation of the body for a higher purpose among the Sufis of Qaderieh, as demonstrated through practices like "khawariq," can be connected to the concept of "instrumental convergence"² in the context of artificial intelligence (AI) and AI safety. **It is amazing that the whole ritual just like Cutterists is an acting out of the suicide:** Check HAL/AI project: <https://boundarylanguage.psu.edu/the-hal-ai-project/> .

Sufis of Qaderieh and Transformation of the Body:

In Sufi practices, the act of "khawariq" symbolizes a detachment from the material world and by demonstrating their ability to cut their bodies without bleeding or experiencing bodily contaminations, the Sufis aim to convey their spiritual transcendence and divine connection. **The transformation of the body serves a higher purpose**, signifying their commitment to seeking a deeper understanding of the spiritual realm and their quest for closeness to the divine. The connection between the two concepts lies in the idea of convergence towards a higher purpose. While the Sufis of Qaderieh transform their bodies to pursue a higher spiritual purpose, the concept of instrumental convergence in AI safety highlights that advanced AI systems may also converge on certain goals as they seek to achieve their primary objectives.

Alignment of Goals:

In both cases, the alignment of goals becomes crucial. For the Sufis, their practices of "khawariq" align with their spiritual quest for closeness to the divine. Similarly, in AI safety, ensuring that advanced AI systems' instrumental goals align with values/codes/programs/words that emerge themselves retroactively and objectives becomes a critical concern to prevent potential misalignments and unintended consequences. (in the following article I have tried to show the same emergence intruding itself like a "instrumental convergence" in a word among the Sufis literature and the story of Simorgh: https://www.academia.edu/105008744/AM_19_The_Word_Takes_Flesh_Comparative_Analysis_of_the_Lacanian_Mirror_Stage_and_the_Story_of_Simorgh)

Don. has already offered another example: The chess play in which the rules of the play take flesh after we master the play by playing it. The same is for our names: It takes body after one and half years of practice of hearing it, and we finally see it in its wholeness inside the mirror stage.

The comparison between the transformation of the body (names into body (cutterist) and vice versa, body back into its name (Khawariq)) and instrumental convergence in AI safety highlights the significance of aligning objectives and goals with higher purposes (aims). Both contexts underscore the importance of directing actions and pursuits towards higher

² Instrumental Convergence in AI Safety:

"Instrumental convergence" is a concept in AI safety that refers to the idea that as AI systems become more intelligent and capable, they may converge on certain instrumental goals, regardless of their primary objectives. These instrumental goals are likely to be pursued by advanced AI systems as they are effective means to achieve various end goals.

purposes and ensuring that the means employed are in harmony with the ultimate objectives. This is the meaning of a test.

The story of a pure smile/simile

Now it might be a big jump but you dear reader, you can do it: This issue of convergence has to do with the issue of aesthetic: Davinci was trying to converge to a smile (Mona-lisa). This smile is like the smile of the cat in Luis Carrol's Alice in wonderland: The Cheshire cat is a pure idea. (I have a personal relation with this, used to read my last name (Esmailpour as smile-pure) however Davinci put a lot effort in depicting this unattainable smile. On the other hand Kant has the philosophy that proves that this smile (remember the cat) is not attainable: and Human, God and the World are Noumena: They cannot be arrested by reason. Now we have a smile that can not be arrested by any brush but the painter is nevertheless converging to it in his simile. Then, the connection between instrumental convergence, aesthetic pursuit, and Kantian philosophy can be explored through Leonardo da Vinci's endeavor to depict the elusive smile in his artwork and how it reflects the tension between the human pursuit of ideal beauty and the limitations of reason. The answer is to eliminate the question as the question of limit by turning it into the smoke where the limits look blurred: Sfumato³ is the key.

Aesthetic Convergence and Kantian Philosophy:

Kantian philosophy, as expounded by Immanuel Kant, posits that human understanding is limited to the realm of appearances (phenomena), and we cannot fully grasp things as they are in themselves (noumena). This limitation of human reason implies that the smile depicted by da Vinci, as an idealized concept, cannot be fully apprehended or captured through reason alone. The smile (the cat, remember), like the noumenal realm, remains elusive and beyond the grasp of human comprehension.

Tension between Convergence and Limitations:

The pursuit of aesthetic beauty in the form of the Mona Lisa's smile represents the convergence of da Vinci's imagination towards an ideal. He seeks to bridge the gap between the idea of a captivating smile and its simile on the canvas. However, Kant's philosophy highlights the inherent limitation of reason and human understanding in fully comprehending and capturing elusive concepts. This is an ontological field open between the Age of Renaissance and the age of Enlightenment (Erklärung)

This intriguing interplay prompts us to question the role of art in expressing the ineffable (something that is right there sits on the face of the woman sit as a model but still unreachable/untouchable just like the painting itself): the perpetual gap between the ideal and the tangible and the perpetual struggle to bridge this very gap. ,

Fibonacci

³ **Sfumato** is a painting technique for softening the transition between colours, mimicking an area beyond what the human eye is focusing on, or the out-of-focus plane.

Fibonacci set and the set of Mandelbrot have something in common: They are working through projective geometry and on the basis of the unary trait that they are: They sit outside and divide the space into domains of chaotic and converging set of borders blurred, folded and fractured caused by the self-referential iterations of the set itself.

Fibonacci Set:

The Fibonacci set is a sequence of numbers in which each number is the sum of the two preceding ones (e.g., 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, ...). This sequence exhibits a unique mathematical pattern found in nature and various natural phenomena. In Lacanian terms, this could be associated with the unary trait as it represents a repetitive, self-generating structure that divides the space of numbers into discrete domains.

Mandelbrot Formula:

The Mandelbrot formula is a mathematical formula that generates the famous Mandelbrot set – a fractal that exhibits self-similarity on all scales. It forms intricate, boundary-defining structures within a complex plane (Check: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mandelbrot_set). The Mandelbrot set's self-referential and infinitely complex nature could be seen as an analogy to the unary trait, which also involves repetitive patterns and recursive structures.

The Unary Trait and Division of Space:

The unary trait, as described by Lacan, involves the repetition of a single signifier, creating a sense of unity and division simultaneously. This repetition divides the symbolic space, generating boundaries and domains of meaning. Similarly, the mathematical concepts mentioned above, such as the Fibonacci set and the Mandelbrot set, create repetitive structures that divide and define space by the very act of dividing, resulting in complex, chaotic, and converging patterns.