

March, 2010

Posted to the In-The-Garden Yahoo Group

Re: Pronunciation of Arabic

Dear Family,

Greetings of the Heart to each of you! We are so blessed to have such a powerful vehicle for love, community, embodiment and transformation in the Dances.

As far as the question "Should we ask Shabda to make the decision for us?" My wish for each of you is to become alchemists, mystics, so that at each opportunity you make the wise decision, no need to call me!. Each circumstance in life would naturally call for a unique response, not some blanket rule decided by a Pir.

So there is no clear answer to the paradox of correct pronunciation.

First language takes birth from, is preceded by, feeling and inner meaning, so if we reach being intune with the infinite, then who can question the method.

Now, if we take Arabic as an example, it goes through so many changes as it travels from country to country, from culture to culture. Our lineage traces from Mother India where the Urdu/farsi pronunciation is dramatically different than what might be called classical Arabic. For example YA HAFIZ (Urdu) in classical Arabic is YA HAFEETH, YA AZIM (Urdu) is YA ATHEEM. So which is correct. Pronunciation is different in Egypt, in Morocco, and much more dramatically in our Dance circles.

My own sense is that we do our best to inform ourselves deeply about origins and pronunciations and then make our choices based on that. Then we can make more conscious choices.

It is very likely that through Murshid Sam's travels he learned EL IL ALLAH. Hazrat Inayat Khan gave a talk on the benefit of using the EL sound instead of the IL sound (text attached).

So you can see your own intuition is needed when to use one form given as transmission and when to use the form of the place or people you are standing with.

Our book, *Physicians of the Heart, A Sufi View of the 99 Names of Allah* will be out by May 1. We have made an effort to learn and communicate the classical Arabic pronunciation, which you can find on our website <www.physiciansoftheheart.com>. In the book, even though we provide the opportunity of learning the classical pronunciation we make it a point of not making too much of it in your practice.

Let us all be as deeply educated as we can on every aspect of the sacred phrases we use in the Dances and then bring our best wisdom on what to bring to the Dance.

Much love, Shabda