

Using Indo-European Liturgical Language

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Question #1: Translate the following liturgical phrases into your Hearth Culture language:

My Hearth culture is Welsh.¹

1. We are here to honor the Gods.

There are three possible ways to translate this, depending on what is actually meant by 'honor'.

- a. *We are here to honor the Gods.* Rydym yma I anrhydeddu'r Duwiau.
- b. *We are here to reverence (pay homage to) the Gods.* Rydym yma I dalu gwrogaeth i'r Duwiau.
- c. *We are here to worship the Gods.* Rydym yma i addoli'r Duwiau.

2. So be it (or a similar finalizing statement): Bydded felly.

3. Ancestors, accept our offering! Hynafiaid, derbyn ein hoffrwm! (To say, Ancestors, accept our sacrifice! would be: Hynafiaid, derbyn ein haberth!)

4. Nature Spirits, accept our offering! Ysbrydion Natur, derbyn ein hoffrwm! (or for sacrifice instead of offering: Ysbrydion Natur, derbyn ein haberth!)

5. Gods (Deities), accept our offering! Dduwiau, derbyniwch ein hoffrwm! (or, for sacrifice instead of offering: Dduwiau, derbyniwch ein haberth!)

6. Sacred Well, flow within us! Ffynnon Sanctaidd, llifa o'n mewn!

7. Sacred Tree, grow within us! Goeden Sanctaidd, tyfa o'n mewn!

8. Sacred Fire, burn within us! Ddan Sanctaidd, llosga o'n mewn!

9. Let the Gates be open! Agorer y Pyrth!

10. Gods, give us the Waters! Dduwiau, rhowch i ni'r Dyfroedd! (if you want it to be, Gods, give us the Waters of Life!, then it would be: Dduwiau, rhowch i Ddyfroedd Bywyd!)

11. Behold, the Waters of Life! Wele Ddŵr Bywyd!

12. Ancestors, we thank you! Hynafiaid, diolchwn i chi!

13. Nature Spirits, we thank you! Ysbrydion Natur, diolchwn i chi!

14. Gods (Deities), we thank you! Dduwiau, diolchwn i chi!

15. Let the Gates be closed! Caeed y Pyrth!

Question #2: What do you consider to be the importance of using phrases in a hearth culture language other than Modern English (or your own native language) in ADF ritual? (Minimum 200 words)

I'm actually of two minds on this subject. The argument has been made that using the language of the ancients allows a more clear form of communication with our ancient Gods. However, I find that argument specious. First of all, the Welsh language of today could hardly be the same language spoken by the peoples of pre-Christian Wales. If we must use a language spoken when last the Gods were worshipped, then we are in trouble indeed.

However, having said that, I do think that the use of phrases in the language of the hearth culture can add greatly to the feel of the rite, creating a tie to the old country, which can give a somewhat magical quality to the ritual, as well as to aid in theatricality. It also can reinforce the feel of the pantheon in use, and enable the participants to imagine, if only for a moment, that they are truly part of that hearth culture. However, there should not be too many phrases outside of the participants' native tongue. I am tempted to remember the old liturgy of the Catholic Church, which was performed entirely in Latin. While the rites may have felt magical, I doubt many people had any real idea of what was going on.

The use of the phrases could immediately be followed, at least the first time they are used in the rite, by the same phrase in the native tongue. For example, the Priest could say, "*Bydded felly!* So be it!" With repetition, something like *Bydded felly!* will certainly be easily understood and even repeated back (and learned) by new participants, even without the translation following the Welsh. Other phrases, though, such as *Wele Ddŵr Bywyd!* (Behold, the Waters of Life!) or *Diolchwn i Chi!* (We thank You!), are only used once or at most a few times. These phrases would need the translation in the native tongue to follow immediately afterwards, so that any new participants could be sure of what was said.

But the use of hearth culture phrases is a valuable tool in the liturgist's and celebrant's toolkit, and while they should be used sparingly, they will nonetheless provide color and texture to a ritual.

¹ For this course, I primarily used the suggestions of the Welsh Language Board, an organization in Wales funded by the government to aid in the use of Welsh. Their free translation services have been a great boon to me. Services can be requested by going to <http://www.bwrdd-yr-iaith.org.uk/>, clicking on 'English', then clicking on 'Advice', and then clicking on 'Contact us'. (Sept. 22, 2005)