

BRO NEVEZ

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE BRETON LANGUAGE
NEWSLETTER OF THE U.S. BRANCH

Quest-France
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Elle témoigne de la culture bretonne aux États-Unis

Loïs, la marraine américaine

Loïs Kuter est ethnomusicologue et vit à Philadelphie. Mais son cœur est aussi en Bretagne. Elle était hier au milieu des enfants de l'école Diwan dont elle est la marraine. Un engagement qui va de pair avec les efforts qu'elle déploie pour faire connaître la culture bretonne aux USA.

Avec ses cheveux noirs tirés en arrière, et son teint clair, elle serait chez elle en n'importe quel pays de basse-Bretagne. Loïs Kuter est née et vit aux États-Unis. Mais son cœur est aussi ici en Armorique. Un coup de foudre qui remonte à vingt ans. Elle est étudiante lorsqu'elle débarque en terre bretonne. Elle se passionne d'emblée pour sa culture et sa langue, et surtout sa musique.

Cette fille d'Américains venus de Pologne et d'Allemagne, n'a jamais cessé de témoigner chez elle de la présence de l'une et l'autre : « c'est une richesse », plaide-t-elle. Loïs, devenue ethnomusicologue, consacre une bonne partie de son temps, chez elle à Philadelphie, à diffuser les nouvelles du Pays breton. Rédactrice de Bro Nevez (un journal diffusé par correspondance), elle intervient aussi sur WXPB, une des radios du campus de Philadelphie. Des fonctions bénévoles qu'elle cumule avec le poste de secrétaire de la branche du Comité international pour la sauvegarde de la langue bretonne. Les principales maisons de disques et



Loïs Kuter au milieu des enfants de l'école Diwan : « il faut garder la langue »

d'édition locales lui envoient leurs dernières productions. Et l'Amérique découvre un peu mieux ses lointains cousins celtes.

Nos racines sont importantes

Ces efforts lui ont valu de recevoir cette semaine à Guérande le collier de l'Hermine, de l'Institut

culturel breton. D'être aussi choisie il y a deux ans, comme marraine de l'école Diwan de Landerneau. Un lien de plus avec la Bretagne. Loïs et les écoliers l'entretiennent en correspondant avec elle. Profitant de sa venue en Bretagne, l'universitaire américaine est venue hier rendre visite à ses amis landerneu. Une halte privilégiée au beau milieu d'une semaine de

vacances bretonnes riches en émotions. L'occasion aussi de se nourrir à la source d'une passion, que de nombreux autres Américains partagent : « En Amérique, des milliers de gens parlent autre chose que l'Anglais. Dans ce pays on comprend facilement la question des cultures minoritaires. Nous avons tous des racines, elles sont importantes ».

KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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The U.S. ICDBL provides Bro Nevez on a complimentary basis to a number of language and cultural organizations in Brittany; in some instances we are also very happy to establish an exchange of publications.

***LOIS KUTER (and the U.S. ICDBL) HONORED BY BRITTANY
Gouel an Erminig 1995***

On September 23, 1995, I was honored by cultural and civic leaders of Brittany, France, as one of five new inductees to the Order of the Ermine. Founded by Breton Duke Jean IV in 1381, this honorary order was unique in Europe for its election of women and commoners to its ranks in recognition of their service to Brittany (mostly the service of defending then-independent Brittany from invasion by France). Although the Order died out when Brittany lost its independence in the 16th century, it was not forgotten. The Order of the Ermine was brought back to life in 1972 by CELIB president, Senator Georges Lombard, to honor his predecessor in that post, René Pléven. In 1985 the Cultural Institute of Brittany (Skol Uhel ar Vro) instituted a yearly ceremony to honor people who have served Brittany, especially in the cultural area.

Each year Breton scholars on the various sub-committees of the Institute (archeology, art, history, music, oral traditions, literature, theater, etc.) nominate individuals they feel worthy of such an honor, and then a final list of four or five individuals are selected to be approved by those already inducted into the Order of the Ermine. Then invitations are sent out to those to be elected. I got my invitation in August, but was asked not to tell anyone about it since it is supposed to be announced only on the day of the ceremony. I am the first American to be so honored, and as you can imagine, getting this "life-time achievement award" is a huge honor for me. I am now one of 36 in this honorary group of people who have worked to support the Breton culture. (Other than Catalan leader Jordi Pujol, I am the only non-Breton). And it is an honor only possible because of the many Bretons who have generously helped me learn about Brittany, and because of the many friends here on this side of the Atlantic who have supported all the work I have done and keep asking for more! Without all of you who have become involved in the ICDBL I would certainly not have remained so active.

Before describing the Ceremony of the Ermine, let me explain the ermine, and why an animal in the weasel family figures into an event to honor the Breton culture and people who work for it. The ermine and symbolic representations are found on the Breton flag and early coats of arms and city emblems of Brittany. It is said that in the 10th century the courage and ferocity of this little animal inspired Alan Twisted Beard (Alan Barbe Torte) to defeat the Normans who tried to invade Brittany. Inspired by an ermine which faced up to a fox he adopted the motto "Death rather than defilement." If the ermine represents anything, it is tenacity, and it is the life-long commitment of people in support of the Breton culture that is recognized by the ceremony each year for the Order of the Ermine.

Members elected in previous years to the Order of the Ermine are present on stage and cultural leaders, friends and family, from all over Brittany are invited to attend this annual ceremony. Each newly elected member of the Order is introduced by a "god parent" from among those already inducted into the Order. Then the President of the Cultural Institute, of Brittany, Pierre Le Treut, presents the medallion ("collier" or, literally, necklace) crafted by artist Pierre Toulhoat on the 14th century model. Then the new member gets to give a short speech. Each year a different city hosts the ceremony, and this year it was the town of Guerande in southeastern Brittany that hosted the event. Music from the area hosting the ceremony is always a part of the event, so in between the speeches was traditional song and music of the veuze performed by young musicians of the Guerande area.

So, imagine me nervously sitting on stage with four other new inductees and 20 or so eminent Breton cultural leaders sitting across the stage. In the audience are several hundred other Breton civic and cultural leaders. The presentations were done in alphabetical order. After two others are introduced and give their speeches, it is my turn, and my "god father" steps up to the microphone to present me -- and I was certainly very honored to have an introduction by Alan Stivell. Besides giving a bit of biographical information about me, Stivell emphasized the importance of being interested not only in one area of Breton culture, but in linking things together -- i.e., one can be interested in Breton music, but one must also work to support the Breton language and other aspects of Breton culture. Although I have spoken before many audiences before, this was one of the largest, and giving a speech in French was certainly a challenge. I worked hard to keep it mercifully short and to the point in addressing how I became interested and involved in working for the Breton culture. The French text (which I read at the ceremony) and an English version are included below.

After all the inductees were presented and had the opportunity to speak, the formal ceremony closed as it does each year with the singing of the Breton national anthem, "Bro Goz ma Zadou." Then everyone gathered for a buffet dinner which offered a nice opportunity to talk to some of my cultural "heros" of Brittany.

While I have written about the Ceremony of the Ermine in past issues of Bro Nevez, I never imagined that one day I would be invited to participate in it. While I have only been at work for 15 years so far, the other individuals elected to the Order of the Ermine this year have made life-long commitments in a number of areas. Ivona Martin has devoted 60 years (at least) to Breton language literature and teaching. Jean Fréour is a world recognized sculptor whose statues can be found throughout Brittany, in Belgium, Italy and Africa. Archeologist Jacques Briard has been a key researcher and author of many books on Brittany's numerous prehistoric sites. And Loeiz Ropars, while best known for his work to revitalize Breton traditional song and dance in the 1950s, has been active throughout his life as a Breton language teacher and defender of the environment and small farmers of Brittany.

Those inducted into the Order in previous years are: Vetig an Dret-Kervella, Charlez & Chanig ar Gall, Anna-Vari Arzur, Herry Caouissin, Vefa de Bellaing, Bernard de Parades, Per Denez, Yvonig Gicquel, Pierre-Roland Giot, Glenmor, Ronan Huon, Pierre Laurent, Robert Legrand, Per Lemoine, Louis Lichou, Georges Lombard, Joseph Martray, Polig Monjarret, Gabrielle Pescatore, Michel Phlipponneau, Yann Poilvet, Jordi Pujol (Catalonia), Henri Queffelec, Maryvonne Quéméré-Jaouen, Alan Stivell-Cochevellou, and Albert Trévidic. Sadly six others of this group have died in recent years: Yvonne Jean-Haffen, Pierre-Jakez Hélias, Jean Mévellec, René Pléven, Henri Queffélec, Jean Tricoire.

While I (and all the other inductees) could think of a dozen others more qualified to join such a prestigious group, Bretons were very pleased to include an American in the Order and they have appreciated especially the work of the U.S. ICDBL and the publication of Bro Nevez (distributed widely in Brittany). For those who haven't heard my history, I got involved with Brittany in the late 1970s when there for a year to do research for a doctoral dissertation on Breton identity and Breton music and language as expressions of Breton identity. I was asked to found a branch of the ICDBL when I got back to the U.S. in 1980, and the rest is history--certainly a history made possible only because of the many people who have shown an interest in Brittany and who have supported the U.S. ICDBL. Over the years, I have also given a number of lectures and classes on Breton culture and

produced a radio series here in Philadelphia for the past ten years. I have also been involved in a number of very interesting projects to help make Brittany better known, from concert notes for touring Breton musicians to consulting on a documentary film on traditional Breton music (with ICDBL member Gei Zantzinger), to setting up an information stand at the Otlands Celtic Festival (with the help of a half dozen ICDBL members), or helping to build a collection of Celtic books at a community college library in Pennsylvania. Needless to say, I am quite proud to be a member of the Order of the Ermine, and I am very thankful to all my friends to encouraged me over the years. On the silver medallion presented to the Order of the Ermine members are the words "d'am buhez" -- Breton for "For my life" -- so you can be assured that my work for Brittany will be continuing!

Ouest France (LaBaule) 25 sept. 1995

Institut culturel de Bretagne :

cinq Hermine dont une à une Américaine

(Lire page 7)



L'Institut culturel de Bretagne à Guérande

Cinq Hermine dont une Américaine

L'espace rencontre Athanor de Guérande recevait samedi après-midi la visite de l'Institut culturel de Bretagne et des assoiffés de culture bretonne. A 13 h, la vente-signature d'une cinquantaine d'acteurs ; à 16 h, la remise des « Hermine » ont attiré un public nombreux.

Créé en 1981 par le conseil régional de Bretagne avec la participation du conseil général de Loire-Atlantique, l'Institut culturel de Bretagne a pour rôle de soutenir l'action culturelle et d'encourager toute nouvelle réalisation. Samedi, il organisait à Guérande une grande vente-signature qui réunissait une cinquantaine d'écrivains et plus de trois cents titres.

Histoire, musique, romans... Des œuvres de toutes sortes, en français et en breton y étaient présentées pour le plaisir des centaines de personnes venues les acquérir et rencontrer leurs auteurs. « Je suis étudiant en droit et breton, disait un jeune acheteur, je me passionne pour le droit breton que je veux approfondir, cette rencontre est très intéressante pour moi. »

Revue en anglais

Au milieu de la foule, une Américaine, Lois Kuter, exprime



La vente de livres et leur signature ont connu un franc succès.

son amour de la Bretagne : « J'ai entendu un jour de la musique bretonne et j'ai été attirée. C'est depuis ce moment que j'ai eu envie d'étudier ce pays sur lequel il y a toujours quelque chose à apprendre. L'identité bretonne me passionne, la musique, la langue. J'ai créé aux Etats-Unis une revue en langue anglaise, "Bro Nevez" qui est diffusée dans les bibliothèques jusqu'au Canada ».

Elle évoquait la remise des « colliers de l'Hermine », ordre créé par Jean IV en 1881, remis d'actualité en 1972 et destiné à

honorer chaque année quatre personnalités ayant servi la Bretagne. Exceptionnellement, Pierre Le Treut, président de l'Institut, l'a décerné à cinq personnes : Jacques Briard, archéologue et auteur, notamment, du « Guide des musées de Bretagne » ; Jean Fréour, le sculpteur vivant à Batz-sur-Mer et connu dans le monde entier ; Ivona Martin, auteur de nouvelles, qui gère la revue « Ar Bel Keltiek » ; Loëiz Ropars qui relança les fest-noz et créa « Al Leur Nevez » ; Lois Kuter présentée au public par Alan Stivell.

L'Hermine à une Américaine

GUÉRENDE (44). L'Institut culturel de Bretagne a remis samedi à Guérande les Colliers de l'Hermine à cinq personnalités qui se sont distinguées par leur action et leur dévouement à la cause bretonne. Parmi eux, une Américaine, Mme Lois Kuter, qui est venue de Pennsylvanie pour recevoir cette distinction. Lois Kuter est ethnologue, spécialiste des pays musicaux traditionnels de Bretagne, fondatrice et rédactrice en chef d'une lettre d'information en anglais sur la Bretagne diffusée aux Etats Unis et au Canada.

Les quatre autres nouveaux titulaires du Collier de l'Hermine sont M. Jacques Briard, directeur de recherches au CNRS, spécialiste de l'âge de bronze en Europe ; M. Jean Fréour, sculpteur, membre du mouvement artistique des « Seiz Breur » ; Mlle Ivona Martin, militante de la langue et de la culture bretonnes depuis plus de 60 ans ; et M. Loëiz Ropars, professeur de lettres, fondateur du mouvement Al Leur Nevez, rénovateur du chant traditionnel à danser et des festou-noz.

Gouel an Erminig 1995

Lois Kuter

Acceptance Speech of September 23, 1995

French version

Je suis profondément ému d'être ici aujourd'hui, et connaissant l'importance du Collier de l'Hermine, je suis aussi un peu terrifié. Mais je suis ici à cause de vous et des centaines des autres Bretons et Bretonnes qui travail pour le soutien et la création d'une culture qui vaut bien une attention internationale. Et je suis ici aussi parce qu'il y a des centaines des Américains aux Etats Unis et au Canada qui reconnaissent qu'il y a quelque chose qui bouge ici, et ils veulent apprendre plus de la Bretagne et sa culture si riche.

J'ai découverte la Bretagne dans une manière tout à fait normale pour les Américains -- par moyen de la musique. C'était les bagadoù et les sonneurs de couple qui ont m'attiré d'abord. Et qui peut ignorer le son du biniou et du bombarde ou le brillement des bagadoù. Mais encore plus séduisant était la force et la beauté profond de la chanson traditionnelle. Et aussi merveilleuse, la création continuelle des nouvelles musiques de tout styles, enracinées dans un héritage ancien mais expressif de la Bretagne d'aujourd'hui et de demain.

Mon travail aux Etats Unis est un effort modeste pour redonner quelque chose à tous les Bretons qui ont m'assisté à mieux comprendre leur pays. Des gens qui ont partagé leur sagesse, de l'hospitalité, de la bienveillance quand j'étais un peu perdue, et très généreusement de leur temps très précieux pour m'assister. Je n'étais pas toujours une étudiante modèle. Je regrets surtout ma paresse dans l'étude du Breton. J'ai énormément de choses encore à apprendre.

Mais je ne prends pas des soirs et des weekends pour préparer la revue Bro Nevez, les lectures, ou les émissions de radio seulement par amitié. Ce qui m'inspire surtout, c'est l'esprit en Bretagne d'entrer en action pour accomplir des choses qui doivent être fait -- en anglais on dit "just do it" -- sans attendre des permissions, sans attendre une aide d'argent, sans applaudissements. Just do it! C'était l'esprit de Gwalarn et Ar Seiz Breur. C'est Diwan, Dastum, Skol Ober, et une certaine des autres initiatives bretonnes, commencés avec seulement une poignée des rêveurs. Vous êtes ici dans cette salle. Vous avez commencé avec un peu de foi et souvent beaucoup de courage pour soutenir et continuer à créer une culture unique et belle.

C'est l'esprit de "just do it" qui a m'engagé. Mais, malheureusement, je suis engagé aussi par le fait qu'il y a une France qui a peur de la richesse des cultures qui se trouvent en dedans ses frontières. Comment expliquer autrement qu'on n'a pas mis en place une chaîne de télévision bretonne, qu'il n'y a pas des classes de Breton pour tous les étudiants qui les désirent, que la France n'a pas signé la Charte Européenne des Langues Régionales ou Minoritaires, que Guérande se trouve hors de la Bretagne officielle.

Il y a du travail encore à faire. Mais, en rencontrant des jeunes de la Bretagne, je suis assuré qu'il y a des générations à venir qui continueront ce travail avec le courage et la même puissance créatrice qui vaut bien un soutien international.

English Version

I am deeply honored to receive this recognition, and knowing its significance I am also a bit terrified. But this is not an honor that I, as an individual, receive. I am here because of you--and the hundreds of other Bretons who work to support and create a culture that is truly worthy of international notice. And I am here because hundreds of Americans in the United States and in Canada are eager to learn more about Brittany and its rich culture.

My introduction to Brittany was not an unusual one--many Americans like me have discovered Brittany by way of its music. It was the bagpipes of Brittany which first caught my attention...and who could not notice the biniou and bombarde or the brilliance of a Breton bagad. But even more addicting is the depth and beauty of traditional song, and just as marvelous is the continuous creation of new Breton musics of all styles. Music that is deeply rooted in an old and rich heritage but which is also rearranged and newly composed to reflect the spirit of Brittany today and tomorrow.

My work in the United States has been a small effort to try to give something back to the many people in Brittany who helped me during my travels there--people who offered knowledge, hospitality, kindness when I was a little lost, and a generous amount of their very precious time to help me learn about Brittany. I have not always been the best of students, and I regret especially that I have been so lazy in my study of the Breton language. I still have a great deal to learn.

But it has not just been out of friendship that I have spent evenings and weekends writing for Bro Nevez or putting together radio programs or lectures. I am very much inspired by the spirit of just doing things that need to get done in Brittany...without waiting for a big grant of money, without waiting for approvals, without seeking applause. Just do it! This was Gwalarn and Ar Seiz Breur, and it is Diwan, Dastum, Skol Ober, and hundreds of other Breton organizations which started with just a few dreamers. You are in this room. You began with a little faith and often a lot of courage to sustain and continue the creation of a unique and beautiful culture.

This is what inspires an American to continue to learn about Brittany and share the little I have learned so far. But, sadly, what has also provoked my work has been the fact that Bretons have been stifled by a France that is afraid of the wealth of cultures within its borders. How else can one explain that a Breton language television station has not yet been put into place, or that Breton classes are not available for all children who desire them, that France has not agreed to sign the European Charter for Regional or Minority Language, or that Guérande is found outside the borders of "official" Brittany.

There is still work to do. But I have met some of the young people of Brittany, and I am confident that they will continue this work with the same courage and creative spirit that well merits an international support.

1.390 élèves **Rentrée à Diwan : pendant le redressement la croissance continue...**

Pour leur 19^e rentrée, les écoles Diwan accueillent cette année 150 élèves de plus que l'an dernier. Une rentrée presque comme les autres, si elle n'était marquée par un droit de regard de la justice et le passage progressif des écoles sous contrat d'association. Une double tutelle que ses responsables étrennent avec philosophie.

Pendant le redressement, la croissance continue. Les responsables de Diwan affichaient hier à Quimper un optimisme modéré en présentant la rentrée 1995 dans leurs 26 établissements répartis sur cinq départements.

Avec 1.390 enfants inscrits, les effectifs de la filière bilingue associative sont en effet en augmentation de 12 % malgré le phénomène de dénatalité qui touche la région et les incertitudes qui planaient lors de la dernière année scolaire sur l'avenir de Diwan.

Ce sont les écoliers qui forment encore le gros du bataillon bretonnant, mais le nombre de collégiens (160) et de lycéens (31) est également en hausse.

Le deuxième collège à Plésidy

« Ça tient la route, mais dans la douleur. La président du tribunal a voulu sonder notre solidité financière », a commenté le président André Lavanant qui, accompagné d'Andrew Lincoln, vice-président, venait de rencontrer le juge Guern chargé de suivre le plan d'apurement (*) des dettes de l'association.

Au cours de cet entretien, Diwan a réclamé l'autorisation de créer une école à Plabennec (Nord-Finistère) et d'ouvrir des annexes aux écoles de Brest et de Nantes. L'affaire est mise en délibéré jusqu'au 27 novembre. En attendant la décision du tribunal, les parents d'élèves décideront localement de la conduite à tenir.

Les autres nouveautés de la rentrée 1995 posent moins de problèmes, la plus significative étant l'ouverture d'un deuxième collège Diwan (classes de 6^e et 5^e). Installé à Plésidy, sa création est justifiée par le développement de l'enseignement bilingue dans les Côtes-d'Armor et la surcharge du collège Relecq-Kerhuon qui accueille cette année 144 élèves.

Cette opération est qualifiée

d'exemplaire par le président Lavanant qui se réjouit de voir toutes les collectivités publiques (communes, département, administration) rassemblées autour du projet. « C'est la première fois que Diwan est vraiment accueilli les bras ouverts », dit-il en souriant.

Une autre ouverture illustre également les ambitions de Diwan : celle au lycée Diwan du Relecq-Kerhuon d'une classe de première qui accueille 12 élèves en sections S et L. Présentés au bac en 1997, ils formeront la première génération à avoir effectué une scolarité complète à Diwan.

Le protocole d'accord signé en 1994 avec le ministère de l'Éducation nationale commence également à produire ses effets cette année : la carte scolaire a été négociée sans problèmes avec les inspections académiques et des stagiaires Diwan seront formés à l'IUFM de Saint-Brieuc. « C'est la première fois que l'Éducation nationale porte un regard d'avenir sur Diwan en prenant en compte sa croissance », se réjouit M. Lincoln.

Les responsables des écoles bilingues se gardent néanmoins de pavoiser car la prise en charge par l'État des salaires des 73 enseignants de Diwan tarde à venir, les ouvertures de poste ne se font pas au rythme promis et l'obstacle des concours persiste.

Un retard considérable

« Il semble difficile de faire passer aux enseignants qui travaillent sur le terrain le même concours que ceux qui le préparent toute l'année », note à ce propos Daniel Kernaguelenn, membre du conseil d'administration. De là à mettre en cause la bonne volonté de l'administration académique et des jurys, il n'y a qu'un pas...

« On prend un retard considérable dans la titularisation des enseignants », relève M. Lavanant. Cela n'est pas sans conséquences sur le budget de Diwan qui, pour « compenser la manque d'ambition de l'Éducation nationale », entend mobiliser à nouveau les parents d'élèves et les militants de la langue bretonne. « Aide-toi et le ciel t'aidera », une maxime que Diwan n'a pas fini de traduire en breton...

Fanch Olivier

* Les dettes de Diwan étaient estimées lors de la mise en redressement judiciaires à neuf millions de francs. Région, département et Éducation nationale ont aidé à leur apurement, mais l'association est encore redevable de 2,3 millions, somme qui devrait être remboursée en dix ans.

DIWAN

As the article reprinted here indicates, Diwan continues to grow, and this fall nearly 1,400 children are enrolled in Diwan schools from preschool through high school... a 12% increase with 150 more than last year. This is Diwan's 19th year of operation and this year there are 31 students at the high school level and 160 at the middle school level.

Bilingual classes in both public and private Catholic schools of Brittany also continue to grow, and this year there are 34 classes in the public schools and 24 in Catholic schools. Approximately 1,000 students in those schools are able to get some instruction in Breton, but it is only in the public schools of Lannion that students can get Breton from pre-school through high school.

While the demand for Diwan schools seems to keep expanding, finances remain tight and the support of parents and friends remains critical. So, when you renew your subscription/U.S. ICDBL Membership, consider sending a bit extra to go to Diwan. Our contributions over the years have not been enormous, but every bit helps to enable Diwan to continue to serve children and parents who want an education that truly enables them to use Breton as a living language.

Les autres classes bilingues

Il n'existe pas à ce jour d'écoles spécifiquement bilingues dans l'enseignement public et l'enseignement catholique, mais des classes français-breton fonctionnent également dans ces deux autres réseaux. Elles accueillent un millier d'élèves.

Dans le public, l'académie de Rennes compte au total 34 classes bilingues. Quatre ont été ouvertes la semaine dernière à Vannes, Guipavas, Lannilis et Plougastel-Daoulas. L'enseignement catholique poursuit également le développement de la filière français-breton. Six nouvelles classes ont été ouvertes à la rentrée portant leur nombre total à 24.

Ces créations ne sont décidées que si la continuité pédagogique peut être assurée dans les cycles suivants. La filière complète, de la maternelle à la terminale, n'est pour le moment assurée que dans le public sur le site de Lannion où cinq établissements travaillent ensemble.

Le télégramme 12.09.95

KUZUL ETREVROADEL
EVIT KENDALC'H
AR BREZHONEG



COMITE INTERNACIONAL
PARA LA SALVAGUARDIA DE
LA LENGUA BRETONA

COMITATO INTERNAZIONALE
PER LA DIFESA DELLA
LINGUA BRETONE

COMITE INTERNATIONAL
POUR LA SAUVEGARDE DE LA
LANGUE BRETONNE

INTERNATIONAAL COMITE
TER BESCHERMING VAN DE
BRETONSE TAAL

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE
BRETON LANGUAGE

INTERNATIONALER AUSSCHUSS
FÜR DIE ERHALTUNG DER
BRETONISCHEN SPRACHE

7 Avenue des Tritons, B-1170 Brussels (Belgium)

Brussels, 4 October 1995

20 YEARS OF LOBBYING IN DEFENSE OF THE BRETON LANGUAGE

The International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language (ICDBL) was founded in Brussels on 4 October 1975 by a dozen personalities, representing 7 different nationalities - none of them Breton. The initiative was launched in response to the "Declaration of the Breton cultural movements" of 18 July that year, which had announced that a series of strikes and demonstrations would take place in October with the aim of obtaining effective teaching of Breton, official recognition of the language by the French State and its use in the media.

The cultural organisations, aware of the fact that the French government feared international exposure of its repressive policy with regard to the Breton language, had expressed the wish to see the creation of an international association to support the linguistic rights of the Breton people - an association which would expose and denounce the attitude of the French authorities on this issue.

Thanks to the unusual nature of its action, the contacts its members had at senior diplomatic levels, and its location in the international hub that is Brussels, the founding group soon developed into a world-wide network. As a result, the ICDBL is now present in 23 different countries. The various organisations which defend the language keep this lobby group informed of events and developments. Each individual branch has a wide scope for undertaking its own initiatives. Open letters to French Embassies, to the relevant French Ministers, even to the President of the Republic - with publication in the national press in the country concerned - are the most often-used means of action. Certain specific initiatives have however marked ICDBL's history.

For example, on 5 May 1977, a letter was sent to all French Members of Parliament and of the Senate, highlighting the contempt shown by the French government with regard to these two assemblies when it refused yet again to put on the agenda a bill which, if adopted, would have given legal status to the regional languages of France.

At the international diplomatic level, the ICDBL wrote on 23 November 1978 to all the accredited ambassadors in the Kingdom of Belgium. This time it denounced the hypocrisy of the French state, which while it was prompt to recommend the upholding of the rights of linguistic minorities in other countries, opposed the implementation of those same principles on its own territory.

France's integration into the European Community - a model of respect for the identity and diversity of peoples - might have led us to hope that the ruling Parisian class would develop a more broad-minded outlook to this concept. The ICDBL hoped to encourage such an evolution when it submitted, on 16 May 1980, a "Memorandum on the process of elimination of the Breton Language" - in their own language - to each Member of the European Parliament.

In spite of - in fact because of - the rigidity of the French government's stance, trapped in the dogma of the linguistic unity of the nation, the ICDBL has not relaxed the pressure. Nearly every year open letters have reminded senior French policy-makers that the intolerant attitude they continue to adopt on this issue projects a negative international image of their country.

The President of the Republic, Mr Mitterand, who did not keep the promises he made on this matter in his "56th Proposal for governing", as well as his Prime Minister, Mr Mauroy, and his Minister of Education, Mr Jospin, have all been challenged on this issue. On 17 March 1994 the ICDBL turned to the Prime Minister, Mr Balladur, to denounce the highly significant refusal of the French government to ratify the European Charter on Regional Languages. Finally, on 23 September last year, the founder of the USA branch of the ICDBL, Dr Lois Kuter, was awarded the highest distinction in Brittany, the Order of the Ermine, in recognition of her contribution through BRO NEVEZ, the quarterly information bulletin which she edits.

It is difficult to quantify the impact of the ICDBL's action and it would not wish to claim sole credit for the few concessions which have been made in favour of the Breton language (public funding for the DIWAN schools, creation of a university section in Breton studies) which have been achieved through the day-to-day struggle of all supporters of this cause.

Apart from obtaining the granting of a statute giving full recognition to the Breton language, the aims are to remove the remaining obstacles to more widespread teaching of the language and a greater use of it in the public domain and the media. In this respect, an opinion poll conducted early in 1994 showed that 77% of the French people, more open-minded than their Parisian ruling class, support the idea of a statute for regional languages...

The tenet that French should be the only and exclusive language in France remains however the rule in the higher echelons of the State. The "interference" by a foreign pressure group like the ICDBL in support of the Breton language raises the hackles of the technocratic Parisian power structure. But international public opinion, whose influence has been demonstrated over the issue of French nuclear testing in the Pacific, can no longer be treated with contempt. And this simple fact is an incentive for the ICDBL to pursue, in its own small way, the action it launched 20 years ago in support of the respect of the cultural rights of the Breton people.

Monique BLAISE
Secretary General

Claude STERCK
President

KUZUL ETREVROADEL
EVIT KENDALC'H
AR BREZHONEG



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PARA LA SALVAGUARDIA DE
LA LENGUA BRETONA

COMITATO INTERNAZIONALE
PER LA DIFESA DELLA
LINGUA BRETONE

COMITE INTERNATIONAL
POUR LA SAUVEGARDE DE LA
LANGUE BRETONNE

INTERNATIONAAL COMITE
TER BESCHERMING VAN DE
BRETONSE TAAL

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE
BRETON LANGUAGE

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BRETONISCHEN SPRACHE

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AR YEZHOU MINORELAET ER SKOLIOU-MEUR EN EUROPA

LES LANGUES MINORISEES À L'UNIVERSITÉ EN EUROPE

MINORISED LANGUAGES AT UNIVERSITY IN EUROPE

2.3.1995
VIZ DRE
NOVEMBER
NOVEMBER



AN ORIENT - LORIENT
BREIZH - BRETAGNE - BRITTANY

DONEMAT E BREIZH

Louen eo Bro an Oriant ha Skol-Veur Kreiz Breizh o legemer ar c'hendiviz diarbenn ar yezhoù minorelaet. Azet eo ar vodadeg ellevodad-mañ gant Kuzul Severnadrud Breizh, ha skozellel eo gant Kengor Europa, Kuzul Rannvro Breizh, Kuzulioù Departamant ha skozellel eo gant Kengor Europa, Kuzul Rannvro Breizh, Kuzulioù Departamant ha skozellel eo gant Kengor Europa.

Penn-ar-Bed hag Adoù an-Avor ha SYDEREL Bro an Oriant.

Mard oc'h desdemet gant ar vodadeg, adkaset ar baperenn amañ dindan da skoleiouriezh Skol-Veur Hantv Breizh ha kaset e vo deoc'h lior dirbenn al lejet en Oriant, an hentio da zont betek eno ha penaos lakaat e anv er c'hendiviz.

BIENVENUE EN BRETAGNE

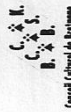
Le Pays de Lorient et l'Université de Bretagne sud sont heureux d'accueillir ce colloque consacré aux langues minorisées. Organisée par le Conseil Culturel de Bretagne, cette rencontre internationale a obtenu le soutien de la Commission Européenne, du Conseil Régional de Bretagne, du Conseil Général du Finistère et des Côtes d'Armor et du SYDEREL du Pays de Lorient.

Si vous êtes intéressé(e) par cette manifestation, retournez remplir le bon ci-dessous au secrétariat de l'Université d'Été de Bretagne et vous recevrez, en retour, tous les renseignements nécessaires sur l'hébergement, les transports et l'inscription au colloque.

WELCOME TO BRITTANY

The "Pays de Lorient" and the University of Southern Brittany are pleased to host this seminar on minority languages. The international meeting is organised by the Breton Cultural Council, and has received financial support from the European Commission, the Breton Regional Council, the Departmental Councils of Finistère and Côtes d'Armor and SYDEREL.

If you are interested in taking part, please fill in the following form and send it back to the Summer School of Brittany, and you'll get information on how to register, where to stay in Lorient and how to come here.



Council of Europe

EVIT GOUZOUT HIROCH HA LAKAAT HOC'H ANV KIT E DAREMPRED GANT :
DEMANDE DE RENSEIGNEMENT A RETOURNER A :
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION INCLUDING A REGISTRATION FORM, CONTACT :
U.E.B. - B.P. 251 - 56102 LORIENT Cedex - Bretagne
Tél : 97 64 19 90 - Fax : 97 64 20 45

Anv/Nom/Name : _____
Anv-bihan/Prénom/first name : _____
Michel/Activité/Occupation : _____
Chomlec/Tr/Adresse/Address : _____

AR YEZHOU MINORELAET ER SKOLIOU-MEUR EN EUROPA

Kelennelel ez eus bel muioc'h-mui die ar yezhoù minorelaet er bloavezhioù tennet en Europa, dreist-holl er skolioù marm. Kentañ hag el derez. Aet eur pelloc'h gant en el bro egele en eben-met e pep lec'h emañ an doar-h'evit gouzout penaos lakaat ar yezhoù rannvro da vezañ anavezet evel binvioù kelenne ha penaos o lakaat da zegouezhout diouzh o c'harg nevez.

Er Skolioù-Veur e-pad pell ez eus bet goret war-dro ar yezhoù rannvro evel war-dro danvez mudi da vezañ studiet e kelenner yezhoñiezh. Bremañ pa vez goret gant ar yezhoù-se evel kelenne danvezoù-skol ken dishevel an el doar-h'evit hag ar matematik hag an istor, pelha eo kelfidi ar skol-veur ? Douar-h'evit eo prest-houmañ da c'hoari ar roll skolaer a zegouezh gant, ha kement-mañ koulz war doare ar stummañ ha war hini ar c'hlosteriezh ?

LES LANGUES MINORISEES À L'UNIVERSITÉ EN EUROPE

L'enseignement dans les langues minorisées a connu un développement important au cours des dernières années en Europe, essentiellement dans les classes maternelles, primaires et secondaires. Ces avancées sont variables d'un pays à l'autre mais partout elles posent la question de la reconnaissance des langues régionales comme vecteurs d'enseignement et de leur adaptation à leur nouvelle vocation.

L'université, pendant longtemps, a considéré les langues régionales seulement comme objet d'études linguistiques dignes d'intérêt. Dans un nouveau contexte qui voit ces langues employées pour enseigner des matières aussi diverses que les mathématiques ou l'histoire, quelle position adopte-t-elle aujourd'hui l'université ?

Celle-ci est-elle prête à assumer les enjeux scientifiques que l'évolution actuelle suppose, tant sur le plan de la formation qu'en matière de recherche ?

MINORISED LANGUAGES AT UNIVERSITY IN EUROPE

In recent years, great progress has been made in the domain of education through the medium of the minoritized languages, especially at nursery, primary and secondary school levels. The achievements, although varying from country to country, all raise the question of the recognition of regional languages as teaching mediums and of their adaptability to their new vocation.

Universities have long regarded the regional languages simply as linguistically worthy subjects of study. What position do universities now adopt in a new context in which these languages are used to teach subjects as wide-ranging as mathematics and history ? Are they ready to face up to the scientific challenges brought about by the present developments, as far as teaching and research is concerned ?



THURSDAY 2 NOVEMBER

TIME	THEMES	ORDER OF EVENTS
14 h		14 h 00 Welcoming ceremony 14 h 30 Opening of debate
15 h to 18 h	Language Status and policies	15 h 00 The situation in four countries a - Catalonia b - Wales c - Ireland d - Alsace 4 x 15 min talks + 1 hr debate 17 h 00 The significance of the University in linguistic normalization (Southern Basque country) 20 min talk + 45 min debate

FRIDAY 3 NOVEMBER

TIME	THEMES	ORDER OF EVENTS
9 h to 12 h 30	Social demand	9 h 00 Identifying and satisfying needs : the Irish and Scottish cases 2 x 20 min talks followed by 45 min debate 10 h 45 The functional aspect of social demand : Galician talk Presentation of question, 30 min, debate 60 min 14 h 30 Summer schools : the Catalan and Basque examples 2 x 20 min talks followed by 20 min debate 15 h 45 Research in the minorised languages 60 min forum 17 h 00 Research distribution : publishing and new technologies Wales : 20 min introduction, 40 min debate 21 h Concert and Fest Noz

SATURDAY 4 NOVEMBER

TIME	THEMES	ORDER OF EVENTS
9 h to 13 h	Training and pedagogy	9 h 00 Theory of immersion as a pedagogy, practice, in reference to three experimental areas : Catalonia, the Basque country, Wales 3 x 10 min introductions and 30 min debate 10 h 00 Teaching techniques, the creation of teaching aids and new technology Case study and discussion 60 min 11 h 00 Prospect for University in Brittany Introduction et debate 60 min 12 h 00 General conclusions and resolutions 15 h 30 Visit of the Lorient area

D'AR YAOU 2 A VIZ DU

eur	temoù	prantadoù
14 h		14.00 Degemer 14.30 Digoradegzh an divizoù
etre 15 h ha 18 h	ar statudoù hag ar politikerezh yezh	15.00 Stad an traoù e peder bro a - Katalonia b - Kembre c - Iwerzhon d - Eizos Peder displegadenn 20mn hag un eur diviz 17.00 Ball ar Skol-Veur evit normalizañ ar yezh (Euskadi ar C'hristelez)

D'ARGWENER 3 A VIZ DU

eur	temoù	prantadoù
etre 9 h ha 12 h 30	ar goulenn sosial	9.00 Anavezout an ezhommoù ha bosian dezho : skouerioù Iwerzhon ha Bro-Skos Div displegadenn 20 mn hag un diviz 45 mn 10.45 Doare funkshonel ar goulenn sosial : displegadenn Gatalia Ur gningadenn 30 mn hag un diviz 60mn 14.30 Ar skolioù-meur hariz : skouerioù Katalonia hag Euskadi Div displegadenn 20mn hag 20 mn divizoù 15.45 Ar c'hiskerezh er yezhoù minorelael Ur forum 60mn 17.00 Skignañ ar c'hiskerezh : an embann hag an teknologiezhioù nevez Un digoradur 20 mn gant Kembre ha 40 mn diviz 21 h Sonadeg ha fest-noz

D'AR SADORN 4 A VIZ DU

eur	temoù	prantadoù
etre 9 h ha 13 h	ar stummadur hag ar bedagogiezh	9.00 Teoriezh ar soubadur evel hentenn bedagogel diwar-leiz zacherin an-proù : Katalonia, Euskadi ha Kembre In digoradur 10 mn hag un diviz 30 mn 10.00 An teknikoù kelem, ar sevel danvez hag an teknologiezhioù nevez Studi skouerioù ha divizoù e-pad 60 mn 11.00 Hentoù nevez evit ar Skol-Veur e Breizh Digoradur ha divizoù : 60 mn 12.00 Klozadur ha mernadoù 15 h 30 Poumenadenn e bro an Orlant

JEUDI 2 NOVEMBRE

HORAIRE	THÈMES	SÉQUENCES
14 h		14 h 00 Accueil 14 h 30 Ouverture des débats
15 h à 18 h	Statuts et politiques linguistiques	15 h 00 Quatre états des lieux a - Catalogne b - Pays de Galles c - Irlande d - Alsace Exposés de 15 + 1 h de débats 17 h 00 L'implication de l'Université dans la normalisation linguistique (Pays Basque Sud) Exposé de 20 + débat de 45'

VENDREDI 3 NOVEMBRE

HORAIRE	THÈMES	SÉQUENCES
9 h à 12 h 30	Demande sociale	9 h 00 L'identification et la satisfaction des besoins : les cas irlandais et écossais 2 exposés de 20 suivis d'un débat de 45' 10 h 45 L'aspect fonctionnel de la demande sociale : exposé galicien Présentation de la question, 30', débat 60' 14 h 30 Les universités d'été : les exemples catalans et basques 2 exposés de 20 suivis de 20' de débats 15 h 45 La recherche dans les langues minorisées Forum de 60' 17 h 00 La diffusion de la recherche : édition et nouveaux supports Introduction Pays de Galles, 20', débat 40' 21 h Concert et Fest Noz

SAMEDI 4 NOVEMBRE

HORAIRE	THÈMES	SÉQUENCES
9 h à 13 h	Formation et pédagogie	9 h 00 Théorie d'une pratique pédagogique, l'immersion en référence à trois lieux d'expérience : la Catalogne, le Pays Basque, le Pays de Galles 3 introductions de 10' et un débat de 30' 10 h 00 Techniques pédagogiques, création d'outils et nouvelles technologies Etude de cas et débats 60' 11 h 00 Perspectives pour l'Université en Bretagne Introduction et débats 60' 12 h 00 Conclusions générales et résolutions 15 h 30 Visite d'agrement dans le Pays de Lorient

BRETONS AND BASQUES

Lois Kuter

Because it is so difficult for Americans to get the information necessary to fully understand the complexity of political issues in Brittany, we have tended to stick to purely cultural areas in the pages of Bro Nevez. Our mission to support the Breton language and culture has meant that it has been appropriate now and again to write to French politicians to express our views on their decisions which impact the future of the Breton language and culture, but there are other areas of great concern to many Bretons which fall outside of the work of the ICDBL.

I have received a number of news clippings and information on the situation presented in the pages which follow: the arrest and upcoming trial of a number of Bretons (including some active in support of the Breton language) for giving Basques hospitality. It is not the role of the U.S. ICDBL to determine guilt or innocence of these people or to applaud or condemn their choice to shelter Basques on the run. But the November trial of Bretons (which may be over by the time most readers receive this newsletter) will make major headlines in Brittany and I have decided to include some of the information I have received. The first article is the reprint of a "press release" (prepared in English). The second "Background" piece is a translation and summary of a longer document prepared by Skoazell Vreizh. I would be happy to send information I have received to anyone interested in more details, or you could contact Skoazell Vreizh directly.

A LETTER TO THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS

September 1995

Mignoned ker/Dear Sir or Madam/Annwyl Ffrind/A Chara,

The aim of this letter is to inform public opinion and to invite foreign journalists to cover the trial of 43 Breton people accused of sheltering Basque refugees and of the 20 Basques arrested for various reasons in Brittany and France.

We are acting on behalf of the backing-up committee (Comite de Soutien) which aims at helping out the families and individuals accused in this affair. ... The trial will take place in the "12eme Chambre du Tribunal Correctionnel de Paris" from November 13th at 9 a.m. to the 17th. It may last longer than scheduled. The presence of journalists at a political trial is of the greatest importance. This special court acts on political orders and politics will always take into account public opinion. If journalists, and better still, foreign journalists are present, this could mean lesser sentences for the defendants.

The Bretons accused:

The Breton people claim they are the victims of a brutal French repression because they have provided homes to Basques on the run. They claim they have the right to give shelter to any refugee, may he/she be Basque, Bosnian, Kurd, Croatian or Algerian on the ground of simple political asylum and that the right of asylum is a moral duty, a humanitarian duty.

The problem is that France -- self-proclaimed creator of human rights -- issues less and less legal asylum cards since 1986. Basques fleeing Franco's regime were allowed political asylum by the French authorities. From 1987 onwards no papers were delivered. The Basques found themselves in an illegal position, that is, on the run. Naturally, they knocked on doors of people who had legally welcomed them before 1986: Bretons mainly. In 1992, the French Socialist government decided to help the police of the Spanish

Socialist government, known for its bad habit of torturing as testified by Amnesty International, and a first swoop was organized by the examining magistrate for anti-terrorist cases, Laurence Levert. 70 people are in custody.

- March 94: 8 arrested
- June 94: 8 arrested
- Sept 94: 10 arrested
- Feb 95: 2 arrested
- June 95: 2 arrested

Over a hundred people (from 16 to 73 years old) were arrested by Paris special anti-terrorist squad, brutally questioned for hours on end, detained in appalling conditions for 3 days and 3 nights without a lawyer and either freed or sent to prison in Paris for periods of up to 3 months internment.

Charges

- 43 will be tried for:

1. Aide a sejour irregulier (helping irregular stay)
2. Association de malfaiteurs en relation avec une entreprise terroriste (taking part in a criminal terrorist organization).

Defence

Lawyer Yann Choucq will be the defendant of most Bretons, and he may be contacted through Skoazell Vreizh ("Breton Help" which deals with the practical support of the victims).

Skoazell Vreizh	or	Yann Choucq
Feunteun Wenn		1, rue du Chapeau Rouge
3, rue Aristide Briand		44000 Nantes
44350 Guerande		Tel. 40.48.59.76
Tel: 40.42.92.94		Fax: 40.35.55.63
Fax: 40.24.81.38		

Basques

The charges against the Basques are:

- not respecting forced residence. A Basque refugee was forced to live in Metz (East of France) whereas he was married with a girl from Morlaix (Brittany). He, of course, stayed with her and both were arrested.
- irregular presence (no papers) on French territory.
- suspected of membership of a terrorist organization (ETA).

Public Opinion

- in France at large, the last 7 bombings are probably due to GIA-FIS Organization and have created a fear and anger against terrorists so you can imagine that the French authorities will only have to mention the word terrorist to win their case.

- in Brittany, this may also work. But the 120 arrested in the last 3 years are known here to be peaceful ordinary people. People won't accept to see them as terrorists and will be on their side, e.g., when in September 95, 10 people were arrested--among them a 73 year-old woman--a group of 150 neighbors and friends convinced of their innocence, invaded the police station in Lannion, where they were being held. Unfortunately they didn't manage to free them, but it gives evidence of the feeling of injustice being done. Such an invasion had never happened in Breton history.

The importance of this trial.

- 1) It will be the trial of political asylum in France. Especially after the implementation of the new Pasqua (anti-immigration) laws.
- 2) For Brittany, it will be the largest trial since the Amoco Cadiz case. In 1994 Chicago based Standard Oil was held responsible for the 1979 oil slick which polluted west and north Brittany shores. Small coastal villages joined to sue Standard Oil and eventually won a 15 years case and had Breton interests respected.

If you need further information, you can contact Skoazell Vreizh. We thank you in advance for your help.

* * *

SOME BACKGROUND

A Dossier from Skoazel Vreizh - In Summary

At the beginning of 1992 police placed under surveillance a number of families in Brittany they suspected had lodged Basques of the ETA. On April 28, 1992, Sabino Euba Cenarruzabeita, 55 years old, and presumed to be the "ETA Treasurer," was arrested at Roissy departing for Mexico. He had stayed in Brittany where anti-terrorist police watched his movements.

This arrest touched off a series of police raids in May 1992 in Finistère, Morbihan, Côtes d'Armor, Loire-Atlantique, and in Paris and Bordeaux. 45 interrogations in Brittany were followed by 33 investigations and 16 incarcerations. Those held in prison stayed there from several days to three months.

During the May 1992 raids only two Basques were "discovered," in Brest. No arms and no explosives were ever found despite thorough searches.

As the inquiry continued there were other interrogations, often followed by incarceration, from 1992 to 1995. In all, 120 people were questioned just in Brittany.

Who are they? People who up until then had never drawn attention to themselves: teachers, farmers, artisans, housewives, businessmen.. Some were active in Diwan schools or in support of the Breton language, others were involved in biological agriculture, ecology, or in non-profit, union, humanitarian, or political organizations... Nearly all had families.

In common to all these interrogations was the great violence used by the police--a brutality disproportionate to the personality of the people arrested. Breaking into homes at 6 a.m., people handcuffed naked to radiators, parents menaced with guns in front of their children, and insulted, children blackmailed, houses torn apart and doors broken down... Elderly people were interrogated with the same brutality. Five and six year old children were "invited" to recognize people they knew in photographs. Adolescents were interrogated without adults present. All were forbidden to speak Breton.

Nearly all those questioned were required to spend four days in custody, the ruling for any case concerned with "terrorism," including repeated interrogations which always included insults and menaces, being locked in cold and dirty cells with no blankets, lights on day and night, and no privacy for the most basic personal hygiene, with no means to wash or change clothing.

Those "raided" in May 1992 went through a veritable nightmare, transferred to Paris in police vans with an impressive escort, with nothing to eat or drink, always under the menace of machine guns. In prison, men and women, were systematically labeled "terrorists" and placed in the most highly guarded conditions (transferred in chains and under armed guard). They were spread out in different prisons of the Paris region.

Following the arrests, support committees were set up all over Brittany and demonstrations were held in May in Guingamp, Brest, and Lannion. 2,000 demonstrators marched in Quimper to demand the release of the prisoners. Protests were lodged and petitions circulated by a number of cultural organizations (including the Cultural Council of Brittany), political parties of all persuasions, and elected city officials, unions, and humanitarian organizations.

After all those held from the 1992 raids were freed, the situation seemed to get calmer in Brittany. But the investigation by Judge Levert continued and other people were questioned and then sometimes arrested and imprisoned. Six arrests were made in Lorient in March 1994 of locally known people, including a former municipal councilor. In June and September of that year other raids took place in the Côtes d'Armor and Morbihan, and the response from the Breton population was just as immediate. More than 3,000 demonstrators from all over Brittany came to Lannion on September 17, 1994, to demand the release of those imprisoned. But new arrests were made in February and March 1995.

Those who have been arrested for the crime of hospitality have lodged Basques who have fled an intolerable situation in the Basque country--torture and repression. The flight of Basques--those active with the ETA, but also friends and family with no direct activity in the ETA--has been stimulated by the creation of the paramilitary police GAL (Groupement Anti-terrorist de Liberation). The operation of GAL in the northern Basque country (over the border in France) and its use of assassinations and bombings has forced Basques to find haven elsewhere. Following a tradition of hospitality well rooted in Brittany, Bretons have welcomed children from northern Ireland fleeing the war there, and have opened doors to Kurds or refugees from the ex-Yugoslavia. With a change in political relations between France and Spain in the early 1990s Basque "refugees"--often living in Brittany for many years--have now become labeled "terrorists."

What is Skoazell Vreizh

The association Skoazell Vreizh was created in 1969 by well known Breton personalities, among whom were Xavier Grall, poet and journalist, Doctor G. Le Scouezec, author of the well known Guide de la Bretagne Mystérieuse, and Yann Choucq, Esq., lawyer. Today it is presided by Per Loquet in Guerande.

Skoazell Vreizh has the following objectives:

- * morally and financially support the families of Breton political prisoners
- * morally and financially support those held in prison

- * help with lawyers fees in cases concerning political and cultural militants
- * alerting the public on problems of political and cultural repression in Brittany by the French state.

For more than a quarter of a century Skoazell Vreizh has thus defended and supported the families of FLB and ARB militants, Bretons refusing to serve in the French army, militants of Stourm ar Brezhoneg who have demanded that road signs be done in the Breton language, Bretons whose checks made out in Breton have not been honored by the SNCF, militants who are victims of arbitrary arrests, and associations who are victims of illegal searches...

Today Skoazell Vreizh supports 45 Bretons accused of the crime of hospitality.

The case by the French justice system against these people has already cost nearly 300,000 francs to the association (lawyers fees, support of people jailed and of their families), and the trial which will begin November 13 will cost as much.

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Ouest-France
9 juin 1994

250 manifestants hier soir à Carhaix contre les arrestations

Basques : trois Bretons en garde à vue

250 personnes se sont rassemblées hier soir à Carhaix pour protester contre les arrestations de militants culturels bretons. Hier matin, cinq des sept personnes interpellées, mardi, dans le cadre d'une opération menée par le juge Le Vert, chargée des dossiers des réfugiés politiques basques, avaient été remis en liberté. Trois jeunes Bretons restent en garde à vue. Ils auraient été transférés à Paris.

Les jeunes époux Le Moy interpellés à Loudéac et Kristen Tonnel également de Loudéac auraient été transférés hier soir à Paris dans le cadre d'une garde à vue en relation avec les affaires de réfugiés politiques basques séjournant en Bretagne. Alors que 250 personnes environ manifestaient hier soir à Carhaix, on apprenait également que le réfugié basque assignée à résidence à Carhaix et séjournant en Bretagne depuis dix ans, Imanol Olazabal Eceiza, avait lui aussi été transféré à Paris. Lors d'un rassemblement devant la mairie de

Carhaix, le maire de la ville, Jean-Pierre Jeudy, divers gauche, a dénoncé les méthodes mais aussi le « délit d'opinion qui semble être à l'origine de cette opération qui n'a d'autre but que de semer le trouble dans l'opinion ». Le maire de Carhaix tiendra aussi à rappeler qu'il y a quelques années le tribunal de Poitiers avait refusé d'extrader le même Imanol Olazabal, reconnaissant le caractère politique de sa situation.

Cozan et Joseph à la manifestation

Le député UDF de la circonscription, Jean-Yves Cozan, le conseiller général socialiste Jean-Claude Joseph et trois conseillers régionaux Verts, dont le Quimpérois Alain Uguen, étaient présents à la manifestation. Jean-Yves Cozan soulignera le travail important réalisé par les membres du centre culturel dans le domaine de la culture bretonne. « Je suis solidaire des valeurs culturelles, de solidarité et d'amitié entre les peuples que vous défendez... » affirmera le député en soulignant que ces arrestations à quatre jours des élections européennes



250 personnes se sont rassemblées hier soir à Carhaix pour protester contre les dernières interpellations de militants culturels bretons.

pourraient presque passer pour un gag... « Je dis non à ce qui veulent faire l'amalgame » précisera-t-il.

Auparavant, le président du centre culturel breton de Carhaix avait expliqué que « cette affaire

se résumait une fois de plus à un délit de solidarité ». Après un passage devant la gendarmerie de Carhaix les manifestants se sont rendus place des Droits de l'Homme où la manifestation s'est terminée sans incident.

Basques : coup de filet en Centre-Bretagne sept militants bretons interpellés

(Lire page 11)

Coup de filet de la PJ de Paris sur Carhaix et Saint-Jean de Luz

Sept militants bretons interpellés

Sept militants culturels bretons, responsables ou membres du Centre culturel breton Egin de Carhaix, ont été interpellés mardi au petit matin par des policiers de la PJ de Paris qui intervenaient sur commission rogatoire du juge Laurence Le Vert chargé du dossier sur les affaires des réfugiés des Basques. Dans le même temps, un réfugié basque bien connu à Carhaix était interpellé, ainsi que quatre autres personnes (six selon d'autres sources), à Saint-Jean de Luz.

Sept personnes domiciliées dans la région de Carhaix et toutes engagées dans le Centre culturel breton ont été cueillies au petit jour par des policiers de la 6^e division de la police judiciaire de Paris. Il s'agit de Gérard Lambert, président du Centre culturel breton, domicilié à Maël-Carhaix ; de Myriam Calon, vice-présidente du Centre culturel, domiciliée à Saint-Thois ; de Fulup Le Quéré, domicilié à Saint-Thois ; de Michel Hellequin, ancien président du Centre culturel ; de Antonietta et Loïc Le Moy deumerant à Loudéac ; de Florence Corbic domiciliée à Plésidy dans les Côtes d'Armor.

« A 6 h 30, nous avons été ré-

veillés par quatre policiers parisiens pour une perquisition. Ils n'ont pas réveillé nos trois enfants. Ils ont pris quelques tracts du comité de jumelage Olartzun-Carhaix et un rapport d'Amnesty International », raconte Béatrice, l'épouse de Gérard Lambert.

Perquisition

Vers 9 h, les policiers ont poursuivi leur perquisition à Carhaix, au centre culturel breton, en présence du président et de la secrétaire du centre. « Ils ont pris une affiche Euskadi (NDLR : Pays basque) et un drapeau basque, n'ont pas pris de disquette, ni cherché de fichiers ». Le président a ensuite été dirigé sur Morlaix où il a été placé en garde à vue, tout comme Michel Hellequin. Les lieux de garde à vue des autres personnes n'ont pas été dévoilés hier soir. Elles se trouvaient sans doute à Quimper.

A Carhaix, ville qui s'est officiellement jumelée à la Pentecôte avec la ville d'Olartzun au Pays basque espagnol, c'est la consternation. Le maire Jean-Pierre Jaudy fait part de son « indignation » et se dit qu'on doit l'arrêter si le fait de faire flotter un drapeau basque comme celui qui flotte à la mairie de Carhaix est considéré comme un délit. L'adjoint à la culture Daniel Cotten y voit « une manœuvre d'intimidation par rapport à des gens

qui s'investissent au grand jour sur le plan culturel breton. » Le centre culturel breton souligne « que ces interpellations ont eu lieu alors que la police arrêtait à Saint-Jean de Luz un réfugié Basque bien connu à Carhaix, Imanol Olazabal Eceiza. Ce dernier réside en toute légalité à Carhaix depuis 1984. Assigné à résidence dans le Finistère depuis 1983, il lui est interdit de travailler et vit donc de la solidarité de nombreux bretons et en particulier de

celle des personnes interpellées mardi matin. »

Hier soir, une vingtaine de membres du comité de soutien aux Bretons inculpés ont manifesté devant le commissariat de Morlaix. Aujourd'hui mercredi, à 18 h 30, le Centre culturel breton appelle à un rassemblement devant la mairie de Carhaix pour réclamer « la libération des personnes interpellées. »

Noëlle COUSINIÉ.

Le Télégramme October 1995

Accueil de Basques : 37 Bretons seront jugés à Paris en novembre

Le comité de soutien aux inculpés bretons du droit d'asile s'est réuni hier à Brest. Ce comité vient en aide aux personnes qui ont été mises en examen en 1992 pour avoir accueilli chez elles des militants basques dont les autorités judiciaires assurent qu'ils sont des terroristes ou du moins en contact avec eux.

Après 3 ans de procédure, le procès est maintenant fixé : il se déroulera à Paris, devant une cour spéciale, à partir du 13 novembre. Il durera au moins une semaine. 69 personnes sont convoquées dont 37 Bretons. Les autres sont des Basques et des résidents d'autres régions de France.

Le chef d'inculpation pour une partie d'entre eux est « association de malfaiteurs en relation avec une entreprise terroriste » et pour les autres « complicité d'association ».

Cette inculpation semble peu justifiée au comité qui fait remarquer que jusqu'en 87, ces Basques bénéficiaient d'une carte de séjour de réfugiés politiques et qu'ils sont, tout à coup, classés terroristes.

Le soutien de Renaud ?

Le but de la réunion d'hier était de faire le point sur la préparation du déplacement à Paris, le

12 novembre, de ceux qui veulent manifester leur solidarité avec les inculpés, ainsi que la mise au point de solutions financières que le comité doit trouver pour faire face à des frais.

« Nous avons déjà dépensé 320.000 F et nous en faudra à peu près autant », indique le trésorier de l'association. « Il s'agit de payer les avocats mais aussi de venir en aide à ceux qui ont dû engager des frais pendant l'incarcération de l'un des leurs ».

Pour faire face à de telles dépenses, le comité ne peut compter que sur la générosité de la population. C'est pourquoi un programme de rassemblements à la fois conviviaux et informatifs a été mis sur pied.

Le 24 octobre à 18 h, à la fac des lettres de Brest, débat sur l'affaire.

Les 31 octobre et 1^{er} novembre, à Carhaix, fête de la solidarité.

Le 4 novembre, à Plougastel-Daoulas, kig-ha-farz bio.

D'autre part, à l'occasion de la venue de Renaud jeudi à Brest, le chanteur doit manifester sa solidarité avec les inculpés.

Le comité peut être joint à Skoazell Vreizh, 3, rue Aristide Briand, 44350 Guérande. Tel 40.42.92.94.

Politicorama

Ouest France
10 juin 1994

Carhaix : les élus contre le délit de solidarité

A quatre jours des élections européennes, interpellé des Bretons qui peuvent être en relation avec des Basques espagnols provoque pour le moins de l'étonnement dans la région de Carhaix. Des élus de tous bords (UDF, PS, Verts, divers gauche) se sont joints à la manifestation organisée mercredi soir pour protester contre les arrestations de militants culturels bretons. « Cette affaire se résume à un délit de solidarité », explique le président du centre culturel breton. « Je suis solidaire des valeurs de solidarité et d'amitié entre les peuples que vous défendez », affirme Jean-Yves Cozan, député UDF. « Le délit d'opinion qui semble à l'origine de cette opération n'a d'autre but que de semer le trouble dans l'opinion », estime le



Jean-Yves Cozan.

maire divers gauche Jean-Paul Jaudy.

NEW RECORDINGS FROM BRITTANY

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

Pierre Crepillon, Laurent Bigot. 'Dreuz Kreiz Breiz. Keltia Musique. KMCD 56. 1995. 49'26.

While the high pitch of the biniou and the blast of the bombarde can make these instruments difficult for Americans to love on first hearing, this traditional pairing has gained a solid following in Brittany, with a good number of young people learning the art of leading a lively dance or exploring the subtleties of melody in a slower air. This new CD is one of several great new recordings of traditional style bombarde and biniou playing, and features two of the best, Pierre Crepillon and Laurent Bigot who credit much of their inspiration to a well known biniou player of a previous generation, Per Guillou. Their virtuosity is probably best captured in the 10 and 12 minute dance suites: gavottes from various areas of the Cornouaille (Kernow) region of Brittany and a suite of dances from Loudeac. The CD also includes three marches ("March for the conscripts of Loudeac," "Wedding marches from Carhaix," and "Julian Cadoudal's march") as well as a lovely hymn from the Vannetais area ("Kantik Santez Anna").

While the sound quality of the recording is very good I found it a little "distant" -- giving me the sense I was in a very large hall with Crepillon and Bigot at the far end of it. The jacket notes to this recording are very good and Keltia Musique seems to be making a strong effort to open its recordings up to an English-using market with bilingual texts. The booklet for this CD is divided roughly in half -- one ends starts with French and the other with English. While the French notes were slightly more detailed, the English version is quite sufficient, giving a good idea for each selection as to its geographic source, who composed it (when known), or where the musicians learned or heard it. Titles for each are given in Breton with the English (or French) below. Grey designs superimposed on the white pages add some aesthetic interest without obscuring the print in any way, and the print is nice and large! On the cover is a nice photo of Pierre Crepillon and Laurent Bigot (where they almost seem to be perched high in a tree as they play).

For those who enjoy the traditional paired playing of bombarde and biniou, this CD is another wonderful new release and I can recommend it without hesitation.

Alain Pennec. Alcoves. Keltia Musique KMCD 51. 1995. 44'02.

Like Pierre Crepillon and Laurent Bigot, reviewed above, Alain Pennec has several decades of experience and strong roots in traditional styles of Breton music. Pennec has made the diatonic or button accordion his instrument of expression today, but I first heard him as a bombarde player in pair with his brother on the biniou in the mid-1970s. In fact, the lp Airs à Danser de Basse-Bretagne was one of the first additions to my collection of Breton recordings. On Alain Pennec's latest CD on the Keltia Musique label he pairs accordion with the guitar of Soig Siberil, and on several selections he plays with pianists Pierre Nicolas and Rachel Goodwin. Alain Pennec's strong knowledge of different instruments and experience of various types of ensembles (paired bombarde/biniou, bagad or acoustic group) contribute to a wonderful diversity of style and repertoire to be found on this new CD. Included are a number of lively Breton dances--both traditional and more recently composed: hanter-dro, gavotte, pile-menu, kas ha barh, and Iaridé. But the CD also includes some newly composed melodies and other rhythms (blues, waltz, march), and one can also hear a strathspey and reel by G. Scott Skinner and the influence of Zagreb in a composition by Soig Siberil. Perhaps most "exotic" is Pennec's arrangement of "Prelude Opus 81," a composition originally written for harmonium and piano by César Franck (1822-1890).

Like the Keltia Musique production reviewed above the jacket notes here are easy to read and are bilingual (French with a slightly shorter English translation following). While they are quite short, the notes on each selection are adequate, providing the basics on the origin of the tunes. Photos are included (always a nice addition) and a very short biographical note is included on the back of the CD case.

Alain Pennec is a great accordion player and his mastery of the instrument means that each piece on this very varied CD is better than the last.

Kristen Nikolaz ha Kern. Lusk an Amzer. Gwerz Pladenn GWP 008. 1995. 36'47.

It is always a pleasure to discover someone brand new, and for me this is the case with Kristen Nikolaz who has just released a new CD on the Gwerz Pladenn label with a group called Kern. While this is the first time I have had the chance to hear this wonderful singer, and the three members of his band (Dominique Le Bars, Erwan Volant and Didier Dreau), other musicians in the "back-up" band are quite familiar: Dominique and Jacky Molard, and Thierry Moreau. Instruments include electric and acoustic guitars, percussions, keyboard, cello, veuze and fiddle--a mix as interesting as the style of performance found on this CD.

Kristen Nicolaz sings in the Breton language and uses traditional Breton styles as a basis for departure for his songs. Most song texts reflect a darker side of what this young singer has learned of life in travels--poverty and the impossibility of having a childhood in third world countries, suicide, a man abandoning his beautiful wife for one much younger, the griminess of a large city at dawn, hatred and pollution, and the plight of the Kurds, a people without a country caught in numerous wars. Some of the rhythms and sounds are inspired by time spent in Morocco, but Nikolaz's voice is unmistakably Breton. And you will hear short recordings of spoken Breton (called "Digoradur" by Nikolaz) to introduce several songs. These are nice bits of conversations which give a good idea of the sound of Breton as a spoken rather than sung language.

I really like the shiny cardboard packaging used by Gwerz Pladenn (and quite often by Dastum). It is aesthetically much more attractive and I find it much more durable than the plastic boxes. The jacket notes for this recording include song texts in Breton and a French introduction to summarize the texts and give an idea of what inspired Nikolaz to write them. While there are 12 cuts listed on the back of the CD only 8 are included in the notes. Simply listing the same title found on the back of the CD in the text of the notes for the very short Breton conversation would have made the booklet of notes a bit less confusing. In the case of the forth musical selection, "Digoradur ar bleizi," the fact that this is perhaps intended to be an introduction to the fifth selection does not help when trying to follow the jacket notes. But these are minor details ,likely to bother only someone who would have trouble following the Breton language texts or a fanatic for orderliness.

This CD is a very interesting new addition to the wonderful variety found on the Breton music scene. While Nikolaz may be a bit too avant garde in style for some, the arrangements of voice and music are in all cases intriguing and fit well the poetry and sophistication of his song texts.

Jean-Michel Veillon, Yvon Riou. Pont Gwenn ha Pont Stang. Gwerz Pladenn GWP009, 1995. 51'47.

It does not seem so long ago that flute virtuoso Jean-Michel Veillon released his first solo CD, but this second recording where he is paired with guitarist Yvon Riou is certainly very welcome. Jean-Michel Veillon is well known from his work with groups like Kornog and Barzaz, and both he and Yvon Riou were members of the group Pennou Skoulm. They have, in fact, known each other much longer and have been playing as a duo since 1992. This new CD includes a great deal of variety -- in the five different wooden flutes Jean-Michel uses as well as in the inclusion of slower airs and a number of Breton dance tunes (ridee, dans Kernev, plin, rond de Loudia, rond de Saint Vincent-sur-Oust)--traditional and newly composed. Two short poems by Fañch Peru are set to music, and a long suite of lovely melodies from the Tregor region where the musicians make their home is also included. As is often the case for Breton musicians, several arrangements from other Celtic lands are included: some great Irish reels and a soulful rendering of "Limerick's Lamentation," as well as a traditional Manx lullaby.

Jacket notes (in French) could be more extensive, but provide the basics about tune origins, and provide both of the Breton texts performed. Considering the joyfulness of much of the music on this CD, the photos included of these two musicians make them look unusually mournful and sombre. The attractive cardboard packaging and highly readable print is once again very welcome.

One would not expect less from Jean-Michel Veillon and Yvon Riou, but this is a terrific recording full of brilliant performances by both musicians.

Etoiles Celtiques/Kindred Spirit. Keltia Musique KMCD 55. 1995. 59'07.

A number of good samplers of Breton music have been released--partly to tap into tourist dollars and perhaps to introduce a variety of artists to new listeners in Brittany as well. The Breton label Keltia Musique has just released a sampler which includes not simply a nice cross section of Breton musicians they have produced, but also some of the best Celtic groups whose recordings they distribute. Called "Kindred Spirit" in English and "Etoiles Celtiques" (literally, "Celtic stars") in French, this CD includes artists from Canada, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Galicia as well as Brittany: Loreena McKennitt, Orian (a Belgian-Breton band who play Irish music), Dan ar Bras, Tannas, Bagad Kemper, Barzaz, Dafydd Iwan and Ar Log, Michel Tonnerre, Capercaillie, Skolvan, Seosaimhin Ni Bheaglaoich, Milladoiro, Altan, Gilles Servat, Deanta, and the Shotts and Dykehead Caledonia Pipe Band.

The bulk of the selections are from recordings released in 1994 and 1995 with a few exceptions: Ar Log and Altan (1993), Barzaz (1992), Milladoiro (1991), Capercaillie and Canadian Loreena McKennitt (1989). The jacket notes present each artist in both English and French very briefly--and often this is much too briefly, with little real information. For example: "Gilles Servat is an almost mythical figure on the Breton music scene. Certainly Brittany's most popular singer-songwriter." Surely one can use just two sentences to present Servat much better than that. A full reference is provided for each selection, listing (and showing a a photograph) the recording from which the selection is pulled, with record label addresses.

For those who have a limited income or who are just beginning to build a Celtic collection, samplers are always a useful place to start. This is an especially good selection of high quality groups and artists which gives a nice idea of the diversity and excellence of Celtic musical production today.

Mathieu Hamon, Nolùen Le Buhé, Patrick Marie, Marthe Vassallo. Gwerzioù et Chants de Haute Voix. France 3 Ouest/Keltia Musique. RSCD 211. 1993. 56'

This recording was briefly noted in an earlier issue of Bro Nevez, and it is not brand new (released in 1993), but now that I have had the chance to get a copy and hear it, it seems well worth a review. By now anyone at all familiar with Breton music has probably heard of the Goadec Sisters, and there have been quite a number of very good recordings made of older masters of traditional Breton language song. But a decade ago I certainly would not have predicted the number and quality of young traditional singers performing and recording ballads and songs for dance. This CD presents four who take turns on this CD with a nice variety of solo a capella ballads from their home area of Brittany.

Marthe Vassallo, is a 21 year old student in Rennes who works with Breton language television programming (Chadenn ar vro, FR3), but she is a fine traditional singer from the Tregor region of Brittany and that is how you hear her on this CD. Nolùen Le Buhé, also 21 and a student in Rennes, is from the Vannetais area of Brittany and she presents some lovely Breton language songs from there. Patrick Marie is the youngest of the four--just 17 years old. Originally from Morlaix, he has become a Cornouaillais and contributes several masterpieces of the Breton language song tradition from that part of Brittany. Last but certainly not least is Mathieu Hamon, a 21 year old student and farmer from the area of Redon. He convincingly shows that the French language song tradition of eastern Brittany is just as rich and interesting.

Jacket notes present each singer with photos and a brief biography, and the full text is provided for each song with a French translation provided for all the Breton language songs. I appreciated the short list of definitions/explanations by Erik Marchand for: "Brittany;" "Breton" (the language); "Gallo" (the language); the regions of Tregor, Cornouaille, Vannetais and Leon; "kan ha diskan;" "chant à répondre;" "fest-noz;" "gwerz(ioù);" "son(ioù);" "sonnenn(eu)" and "kanenn(eu);" "kanaouenn(où) deus taol;" and "chant de haute voix." The brief explanations for different song types nicely demonstrates that calling things simply "ballad" or "song" may be oversimplifying the situation. For those relatively new to Breton song traditions, or to the Breton or French language, matching the the different song types to specific selections on the CD would be helpful. But, this CD is not intended to train one in the subtleties of Breton song styles, so don't worry if you are not sure if you are listening to a "son" or a "sonenn" -- those who are really interested will figure it all out for themselves eventually.

The singers on this CD are two women and two men who listen to music from around the world and who are at ease in a modern urban Breton world, but who are rooted in and love the traditional songs of rural Brittany. Their distinctive and wonderful voices show that such songs are not just for old people.

When the fest noz seemed to be at a height of popularity in the late 1970s, there were critics who viewed this event as just a fad. And now in the 1990s when the traditional ballads of Brittany seem to be attracting younger singers and audiences, no doubt there are some who wonder if this is just a short-lived taste for the exotic. The fest noz has had its ups and downs, but seems to remain a vital and uniquely Breton context for music and dance (attractive to young and old). And it seems that as long as there are such great singers as Mathieu Hamon, Nolùen Le Buhé, Patrick Marie, and Marthe Vassallo, there will always be an audience to appreciate the power and beauty of traditional Breton song.

Les Chanteurs du Pays de Vilaine. Danses en Rond, Danses en Chêne. TVB Production (Distriubiton Keltia Musique) RSCD 215. 1995. 56'

One hears a lot about the Breton language kan ha diskan singing for dance and the gwerziou of western Brittany which are gaining a wider and wider audience thanks to exceptional young singers like those reviewed above. But eastern Brittany -- Gallo Brittany -- also has a wonderful song tradition in the French language. And this CD gives one the chance to hear some of the masters of this tradition.

It can be argued that very few people anywhere in Brittany have done more to stimulate the performance of song than members of the Chanteurs du Pays de Vilaine. Six men make up this group: Pierrig Hercelin, Gilbert Hervieux, Jean Yves Le Bot, Alain Le Nay, Jakez Le Soueff and Albert Poulain. They live in and have grown up in a part of Brittany--the Pays d'Oust et de Vilaine--where song is still part of an oral tradition and where an annual song contest called the "Bogue d'Or" has served to stimulate old and young singers to not only present treasures of the past, but compose or dig out rarely heard songs for local eliminatory contests and for the final contest which attracts thousands. The singers on this CD are not only great singers, but are also collectors who continue to learn from older masters in their community who often have a large repertoire to pass along. In their 30s and early 40s, five of the six singers of the Chanteurs du Pays de Vilaine inherit what might be called a "tradition" of collecting song in this region of Brittany which was begun in the 1960s by the sixth member, Albert Poulain, and others such as Jean Louis Latour, Jacques Toupel, Francois Sevant, Albert Noblet and Jean Bernard Vighetti. Collection has been just the excuse to get younger to older singers together and to create new occasions for performance.

Most of the selections on this CD are unaccompanied songs for dancing (and in no place but Brittany can one find such a tremendous use of a capella voice for dance music, whether it be in Breton or French). Danses include "tours," "ridées," pilé menu," "hanter-dro," and the "rond de Saint-Vincent"--a wonderful circle dance unique to the very small area around the town of this name. Each of the dances is led by one of the singers with the rest responding -- a style one also finds for the one march included on the CD. But this area of eastern Brittany, the Pays de Vilaine, also has a very strong tradition of unaccompanied ballads, and one hears two on this CD--one by the group as a whole and the other sung by Albert Poulain. In my opinion, one can find no one better than Albert Poulain to sing the "complainte" -- the tragic ballad of eastern Brittany which packs as much power as any Breton language gwerz.

The jacket notes to this CD note the origins of songs -- who learned the song from whom in what village -- and the full text is given for each. A nice introduction to the Chanteurs des Pays de Vilaine is also included. Including so much information means that type size is a bit small, and I will seek a magnifying glass or photocopy machine to make an enlargement. But those will younger eyes will not have a problem.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Pays d'Oust et de Vilaine is one of the richest regions of Brittany for ballads as well as unaccompanied song for dancing, and this CD only convinces me more.

GWERZ PLADENN MUSICIANS ... ON THE ROAD

War an Hent. Gwerz Pladenn GWP 010. 1995. 34'07.

Gwerz Pladenn is a record label created by Breton musicians in 1993 and today it is directed by Jacky Molard, Patrick Molard, Alain Genty and Jacques Pellen. Distribution is assured by Coop Breizh which has taken on this particular label as one of its own. Gwerz Pladenn is intended to be a collection of recordings where musicians and producers work closely together--a specifically Breton collection, but open to all styles of music. Innovation and experimentation is encouraged -- but this is based on a deep understanding of Breton musical traditions. Thus you find everything on the CDs of Gwerz Pladenn from a capella Breton language ballads (gwerziou) to jazz/rock ensembles to piobaireachd. What is clear is that, whatever the style, the music you hear on Gwerz Pladenn recordings is of an excellent quality.

You will find nearly all of the CDs produced so far by Gwerz Pladenn reviewed in Bro Nevez--two of the most recent in this issue. And a brand new CD has come out to present a sampling of music from these recordings. Called "War an Hent" ("on the road") this CD has been released in conjunction with a tour this Fall to nine Breton cities and to Paris by a group of 14 musicians who have recorded with Gwerz Pladenn (or who have yet to have a CD released with them).

On the tour the 14 musicians perform solo and in groups of various sizes and combinations (up to the grand finale where all 14 are found on stage together). In this touring group are: Jacky Molard (fiddle), Jacques Pellen (guitar), Patrick Molard (bagpipes), Alain Genty (bass guitar), Annie Ebrel (voice), Kristen Nikolaz (voice), Youenn le Bihan (bombarde), Soig Siberil (guitar), Jean-Michel Veillon (flute), Yannick Jory (saxophones), Jean-Luc Bernard (percussion), Thierry Garcia (guitar), Riccardo Del Fra (bass fiddle), and Kristen Nogues (Celtic harp). This is indeed an amazing combination of excellent musicians who are at home with traditional styles of Breton song and instrumental music, but who also push the envelope with innovative arrangements and compositions inspired not only by Breton traditions but musics from around the world, jazz and rock.

The CD sampler, "War an hent," presents nicely the variety and quality of this group with selections from recordings on the Gwerz Pladenn label. Patrick Molard and Youenn le Bihan start it off with traditional style bombarde & biniou. A selection from Soig Siberil's CD called "Digor" features his brilliant performance of compositions and tunes with a strong influence from Galicia, Spain. Annie Ebrel is one of the best singers of the Breton language gwerz, with a CD for Gwerz Pladenn soon to come out. Kristen Nogues has not yet recorded with Gwerz Pladenn, but has played with many of its musicians; she has been on the Breton music scene for many years and is one of a number of great Celtic harp players in Brittany who have managed to go way beyond the O'Carolan repertoire that often bogs down this instrument. Triptyque is the trio of Jacky and Patrick Molard and Jacques Pellen and the selection from their CD is also inspired from Galicia. Jacques Pellen and Riccardo Del Fra--Breton guitarist and Italian bass fiddle player--provide a lovely slow air. Selections are also included from the brand new recordings by Jean-Michel Veillon and Yvon Riou (flute and guitar virtuosos) and Kristen Nikolaz (Breton language singer) reviewed in this issue of Bro Nevez. Appropriately enough, closing out the Gwerz Pladenn sampler is Alain Genty, an innovative composer and electric bass player. A large majority of the musicians on tour for Gwerz Pladenn can be found in the back up band for his CD "Le couleur du milieu" from which the title track is pulled for this sampler.

If you have yet to get to know the recordings on the Gwerz Pladenn label, this is a great recording to become introduced to some of the most interesting and talented musicians of Brittany. Jacket notes for the CD do a particularly good job of introducing each of the 14 musicians on the Gwerz Pladenn tour, including a short biography and history of their musical evolution, and a list for each of recordings on which they can be found.

COOP BREIZH- Making Breton Music Accessible

While today Breton music and culture seem to be highly marketable, this has not always been the case. In a country like France which has been historically determined to standardize culture for the good of French civilization and political unity, grants and resources to support the production of books and recordings have not always been easy to come by. And Bretons have had to fight against a negative identity on the part of Bretons themselves who had become convinced that their culture was backwards and unworthy. Thankfully, attitudes have changed in Brittany and in the past few decades more and more Bretons have taken pride in who they are and in the rich culture they still possess. This change in attitudes is due in large part to the work of cultural militants who have worked hard to give Breton artists, writers and musicians the chance to be seen and heard.

Today it is easy to take the Coop Breizh for granted as just a business specializing in Breton goods, but this organization is much more than that. The following history is a translation of part of a "press packet" I received, and I hope it will give Bro Nevez readers a sense of the history of the Coop Breizh and the continued importance of its work to support the Breton culture.

THE COOP BREIZH: A LITTLE HISTORY

The 1950s: the time of militants

Kendalc'h, a large confederation of Breton cultural organizations, was born in 1952 from an intense expansion in cultural initiatives. Its administrative council has successively included important defenders of the Breton cause: Pierre Mocaer, Yann Brekilien, Per Roy, Jean-Pierre Vincent, Jean Jamet, Yvonig Gicquel, Robert le Grand.

The Coop Breizh, a cooperative association, was created in 1957 in La Baule by militants of Kendalc'h. Their goal was to promote the Breton culture through the greatest possible distribution of its written and musical expressions. "This association has for its objective the implementation of its own means to create, promote, facilitate and develop interest and participation in general economic activity for the language, culture, popular arts, and more generally, all activities and productions which will assure the development of Brittany..."

During its first years the Coop Breizh focused on catalog sales through the Celtic Circles (cercles celtiques), readers of the magazine called "Breizh" (produced by Kendalc'h), and Breton social organizations (amicales) dispersed throughout Europe and the world. Its activity also included setting up tables at cultural festivals and direct sale to the public through a store opened in La Baule.

1970-1980 -- Years of Prosperity: organization and distribution

With Diffusion Breizh in Spezet, a small community on the center of Brittany, a deep cultural specificity was brought to everyday life in Brittany.

In 1970 two Breton cultural militants, Yann Goasdoué and Yannick Baron, moved into the Manor house of Menez Kamm with their families. They intended to make this place an active center for Celtic events year-round.

In 1972, with the encouragement of Robert le Grand, creator of the Coop Breizh, Yann Goasdoué created a structure to distribute books devoted to Brittany. At that period, book stores were not so responsive to a growing demand for Breton material, even though there were numerous small groups publishing books or producing recordings without the structure necessary to sell them.

Yann Goasdoué surveyed book publishers and record producers in the five Breton departments and proposed to them that he become their distributor. He describes it this way: "I wanted to propose to them that I gather and distribute all that they were doing. The idea seemed good to them. They did not have any organized network. It was in large majority militants, and especially teachers who would work at home in the evenings. I proposed to them that I take charge of their stock, do the sales and deliveries myself, and take care of the billings. In the beginning, I worked in the name of the editors I distributed. My only restriction was that I worked only with subjects related to Brittany or the Celtic countries."

The period was a good one especially for recordings. Gilles Servat and Tri Yann produced major hits for the young production house Kelenn. Very quickly, 50 little houses like Kelenn, Nevenoe, Droug (directed by Kirjuhel) or Arfolk gave Goasdoué their recordings and printed materials.

All the little Breton language publishers were contacted and distributed: among them, Al Liamm, Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, Brud Nevez, Emgleo Breiz, etc. Numerous French language publishers joined them--Bretagnes, Calligrammes, Floc'h, Société Archéologique du Finistère, Editions Armoricaines, Nature & Bretagne, Coop Breizh--as well as international publishing houses like the BBC or Omnivox or Pierre Jean Oswald, the Parisian editor who wanted to make better known the militant poetry of "difficult" authors such as Paol Keineg, Yan-Ber Piriou, Youenn Coic...

Very quickly, a link was necessary from the original associative and cultural origins to a rigorous professionalism. The careful crafting of a system of distribution allowed numerous small Breton editors to breathe.

In 1977 the structure Diffusion Breizh was integrated into Coop Breizh, combining a cultural and economic militancy to move at a faster pace.

Today: the first enterprise for Breton books and recordings assuring a true cultural service in Brittany

The activities of the Coop Breizh have two basic directions: 1) the distribution of printed culture (books, magazines, maps...) and musical culture (records, cassettes..) and 2) the publication in Brittany of the works and recordings of young creators, writers and musicians.

Publishing

Books:

A "Comité de lecture" is made up of eight people with different expertise (scientific, historical, literary, commercial). It has the task of selecting new titles each year to be published under the label "Coop Breizh" or "Nature & Bretagne" in areas such as history, literature, stories and legends, maritime history, deluxe books, or basic introductions for the general public on Brittany and the Celtic countries. Some works require a large investment, such as "Les Vieux Métiers Bretons" of Florian Le Roy and Mathurin Mehuet, with 3,000 copies reedited in 1992.

Music:

The Coop Breizh is particularly well placed to follow the developing interest in Breton music inside and outside of Brittany. Yann Goasdoué, director of the Coop Breizh, is a musician--a bombarde player who learned his trade in bagads, in traditional biniou-bombarde pairs, and as a founding member in 1972 of the group Diaouled ar Menez. Some 15 compact discs are scheduled for production this year. 85 titles are currently in the Coop Breiz catalog under three labels:

Arfolk--a label featuring in particular traditional vocal and instrumental music without all the innovations brought on by the "revival."

Escalibur--featuring contemporary arrangements of traditional music, with new harmonies and non-traditional additions such as the use of an electric bass guitar or chromatic accordion.

Gwerz Pladenn--a label created around some of the greatest professional musicians who are seeking to find a means for their own expressions. For them Breton music is the base and a field for experimentation in a variety of musical styles.

Distribution

Diffusion Breizh is a unique example in France, other "regional" initiatives having failed. It contributes to the production of writing in Brittany by giving "small" publishers a means of distribution and by giving "large" publishers a means to develop their field.

Diffusion Breizh represents today about 80% of Breton publications with 2,500 titles (books, CDs, cassettes, videos..) and more than 500 publishers--ranging in size from only 1 to 200 titles produced per year.

Through regular and continuous sales and after several reeditions certain titles have had sales of over 50,000 copies. These are in the categories of dictionaries, stories and legends, and guides such as Gwenc'hlan Le Scouezec's Guide de la Bretagne Mystérieuse.

Over 900 points of sale in the five Breton departments are visited by three representatives. In the Parisian area distribution is assured directly by Diffusion Breizh and Soleils Diffusion. Additionally, negotiations are under way to expand distribution throughout the French speaking world, or at least to 600 of the most important centers for French language book sales. 2,000 prospects throughout the world receive catalogs, information, and visits from representatives and commercial agents. The catalog sales (sales by correspondence), based in Rennes, has a large list of people interested in Brittany and "Celtism" and is in constant expansion.

Diffusion Breizh is also present at the principal international book fairs: Midem, and the annual Book Fairs in Brussels, Geneva, Paris and Frankfurt. And it is also found at thematic book exhibitions for history, maritime culture, etc. Musical productions are distributed internationally. Germany, Great Britain, Northern Europe, Spain (Galicia and Asturias), Portugal, Ireland and the U.S.A. are big consumers of Breton music. Contracts have been established for distribution partners in Germany, Canada and Spain.

Deeply rooted, Diffusion Breizh is nevertheless turned to the future and is very much interested in new media with a catalog for video and future new techniques: multimedia, CD-Rom, etc.

A Patron of Breton culture

The Coop Breizh supports the Breton culture through three literary prizes: the Prix Per Roy and the Prix Roparz Hemon (named after the first two presidents of Coop Breizh) are awards for works in the Breton language, and the Prix Pierre Mocaer is for works in French. The Coop Breizh has also given support to several cultural associations such as Diwan, for the teaching of the Breton language, the Université Populaire Bretonne, and Kendalc'h.

Some Addresses for Coop Breizh/Diffusion Breizh

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— 20 millions de francs de chiffre d'affaires l'an passé —

La longue marche de Breizh Diffusion

Breizh Diffusion, créée en 1972, ne se contente plus de diffuser livres et disques bretons, ou ayant trait à la Bretagne. Désormais, elle édite et produit. La petite coopérative du début est devenue une solide entreprise implantée à Spézet, avouant 20 millions de francs de chiffre d'affaires en 1994. Avec des tonnes de projets, comme l'agrandissement de ses locaux avec plusieurs embauches à la clé.

Yann Goasdoué : un corps nouveau tassé sous des épaules de luttier, les yeux rieurs et malins d'un gamin qui pardonne aux grands de ne pas tout comprendre.

En bon Trégorrois, Yann Goasdoué n'a jamais pu rester les deux pieds dans le même sabot. Depuis le milieu des années 60, on le voit partout en Bretagne. Quand ce n'est pas à la bombe avec les Diaouled ar menez, c'est derrière un stand de Breizh diffusion, dans tout ce que le « Pays » compte de salons ou rassemblements culturels. « Il faut reconnaître qu'entre 1957, date de la création de la Coop Breizh (capital de 20 000 F quasi-fictifs,

un salarié), qui rassemblait un certain nombre d'associations dont le but était la diffusion de la « matière bretonne », et aujourd'hui, un sacré chemin a été parcouru », admet-il.

« Aujourd'hui », c'est Breizh Diffusion, créée en 1972, une entreprise qui ne se contente plus de diffuser livres et disques bretons ou ayant trait à la Bretagne sur les cinq départements historiques et Paris, mais qui désormais édite et produit.

Le capital est passé à 750 000 F (pas fictifs), l'entreprise compte 19 salariés. « Et bientôt trois de plus, souligne Yann Goasdoué, puisque nos locaux spézetois vont passer de 600 m² à 1 000 m², ce qui implique des créations d'emploi. » Autres challenges : la création d'un atelier graphique, ou encore « tenter d'être présents sur le multimédia ».

En 20 ans, Breizh diffusion a élargi la matière bretonne au domaine celtique. « Désormais, toutes les petites maisons d'édition bretonnes transitent par nous, notamment les éditeurs en langue bretonne, ce qui est loin d'être négligeable : les deux gros dictionnaires qui viennent de sortir atteignent des tirages de 5 000 exemplaires, par exemple. » A



Yann Goasdoué au dernier Salon du livre maritime à Concarneau.
(Photo Béatrice Le Grand.)

550 F l'unité, ça n'est pas intéressant que sur le plan culturel...

Tournée générale

Mais le secteur qui s'est le plus développé est celui de la diffusion et de la production de disques, avec entre autres, la création du label Gwerz Pladenn, dont de nombreux artistes sont eux-mêmes actionnaires.

« Nous avons en projet un album solo de Soig Sibéril, un

autre d'Annie Ebrel, ainsi qu'un disque du duo Jacques Pellen-Ricardo Del Fra, sous la direction artistique de Patrick Molard ». Les artistes du label, au complet, effectueront une tournée bretonne à la rentrée. On retrouvera sur scène Kristen Nicolaz, Soig Sibéril, Jacky et Patrick Molard, Youenn Le Bihan, Jacques Pellen, Ricardo del Fra, Annie Ebrel, Didier Squiban et Yann-Fanch Kemener, J.-M. Veillon et Y. Riou.

Ronan GORGARD.

A NOTE ON BRETON ECONOMY

I received recently a very interesting packet--in English!--from SODIE, and industrial development company promoting the area of Lorient for potential economic investors. The fact sheets enclosed present demographics, higher education, transport, commercial and fishing ports, the sea product industry, agro-food business, ship-building and some of the key research institutions of the area.

While Lorient is one of France's major ports (the 2nd largest fishing port), I have pulled some interesting facts from the sheet on the "Agro-food industries" that relate to Brittany. It is not specified anywhere in the packet, but I think that "Brittany" here is composed of just the four "official" departments--excluding Loire-Atlantique--in the statistics presented. Quite a bit of additional information, not included below, is found on specific companies. Anyone interested in this packet from SODIE would be very welcome to contact me for a copy.

Agro-Food Industries

Heiress of a long farming tradition, Brittany remains the first French region for food industry:

- almost 10% of the companies
- 8.5% of the added value
- 13% of the turnover
- almost 10% of investors
- more than 11% of the salaried employees within the French food industry.

The three main sectors are: Meat industry, Dairy industry and Animal Food Production. Agro-Food industry represents in Brittany 7% of the total employment and 31% of industry salaried employees.

Slaughtering and Meat Processing: Brittany regroups more than a third of the French Livestock Slaughtering Industry: first region for pork slaughtering (48% of the French production), of poultry (46%), large bovines (18%) and of veal (5%).

Delicatessen Trade - Salting - Tinned Meat: Brittany is the first French region in this sector (1/4 of the national tonnage). It is also 1st National Rank for cooked ham (30% of France's production, shoulders and varied cooked delicatessen (34%), cooked dried sausages (36%) and pates (33%). 2nd National Rank for the sausages (18%, behind the Nord Pas-de-Calais), tinned food and diverse meat making (18.5%, behind the Pays de Loire).

Fruit and Vegetables Industry: Behind the Picardie, Brittany is the second industrial vegetable producer. 200,000 tons of vegetables were processed in 1992. The Finistere alone produces 2/3rds of the region's production.

Ready Cooked Dishes - Tinned Food - Deep Frozen Food - Frozen Food: Brittany produces 83% of the French tinned food and is the second French producer of French cassoulet and tinned choucroute (sour kraut).

Dairy Products and Eggs: 1st National Rank for collecting cow's milk (20% national production), butter fabrication (32% - "Paysan Breton" is the second most important brand behind "President") and of powdered milk (37%).

Biscuit Factory - Pastry Factory: Second producing region for biscuits and pastry conservation behind Normandy; in 1992 Brittany produced around 55,000 tons of biscuits.

Pet Food and Food Products for Stock Breeding Animals: Brittany's leading field, producing 42% of the national production (22% of the bovine's food, poultry 43% and pork 62%).

BRETON TAUGHT AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES

I recently received a request for information on Breton classes offered at American Universities and had a great deal of trouble coming up with any! I know that U.S. ICDBL member Gweltaz Hamel has offered Breton several times during the Summer Language Institutes at the University of California, Santa Cruz. But, I know of no other classes. Surely Breton must be offered at least occasionally in a Celtic Studies program somewhere in this country, so I would appreciate it if readers would let me know of regular or irregular opportunities to study Breton at a college or university. Or, if you know of other classes that are currently being offered, that would also be good to know so I can refer people to them when questions come my way ... as they do from time to time.

CELTIC LEAGUE - AMERICAN BRANCH

Press Release: Change your clock and your calendar too!

October 31st is really New Year's Eve -- Celtic New Year's Eve, that is, according to a unique calendar published by the Celtic League American Branch. Based on old Celtic traditions, the year--and the calendar--begins on November 1st and ends on the date commonly known as Halloween. Indeed, many of our Halloween customs had their origins in Celtic celebrations of the New Year.

A veritable almanac of Celtic civilization, the calendar sports twelve monthly illustrations of themes from Celtic mythology, plus the names of the months and days of the week in the six Celtic languages, as well as traditional Celtic sayings and over 700 anniversaries of notable people and events from Celtic history.

Copies of the 1996 Celtic Calendar are available from the Celtic League Calendar, 2973 Valentine Avenue, Bronx, NY 10458, for \$7.50 each, postpaid. Or for more information call 1-800-626-CELT. Fax (914) 779-3710.

CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED !!!

Have you noticed that it's the same old person who writes everything for Bro Nevez? Don't be shy. Don't be unnecessarily modest about your knowledge of Brittany. I would love to give up space to new voices in the U.S. ICDBL membership or among our subscribers, and many of you have more talent than you are willing to admit! How about a CD review from someone else for a change? I know there are a few of you out there who follow Breton music. For those able to read Breton and/or French, I would be happy to pass along some of the books I receive from Breton publishers so you can review them. If there is a particular area that interests you that we currently don't do much about in the pages of Bro Nevez -- Breton history, tales and legends, cooking, economy, etc. -- I would love to have writers contributing even a paragraph or two. Or, is there something you want to know more about -- how about a few "Letters to the Editor"?

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