



Ozégan and the Tro Breiz pilgrimage

Ozégan: Tro Breiz is a pilgrimage. Its roots are coming from the High Middle Age, something like the 8th century. We don't know exactly who and how, but we know that when the first king of Brittany, Nominoë, has formed his own church, because we have to consider it that in this time, you know Rome wanted to put its power everywhere in Europe. Brittany and Rome are not agree about many, many things. You know the Empire is not the interest of Brittany people. So, he has made his own church, loyal to his kingdom, and he has named évêques, bishops and seven évêchés, bishoprics. And, after this pilgrimage is born, some historian people think that it was this king Nominoë, but we are not very sure, you know, but we know that this pilgrimage exists from this very old time.

We know also that before there were another pilgrimage from pagan people, not on the same places, but on hills, because there is seven sacred hills in Brittany. We have no proof, historical proof, that this old pagan pilgrimage has inspired the Christian one, but there is a tie--a link, it's evident.

Rob: And this pilgrimage, it takes in different places in Brittany. Why does the Tro Beiz go to these places?

Ozégan: Seven places, because in the legend, Brittany people think that there are seven saints who have made the Brittany, the Christian Brittany: Saint Malo at Saint Malo, Saint Samson at Dol-de-Bretagne, Saint Patern at Vannes, Saint Corentin at Quimper, Saint Paul at Saint Pol-de-Léon, Saint Tugdual at Tréguier, Saint Briec at Saint Briec. But, the meaning of this pilgrimage is seven sins, OK? There is seven days for the Creation, and the people who are walking all along this pilgrimage are, without knowing it, walking on the seven waves of the Creations.

Rob: I notice in your book, seven is a very important number.

Ozégan: Yes, seven in many cultures is a ... a sacred number. First, we have to consider it a week: we have seven days for a week. And, when we take care of the meaning of the name of our days, Monday, this is the day of the moon, it's coming from pagan people. Tuesday, it is the, I think, Thor or Tiw, a god of the Viking, in English. In French, it's "mardi," it's coming from Mars, the god of the war, in the Roman culture. After Wednesday, "mercredi," it's Mercure for us and Voltan is Odin, you know, the big god from the German and the Vikings. Friday, "jeudi," Jupiter in French, Jupiter the big creator in Roman culture, and Friday, Frigg the god of earth with his sister or his wife, Freya, goddess of earth; "vendredi," we ... Friday, Venus, Venus, in French, vendredi, Venus the goddess of love. Saturday, Saturn, and the Sunday, English have kept the real meaning, because it's the day of the sun. In French, we have taken another root, a Latin root, "dimanche," to mean, the "dies," is the day of the "dominum," of the Lord. So, these seven goddesses and gods are the most important gods in the Old Time for all Europa. And we know that in Brittany there is a cult very important about seven gods. And after, with Christianity, seven sins. Pas seulement--not only in Brittany, we know other places in Europe with a cult of seven gods or saints.

Rob: These seven saints of the Tro Breiz pilgrimage, where do they come from?



Ozégan: Some of them are coming from big Galle, from Welsh. St. Malo is a Welshman, I know. Saint Samson too. Saint Patern is coming from Armorique and Saint Corentin too. Saint Paul is from Welsh too, and Saint Briec, Briec, I don't remember if it's an Irish or a Welsh.

Rob: A lot of them came from outside Brittany.

Ozégan: Yes.

Rob: ... and brought Christianity ...

Ozégan: Five, yes, five of them ...

Rob: This Tro Breiz was a pilgrimage, or is a pilgrimage, because I understand they still do it.

Ozégan: Yes, yes, it is very strong now, vivant, alive.

Rob: Why, do you think?

Ozégan: I think one pilgrim, one way and one explication. But, in Brittany, people are very -- it's not exactly proud, you know, of their heritage. They take care of their heritage, because they know that without past, we can't make a future. We are like trees, you know, we need roots. We can't have a complete life without roots.

Rob: How long is the Tro Breiz?

Ozégan: It depends of the way you take -- between 700 or 800 kilometres. But, every year there is an association, the Ways of Tro Breiz, Le Chemin de Tro Breiz, which is organised the pilgrimage for one step, and, and it takes seven year to make seven steps and they organise all. You know, you have only your water to carry, and they take care of you for, uh, meals and to sleep the evening. It's a Catholic association, but they are very open. Of course you have something to pay, but it is very bon marché-- cheap, because they don't do that for money. No, they are sharing their, their belief. You can make this pilgrimage without to be a Christian. You know, there is people who love Brittany, and we have sportifs, sport people with a Nordic walking. There is many way to make it, to, to accomplish it. For me, all the ways are good.

Rob: Ozégan, thank you very much indeed for your time.

Ozégan: Thank you, Robert, and God bless you. I feel myself very close to, to bard people.

Rob: I should point out that you said "bard" and not "bad."

Ozégan: Yes, indeed, with my very bad pronunciation, I don't make this mistake.

Notes: For more info on Ozégan, see: <http://ozégan.com>

For more info on Tor Breiz, see: <http://www.trobreiz.com>



For info on Breton saints (in French), see: <http://www.pelerin.com/Pelerinages/En-route-pour-le-Tro-Breiz/Le-Tro-Breiz-les-7-familles/Les-7-saints-bretons>