



CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

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**CHANGING IDENTITIES, CHANGING LANDSCAPES: THE LONG TERM
DYNAMICS OF HUMAN - LAND RELATIONS IN THE ASPRE, ROUSSILLON**

**INTERNATIONAL ECOTECHNOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE
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Supervisor: Dr. JAMES McGLADE

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ABSTRACT

This research seeks to explore the complexity of human - land relations in the Aspre, with respect to land degradation. It is argued that in human modified environments, such as this Mediterranean - Pyrenean borderland, nature and culture cannot be meaningfully studied apart. Consequently issues of land degradation must be situated within the broader context of socio-natural interaction. Such a study cannot be approached solely from a natural or social science perspective; what is required, and what has been developed in this research, is a transdisciplinary methodology whereby natural phenomena are situated within their historical and socio-cultural context. Central to that context is the need to position the system within a long term evolutionary dynamic, thus allowing us to view the system in process, rather than as a synchronic present day snapshot. Within this 'longue durée' temporal and spatial scales are seen to be critical.

It is argued that land degradation is at root a perceptual issue, thus perception and cognition are seen as critically important in this study. The core field work acts to expose both the physical and social identities of the Aspre, and the multiple perceptions of land degradation held by its inhabitants. The research identifies a series of 'perceptual filters' through which the environment of the Aspre is experienced, and by means of which meaning is negotiated. The recognition of the multiple environmental perceptions and plural rationalities is of crucial importance when contemplating the possible future pathways open to the Aspre, with respect to sustainable futures.

What emerges from this research is a redefinition of land degradation in the Aspre, from that of a purely physical issue, to the realization that what we are dealing with are changing social identities within changing landscapes.

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Finally I wish to express my gratitude to my own family for their support.

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Overview of the Thesis Structure.

Chapter 1, on 'Land Degradation and Human-Environmental Interaction' introduces the research, defines the 'problem' in the light of a relevant literature review, and sets out the aims and objectives of the study. Chapter 2, address the theoretical and methodological difficulties of socio-natural enquiry, and presents our argument for situating this work within a transdisciplinary framework. Chapter 3, explores the environment personality of the Aspre, my field site in the French Mediterranean, but not just as a listing of its physical components. Since we are arguing that the physical environment cannot be separated from its social context, the physical facts of the Aspre are presented as experienced by the inhabitants.

The objective of chapters 4 and 5, is to provide a long term historical overview of the socio-biophysical system of the Aspre. This provides insight on the theoretical debate set out in chapter 1, concerning the conceptualization of human-environmental interaction in the Aspre, within which the question of land degradation must be situated. It also sets the stage for the contemporary field work. Agriculture was and still is a vital link in the relationship between the people and the land of the Aspre. Chapter 6 presents the contemporary agricultural debate in the Aspre, which is necessarily linked with that of the Region and the European Union. Following on from which Chapter 7, marks our *rendez-vous* with the people of the Aspre. As a result of ethnographic field work, we present an interpretation of the contemporary world visions, mentalities and identities of the human actors on the Aspre stage. This leads into chapter 8, which builds on the preceding understanding and analysis in the presentation of the current perceptual engagement between the people and the land of the Aspre. It is here that we get to the root of the multiple perceptions of land degradation in operation there. Finally, by way of a synthesis Chapter 9, relates the research findings back to the initial objectives set out in chapter one, and ends with a contemplative reflection on futures for the Aspre within a larger world system.

"Ici, nous sommes un peuple de la terre, pas très instruit; donc, les gens du Nord nous traitent bête au inférieur". (U)

"We have been coming here regularly for the last twenty years, and in all that time the locals have not been forthcoming. They are typical closed mountain village people, almost incestuous. We will always be simply 'les Anglais', no more, no less. They are not hostile, just indifferent. They are more hostile near the coast." (TT)

"La terre est là pour nourrir l'homme, pas pour son loisir". (BC)

"These little introspective communities cannot understand the wider implications of world trade". (TT)

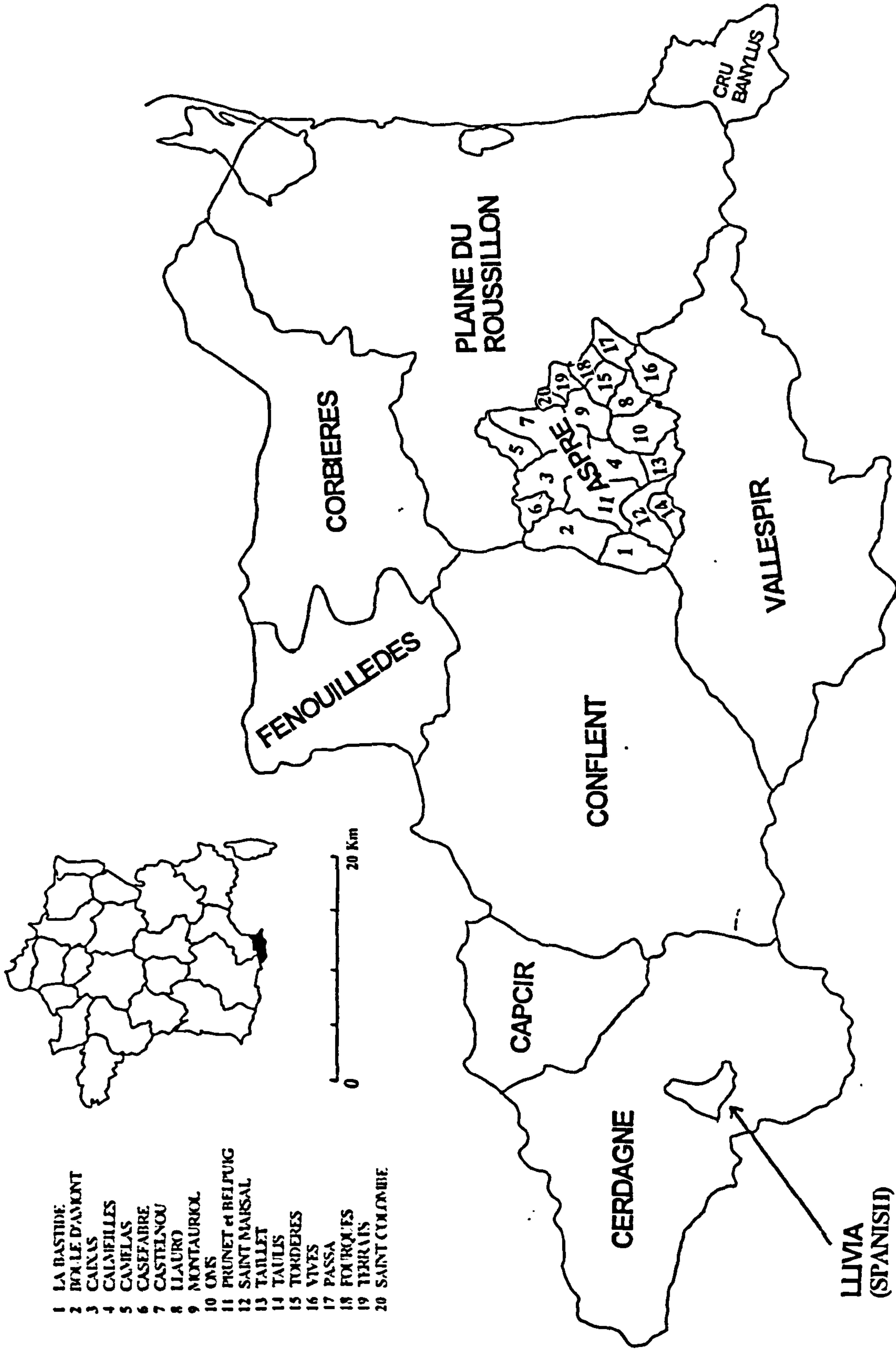
CHAPTER 1. LAND DEGRADATION & HUMAN-ENVIRONMENTAL INTERACTION.

1.1 Introduction.

The Catalan word 'Aspre' signifies something dry, acid and difficult. This research is about the relationship between the people and the land of the Aspre, my field site in a semi-mountainous area of the French Mediterranean - Pyrenean borderland. More specifically the aim of the research is to explore the complexity of human-environmental interaction with respect to land degradation.

The Aspre, which covers an area of approximately 25,000 ha (see Map 1), provides an ideal location for a study of 'land degradation and society'. Firstly, the Mediterranean, this cradle of civilization, represents one of the most human modified and ecologically fragile landscapes in the world. Its ecology is strongly influenced by its temperamental skies, characterised by irregular but frequently violent precipitation, in combination with extreme events such as drought, flooding, fire and land slides. These processes are exacerbated by the more recent pressures of urbanization and tourism. Looming above the Mediterranean plains of vines and olive trees, are the exposed and frequently denuded slopes of the foothills, sandwiched between the opulence of the plain and the austerity of the high mountains. A transect through the Aspre reflects this zonation, and displays an interesting vertical differentiation of ecology and people as one journey from the intensely cultivated vineyards of the Basse Aspre, essentially of Mediterranean character and under the influence of Mediterranean soils and climate, to the more upland Pyrenean world of the Haute Aspre, eternally watched over by the year round snow capped Canigou. The hacked and tormented topography of the Haute Aspre has in more recent times been largely abandoned by agriculture and its indigenous, hitherto agrarian population.

Within the landscapes of the Aspre not only is one presented with the varied physical faces of the Mediterranean - Pyrenees, but also with the concept of 'degradation' within intensively cultivated and extensively abandoned environments.



- 1 LA BASTIDE
- 2 BOULE D'AYMONT
- 3 CAIXAS
- 4 CALMEILLES
- 5 CAMELAS
- 6 CASEFAIRE
- 7 CASTELNOU
- 8 LLAURO
- 9 MONTAURIOL
- 10 OMS
- 11 PRUNET & BELPUIG
- 12 SAINT MARçal
- 13 TAILLET
- 14 TAULIS
- 15 TORDERES
- 16 VIVES
- 17 PASSA
- 18 FOURQUES
- 19 TERRATS
- 20 SAINT COLOMBE

LLIVIA
(SPANISH)

Map 1: The Geographical Position of the Aspre.

The human ecology of the Aspre is equally varied: the Basse Aspre may still be characterised by its indigenous Catalan 'viticulteurs', but due to its peri-urban location (only 20 km from Perpignan, the Departmental capital), one also finds a new commuter population in these viticole villages. Similarly, the vacuum created by the abandonment of agriculture in the Haute Aspre has been filled by an essentially 'outsider' urban leisure population in the form of holiday and retirement home owners, intermingled with a group of people collectively known as 'Neo-Ruraux' (see chapter 7), differentiated by their subsistence back to nature ideas. The ensuing drama of the relationship between the people - both insiders and outsiders - and the undulating land of the Aspre, provides exceptionally rich perceptual pickings on the multiple concepts of 'degradation' in operation there.

1.2 Defining Land Degradation.

This research has arisen out of dissatisfaction with current approaches to land degradation. The vast majority of such studies are conducted within the natural science disciplines, which tend to view the issue solely from a physical perspective. Within this context researchers, depending on their discipline, emphasising climate (EPOCH Programme), soils, geology, hydrology (MEDALUS Programme), vegetation etc. Similarly, the definitions of land degradation to be found in the literature reflect the bias that it is an adverse environmental process¹. A sample of such definitions include the following;

- *A marked decline or total loss of the potential ability of the ecosystem to sustain the biological productivity of land (Rozanov-UNEP 1990).*
- *Desertification or the degradation of arid and semi-arid ecosystems is a stepwise decomposition of the plant and animal community (Le Houerou 1975).*
- *The impoverishment of terrestrial ecosystems under the impact of man, it is the*

¹ The term 'desertification', rather than land degradation is frequently used in arid and semi-arid regions, including the Mediterranean.

process of deterioration in these ecosystems that can be measured by reduced productivity of desirable plants, undesirable alterations in the biomass and the diversity of the micro and macro fauna and flora, accelerated soil deterioration, and increased hazards for human occupation (Dregne 1983).

- A process of sustained land (soil and vegetation) degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, caused at least partly by man. It reduces productive potential to an extent which can neither be readily reversed by removing the cause nor easily reclaimed without substantial investment' (World Bank 1985);

- A comprehensive expression of economic and social processes as well as those natural or induced ones which destroy the equilibrium of soil, vegetation, air and water, in the areas subject to edaphic and/or climatic aridity....leading to destruction of the biological potential of the land (FAO/UNEP 1984).

- Damage to the physical, chemical or biological status of the land, which may also restrict the lands productive capacity (Chartres 1987).

- Land degradation is a change to land which makes it less useful to human beings (Wasson 1987).

The above definitions suggest a change from a favoured or preferred state, with respect to anthropogenic value or ecological stability, to a less preferred one, the operative word being 'loss'. This begs the question as to how one can define and measure this loss in absolute terms? Who can speak about Mediterranean vegetation without acknowledging the role played by the gastronomical preference of the goat and other grazers? Ecological terms such as 'carrying capacity'² of the land is open to interpretation, with the ability to support a given species indefinitely dependent on

²Carrying capacity refers to the maximum population of a given species which can be supported indefinitely in a given territory, without degradation of the resource base.

socio-economic and anthropogenic value judgements and technological developments (as shall become apparent in chapter 4); besides we know that no ecosystem is sustainable indefinitely (cf. Fresco 1992). Neither can we be sure if this loss in capability of the land is reversible or irreversible, who can categorically say that the Sahara will not bloom again one day? When we look at the land and the landscape within the long term we find that they are being continuously modified, which does not necessarily imply degradation. The question at issue here is whether one should view degradation processes within the context of continuous landscape change, or as an end product of that change? From the outset it is apparent that any meaningful concept of degradation must be positioned with respect to temporal and spatial scales. One must also distinguish between purely environmental processes such as weathering, acidification, salinization, leaching etc., which may occur without human interference and those which occur as a consequence of human modification. Since our field site is located within the ambit of the Mediterranean, a region Braudel (1975) referred to as 'a collection of museums of man', this study will not address purely physical processes in the absence of human beings.

Despite the useful and very necessary work carried out by natural and physical scientists over the years, they have failed to come up with a universal causal model. This is not surprising, since degradation occurs under very different climatological, geological, pedological, vegetational and social circumstances. It would seem presumptuous to assume that a limited number of causes underlies all these examples. Clearly there can be no universally applicable causal models. The frustration of such a fluid predicament is reflected in the conclusions of a UNEP (Rozanov 1990) report on 'The Assessment of Global Desertification', when it stated that: "The uncertainty in the assessment of the existing situation is mainly the result of unclear definition of what is the desertification and what is to be measured and how in order to assess it appropriately". This statement not only highlights the recurrent problem in defining land degradation, but it also reflects the belief that if only we could come up with an unambiguous, and no doubt universal definition of the problem, an appropriate empirical measure and methodology would be arrived at. This research will demonstrate that the search for

such an empirical measure constitutes part of the problem rather than being directed at any hope of finding a 'solution'. The crux of the problem lies in the fact that a purely physical or technical approach can only ever provide us with a partial picture, because it fails to take into account the fact that most physical environments in the world today are embedded in a social matrix.

Central to the idea of land degradation is a culturally informed 'a priori' expectation of the land. The overt manifestation of land degradation is frequently seen as a reduction in the productivity of the land in the form of crop yields and diminishing labour returns; what Brown (1981) referred to as the quiet crisis eroding the basis of civilization. A dramatic example of such loss in productivity being the American 'dust bowl', an area that moved from being a wheat plain to a dust bowl in the 1930s, with catastrophic economic and social costs. However, this focus on reduced productivity is not the only criteria by which degradation can be defined: for example, the Greek island of Delphos was completely denuded in the Middle Ages exposing its chalk skeleton, but today that skeleton is a major tourist attraction. Its ecological and physical 'degradation' has been transformed into something exotic attracting substantial economic benefit. Similarly, an agronomist may well classify the Kalahari desert as a degraded and desolate wasteland, but it is a fountain of life to the Bushman.

There is also a tendency to link degradation with over exploitation of natural resources, which in turn is frequently connected with Malthusian notions of population and or economic pressure. However, as shall become apparent in the chapters that follow, the 'degradation' we find in the Haute Aspre is to a large extent due to human abandonment of the land, which of itself does not necessarily imply ecological impoverishment. As previously noted the Mediterranean is 'par excellence' a human modified environment. If today by some extraordinary means one could wipe out all traces of human interference and the pristine, prehistoric mediterranean forest were to reappear, present day pastoralists, agriculturalists, and even Mediterranean botanists and ecologists, (who take much of the flora and fauna of the garrigue and maquis, resulting from deforestation, as 'indigenous' species of special scientific and genetic interest), may

well perceive such a reversal as degradation³. Not only do these examples highlight the entanglement of anthropogenic and ecological processes, but they also expose the multiple perceptions of such processes, raising questions about the substitutability of assets, cultural expectations and ultimately militate against defining degradation solely in abstract environmental terms. Rather degradation is a relative concept, linking natural processes with social, cultural and economic values. It has no intrinsic or 'a priori' meaning; its meaning can only be negotiated by reference to specific social and natural structures (McGlade 1993b). Recognition of the social context implies that degradation must also be linked to perceptual criteria (Blaikie & Brookfield 1987). Much of the confusion and complexity surrounding definitions of land degradation arise from a refusal to acknowledge those essentially subjective cultural expectations and value judgements, which ironically are masked by the unquestioned transfer of western scientific 'diminishing production criteria' onto physical and biological processes, culminating in a false adherence to so called 'neutral', universal technical definitions and measurement procedures, such as the Universal Soil Loss Equation⁴ (cf. McGlade 1993b; 1995).

It is clear from the previous definitions that many natural scientists readily acknowledges the human causation role in the land degradation process. However, in keeping with the predominant belief that the land is essentially a physical and biological medium⁵, and without recourse to the analytical tools of the social sciences, natural

³Of course this would be impossible, because even without human interference the natural environment would have evolved of its own accord. Pointing to the fact that there are no 'bench marks'; neither the social or physical environment can stand still.

⁴The Universal Soil Loss Equation (USLE), which has been calibrated for temperate climates and cropping systems, may be written as follows; $E = f(C, S, T, L)$, where E is the average annual erosion (t/ha/yr); C is the climatic factor, using Hamer's estimation for precipitation data; S is the soil factor: a classification based on soil texture, organic matter, structure and especially permeability; T is the topographic factor: slope and gradient; and L is the land utilization factor: plant cover in relation to bare soil (cf. Seckler 1987; Stocking 1987).

⁵Speight (1987) defined the concept of land as, "an extensive system of physical and biological materials and processes associated with the interface of the solid earth, terrestrial water bodies and the air, and the works of human beings".

science research tends to be concentrated on the physical end result of such actions. By choosing to ignore the complex links between the soil, economics, politics and other social criteria, they leave unanswered where the constraints lie, and thus their inability to arrive at an empirical universal causal model of land degradation. Concurrently, within the social sciences there is a large agrarian literature on land tenure and issues dealing with access to the means of production, most notably within a Marxist or Development context. However, these studies have tended to underplay the dynamics of the physical system. Redclift (1987) declared that; "the environment has suffered more neglect at the hands of social scientists than any comparable subject". In short, the majority of land degradation studies tend to be divided between; (a) those that view the environment as a passive backdrop to human activities, and (b) those which view human society as a backdrop to physical processes.

What we shall seek to argue is that the relationship cannot be so readily dichotomised, and that the dynamics of land degradation cannot be studied from either a purely social or natural perspective. Rather what we are dealing with is a co-evolutionary partnership, whereby humans are actively altering the surrounding ecology at the same time that natural systems are themselves continuously evolving in a dynamic sense (cf. McGlade 1991). Inevitably one must take account of the natural rhythms of the land in terms of its sensitivity, resilience and regenerative capacity, and those of the human actors impacting on such systems⁶.

Given the previous discussion it follows that the land degradation 'problematique' must be placed within the realm of human - environmental interaction. This in turn raises the substantial methodological problem of studying something which lies at the interface between academically segregated natural and social science disciplines, necessitating what is referred to in the following chapter as a 'transdisciplinary framework'. Because

⁶Blaikie et al. (1987) define sensitivity as, "the degree to which a given land system undergoes changes due to natural forces following human interference". Resilience is a term coined by Holling (1973), which he defined as the property of a system to absorb and utilise change in a non deleterious way.

we are ultimately linking natural processes with human values and expectations, we shall follow Blaikie & Brookfield (1987) in asserting that perception and cognition monopolise human relations with the environment. There may well be purely physical degradation relating to soil structure, infiltration capacity, and ecological indicators such as the replacement of 'desirable' plants with 'less desirable' ones, but the acknowledgement of such degradation must be interpreted within a social system, reflecting cultural, political and economic aspirations.

The overall complexity of the debate, leads us away from single theories of land degradation, towards contextual studies, where the dynamics of specific human environmental interaction, their consequences and the interpretation of such consequences can be understood. Going back to our introductory statement this research is centred on the relationship between the people and the land in the Aspre today. Given the fact that both society and the physical environment are constantly in transition an historical perspective on the relationship is essential. Positioning the human-land relationship in the Aspre within its long term trajectory is not only necessary in order to position the present, but it also provides a more profound understanding of the nature of socio-natural interaction in operation there. By so doing it avoids the distortion of a myopic late twentieth century synchronic snapshot of the situation. Thus, the unveiling of 'la longue durée' is essential to a more correct conceptualisation of human-environmental relations.

To summarise, the research which follows acknowledges the nature of the physical environment of the Aspre and its enabling and constraining properties, but the contribution of the thesis does not lie in advancing a physical 'measure' of land degradation. Rather it is in re-conceptualising the issue by firmly positioning it within the complexity of socio-natural interaction, with emphasis being placed on the social meaning and perceptual nature of degradation in a contextually specific locality. By so doing we are attempting to redefine land degradation as something other than a purely technical or physical issue.

1.3 Concepts of Nature, Society and Environment.

To describe the multiple meanings of concepts such as nature, environment and society would take a thesis in itself. For our purposes we are simply concerned with summarising some of the more commonly used definitions. In recent times the term 'nature' has come to mean the world apart from human influence. C.F. Lewis (1967), noted that nature may be thought of "mainly as the real, the nonfictional", i.e. the material external given as opposed to the world of human culture. However, the ambiguous term *nature* can also be taken to mean the essence of things, that which constitutes the fixity of somethings being. This is the sense adopted by Ortega Y Gasset (1941), which in contrast to the previous definition does not exclude, but rather embraces culture. In Ortega's sense the nature of an individual is the sum of both innate and acquired attributes. Barthe's (1973) concern with the historical and social construction of nature, exposes the creation of a '*nature myth*', since mythmaking seems to him to be the way in which social ideas become entrenched. The objectification of nature is crucial to a scientific understanding of the world, because from this well springs its indisputable, matter of fact window onto reality. Barthe argues that in fact the reverse is true, rather than having culture as a subset of nature, nature becomes in effect a social creation.

The term 'environment' is frequently treated as synonymous with that of nature. Literally speaking an *environment* is that which surrounds, and as Lewontin (1982) points out, it presupposes something to be surrounded. However, it would be misleading to believe that *environment* is simply a locational term defining geographical proximity. A more relevant sense of environment is suggested by the French term *milieu*. An *environment* as *milieu* is not simply something a creature is *in* (it goes without saying that a creature has to be somewhere and not nowhere), but something it *has* (Cooper 1992). Environment as *milieu* assumes a field of meaning and significance. It emphasises the importance for a creature of not simply being surrounded by geographical space, but more in common with the concept of *place* signifies somewhere one feels at home and within which an organism can develop a degree of mastery over its life. Cooper (1992) argues that it is this sense of

environment that is endangered by our technological age, whereby one is at home everywhere and nowhere in particular. Alternatively, in Darwinian terms, *environment* invokes the condition of natural selection. We can conclude that the term *environment* has a geographical, social and ecological dimension.

Ecology in its widest sense is defined as the study of the interrelation between organisms and their environment (Odum 1979); with human ecology dealing specifically with the interaction between humans and their environment. Luhmann (1985) defined society as, "a self-organising (social) system of communications, based on complementarity of expectations among individuals". Marx (1964) warns against postulating society as an abstraction *vis à vis* the individual. For him the individual is the social being, and is therefore an expression and confirmation of social life. However, it is true to say that the essence of society lies in co-operative organization, which is necessarily both social and ecological. Human-environmental relations are complicated by the fact that they are mediated not only by biological but also cultural criteria⁷; culture at its most basic being a shared system of symbols by which meaning is articulated. In societies search for Luhmann's (1985) "complementarity of expectations", meaning is to a large extent self-referentially constituted. This implies that apart from fulfilling physiological needs, society cannot communicate directly with its environment, it can only communicate about its environment with itself (van der Leeuw 1993). Following Barthe's (1973) argument, since humans cannot stand outside their environment, society does not have access to a neutral conception of nature; rather it has only access to a social reconstruction of that environment, having passed through its 'perceptual filters', which are irreducibly socially, politically and ideologically bounded. Problems arise when humans 'internal' environmental expectations do not correspond with the enabling and constraining rhythms of the 'external' environment; it is then that degradation is perceived.

⁷The term 'landscape' overcomes the dualistic split between nature and culture. As Meinig (1979) writes, "it begins with the acceptance of the intermingling of the physical, biological and cultural features". The distinction between landscape and human modified environments is not clear, and for the purpose of this thesis they are treated as synonymous.

Land degradation and much of current research on environment and society is implicitly linked with the 'sustainable development' discourse. As highlighted by Redclift (1987) that debate draws on two frequently opposed intellectual traditions: "one concerned with the limits which nature presents to human beings, the other with the potential for human material development which is locked up in nature". In essence sustainability, which is generally presented as a desirable objective, is based on a search for a means by which society can continue indefinitely with its present, essentially exploitative approach to nature. This search rests not only on what Timmerman (1986) referred to as the 'myth of equilibrium', which contrary to a dynamic perspective assumes that stability is natural, and that society is external to, or rather can be disentangled from its biophysical envelopment. This isolationist notion, inherent in the Western intellectual tradition, views the natural environment as an explicit physical reality - nature - subject to anthropogenic control and prediction via the tools of science and technology. We seek to argue that the mutualism of organisms and their environment is implicit, both forming part of a closely connected single system (cf. McGlade 1995). People and society can only endure through a continuous intercourse with their environment.

The myths, perceptions, truths and half truths which surround concepts of nature, environment, society and sustainability implicitly permeate this thesis. The dichotomy between social and ecological relations, and the understanding of the reciprocal interplay between them, lies at the heart of our field of inquiry in the Aspre.

1.4 The Socio-Natural Dialectic.

We set out from the premise that one cannot define the physical environment in isolation from its social context, and that the dualism between 'nature' and 'culture' is artificial. Since we do not have access to a neutral conception of either nature or society, it is useful to start by examining the epistemologies underlying the concept of nature and the location of humans within its ambit, as what we find dictates to a large extent how we approach socio-natural studies. The rest of this chapter will be concerned with presenting a historical overview of this debate, which if nothing else clearly shows that there is nothing 'fixed' or 'natural' in societies way of perceiving the

natural world, our knowledge being critically shaped by the preoccupations we bring to it.

1.4.1 Socio-Natural Metaphors:

Mills (1982) argued that three metaphors in particular have been used to describe Western humanity's interaction with nature. These are the 'book of nature' in the Medieval period, 'man as microcosm' during the Renaissance, and the world as a 'machine' in the Modern period. Conversely these stages could be summarised in what Steiner & Nauser (1993) referred to as the archaic, political and economic mode of relating to the cosmos.

The medieval cosmology was a geocentric one, the earth was at the centre of the universe and all evidence suggested it was solid, stationary, finite and spherical (Pepper 1984). Mill's (1982) symbolism of the 'Book' metaphor signified that since nature was a result of God's design, one read two books, the Bible and Nature to discover God's purposes. This was the era when humanity literally believed in 'sermons from stones'. Medieval nature encrusted with 'signature' possessed a symbolic content that was far more significant than its material content (cf. Evernden 1992). God's handiwork was to be known through an emphatic knowledge of the world in the search for symbolic meaning rather than via surface observations. It was a self referential world view, whereby humans perceived themselves as part of nature, under the guidance of religious principles. The emergence of politically organised societies prompted a shift from purely theocentric thinking towards more rational anthropocentric ideas during the Renaissance. Having learnt the book of nature, we move to the 'microcosmic' metaphor, where by man was seen as the measure of all things, epitomised in Leonardo de Vinci's geometrically precise painting of 'Man in a Circle'. Before the Renaissance it was considered essential that some form of empathy be employed to acquire knowledge of nature and the world, it now became essential that empathy not be applied. Knowledge was now to be acquired solely through human reasoning - rationality, and so the 'book of nature' became a human artifact (cf. Lewis 1967). The prototype example of this development can be traced to the ancient Greeks, notably

Aristotle, who endeavoured to form an image of the 'Sophist', which acclaimed humans as creative thinking beings (van der Laan 1982). The Renaissance's concept of nature was of an orderly hierarchy of elements. This was the cosmology of the 'Great Chain of Being', whereby all the elements in the universe, animate and inanimate, spiritual and material were linked together in a mutually dependent chain of fixed hierarchy (cf. Lovejoy 1936). God was still at the pinnacle of the chain, but the position of humans is rather ambiguous, their symbolic place was half way between the 'angels' and the 'beasts', their challenge being to suppress the latter within them in order to emulate the former (Marshall 1992). However, the Renaissance world was increasingly social and conceptual, where ideas rather than religious symbols played the larger role in defining oneself and one's place in the world. God no longer spoke in stones, but rather through man.

The onset of the Enlightenment and the birth of the 'Modern' epoch coincided with the development of rational empirical science, whereby geometry rather than man became the measure of all things. Both humans and nature were reduced to fundamental law abiding mathematical equations, and thus nature and man became part of the clock-work precision of the machine metaphor. The mechanistic metaphor gradually became one of analysis and dissection, asking not only how nature works, but how it may be controlled and mastered for human ends (cf. Passmore 1974). The philosophy accompanying the mechanistic cosmology, which is still dominant today, is 'empiricism' and belief in 'objectivity'. The world was only to be known through surface observations, leading to the experimental science of empiricism. The externalization of nature was an inevitable consequence of the Cartesian observer independent mode of deductive analysis, where truth meant little more or less than that which works under repeated observation (cf. Arendt 1958). Since there was believed to be nothing beyond what was seen, perception suffered a deliberate impoverishment and the human being became analogous to a camera, reflecting an external surface reality. The nineteenth century saw this development channelled into a factory technology, and the emergence of economic man inextricably bound to an industrial way of life. The new conception of the Deity was as noted by Dijksterhuis (1961), that of a "retired engineer", whose

human technicians could now take over the maintenance of the planet.

A reaction against the mechanical model was kept alive in the background by the so called Transcendentalists and the 'Deep Ecology' movement, founded on the works of people like Thoreau, Naess, Muir, Leopold, Devall and Sessions. They put forward the idea of bioethics, and embraced the view that humans can transcend their material existence and find harmony and spiritual fulfilment in nature. It was not until the latter half of the twentieth century that their ideas attained a form of scientific credibility.

As we move from the Medieval to the Modern epoch we remark a gradual shift from viewing both the human being and the natural world as hermeneutic entities, full of meaning, symbols and spirituality, to that of transparent 'facts'. Mathematical symbols took over from Medieval symbolism. The rift between 'nature' and 'cultural' became more pronounced, as did the dualism between mind and matter. There are indications in places like the Aspre that as we approach the end of the second millennia a new mythology reflecting a new consciousness is trying to emerge, arising out of what Dubos (1976) referred to as the fact that "science gives man everything to live with but nothing to live for". Shepard (1969), eloquently described this nauseating condition of modern despair as, "the arts of anxiety, the politics of pathological individualism and predatory socialism". As shall become apparent in the course of this research the landscape of the Aspre and the multiple perceptions of it, are drawn into the contemporary anthropogenic struggle for meaning and identity.

In conclusion our brief preamble through the principal cosmologies of the Western world⁸, confirm that we do not have access to an 'a priori' real world out there, or to a neutral conception of nature or the human being. Rather we see the world as our existing conventions enable us to see it. Ideas have histories, and as Cupid (1990) reminds us "common sense is not timeless but datable". A change in paradigm results

⁸We acknowledge that Christianity (cf. White 1967), Marxism (cf. Pepper 1984; Fry 1975) and Art have also greatly influenced humanities conception of itself and its relation with nature, but this is not the place to enter into that debate.

in a changed configuration of reality, scientists see new and different things even when they are looking with old instruments in places they have looked before (Tuan 1974). The 'natural' world may indeed be ultimately unknowable, with no fixed boundaries between nature and human culture. However, we do know that the perceptions of and the demands made by western society on its surrounding environment have varied over time, and that changes in environmental perception tend to be accompanied by changes in human self-perception. As Virgil stated, 'we make our destinies by our choice of gods'. We shall now move on to examining some of the principal academic epistemological 'Gods' which illuminate contemporary conceptions of the human-environmental 'problematique'.

1.4.2 Socio-Natural Epistemologies.

The question of the nature of the relationship between the physical environment and human social organization is a very old one. Ultimately any theory of socio-natural interaction must articulate and be consistent with a theory of the environment and of the human being. In modern times one of the most profound influences on this dialectic is Darwin's theory of evolution. It forced a shift from the 'static machine' conception of the environment under Newtonian science to that of an organic and evolutionary vision. The Darwinian theory of natural selection, competition and struggle for survival was interlaced with concepts of interdependence, interrelation and equilibrium. However, Darwin's most revolutionary contribution was to alter the image of 'man' himself. He placed humans within the 'web' of life, as part of nature rather than aloofly outside it. No longer could humans consider themselves as the apex of being and lord of creation, when their immediate cousins were 'scientifically' shown to be that of the ape family. The resultant model of nature was for the first time active, but still deterministic, all struggling forward towards an equilibrium centred climax condition (cf. Marshall 1992). The model he presented of the human being was of an evolved, passive social animal, whose mode of relating to the environment was that of adapting to evolving planetary conditions or extension, but with no possibility of determining its own future. Humans were effectively seen to be fulfilling a predefined function dictated by external environmental agents. The most extreme expression of

the environmental determinism stance was advocated by Ratzel (1882-1891) and Semple (1911). According to these authors, the physical environment is a necessary and sufficient cause not only of social systems, but of specific intellectual, artistic, and moral artifacts as well (cf. Hawley 1986).

A reaction to environmental determinism was launched in the interwar period by such French geographers as Vidal de la Blache and Annalist historians, such as Lucien Febvre and Le Roy Ladurie. Febvre's (1925) epigrammatic statement; "Des nécessités, nulle part. Des possibilités partout", resulted in a school of thought known as 'Possibilism'⁹. The Possibilists were at pains to point out that, "no human facts are simple facts, natural facts on the other hand never exercise a purely mechanical, blind and fatal action on the life of man" (Febvre 1925). According to the Vidalian school of thought the environment is nothing more than a permissive and limiting condition, a necessary but not a sufficient cause (cf. Vidal de la Blache 1902; 1911). In anthropology the Possibilist position of scholars such as Kroeber, Boas and Ford upheld ideas that the environment did not determine people's activities, but only limited them within a range of possible constraints. Possibilism which emphasised the importance of history, became the prime soft candidate between environmental and cultural determinism.

The relativist approach was summed up by Kroeber (1939) when he claimed that, "the immediate causes of cultural phenomena are other cultural phenomena". However, as argued by Ellen (1982), this too appeals to ultimate limits, i.e possibilities within a given range, and so in the end was also deterministic. Similarly they distracted attention from the fact that the range of possibilities varied greatly from one milieu to another, and were in some circumstances very limiting indeed. Not until the 1950s was an alternative to the relativist perspective of environmental possibilism offered in the form of Julian Steward's cultural ecology, which hinged on the concept of Darwinian adaptation.

⁹Ironically Febvre's best known student Braudel was a strong adherent of 'la longue durée' which bordered on Ratzel's environmental determinism.

Steward's (1955) basic hypothesis i.e. his 'culture core', was that given certain environmental conditions, the utilization of certain forms of exploitative technology and organization, causes or gives rise to certain institutional patterns in a group's social organization (cf. Grossman 1977). His major contention being that cultural practices provide people with the behavioural means of adjusting to the physical and social conditions of their lives. For Steward this was the active process of adaptation, which is still highly influential in human-environmental studies to this day. Steward's comparative approach was reminiscent of that of Ratzel, both being interested in finding regularities between cultures, across time and space, as a result of similar environmental features. One of the frequent criticisms levelled at Steward's approach was that it was distinctly ahistorical (cf. Winterhalder 1980), and focused on subsistence activities, where emphasis was on finding a balance between population and resources rather than on production and exploitation of resources (cf. Viazzo 1989). Anthropologists such as Vayda and Rappaport (1968), found that Steward's cultural ecology gave undue weight to culture. Similarly the idea that the environment was a stable and static backdrop to human activities implied, as remarked by Ingold (1992), that if culture imposed meaning on an empty 'tabula rasa' of an environment, then the environment must originally be empty of significance, following from which "culture is an adaptation to nothing at all". Thus far theories of the environment and people have been dichotomised into viewing nature - culture as discrete entities, reinforcing the Cartesian dualism.

There has been another significant paradigm shift since the 1960s, arising out of the growing popularity of Tansley's (1935) ecosystem concept, which marked a shift away from environmental or cultural determinism to biological analysis stressing the inter-relationship among biotic and abiotic communities within their common habitat. The ecosystem was seen as the total context within which human adaptation and biological evolution took place (Moran 1982, 1990). Its value derived from the fact that the overall properties of the system differ from the properties of its elements. The ecosystems concept has drawn heavily from Systems Theory as a tool of analysis, with its cybernetics, information flows, control loops and feedback concepts to support the

idea of the earth as a self-regulating organism. Tansley drew attention to the natural-physical interrelationship and its tendency to develop towards a dynamic equilibrium, which was in keeping with his own strong interests in nature conservation (cf. Golley 1984). Leading ecologists such as Odum (1969, 1979) using systems theory, talked of stratified order and presented nature in terms of a hierarchical pyramid, reminiscent of Lovejoy's 'Great Chain of Being', but with the predator displacing God at the top of the chain.

The adoption of an ecosystems approach in anthropology and human geography led to more sophisticated computations of human-ecological interaction, involving such concepts as carrying capacity, and estimates of energy efficiency. The calorific obsession was epitomised by Leslie White's (1949) seminal work on the energetic basis of society. There was also an emphasis on functional analysis of cultural institutions, with things such as ritual, marriage, infanticide etc, seen as regulatory mechanisms within which homeostasis was maintained. Rappaport's (1968) work on the Tsembaga of Papua New Guinea was the first major anthropological research to incorporate the conceptual tools of biology, and to study the human and non-human components of the ecosystem within the same framework. He argued that the system could be understood in the light of systems theory, and that cultural processes like ritual could be seen to play a cybernetic function.

The point to stress is that the adoption of an ecosystems approach to the understanding of human-environmental interaction entailed a shift in the focus of research from a concern with the relations between environmental functions and modes of subsistence to the analysis of the relations between population and resources (cf. Viazzo 1989). The major shortcoming of the approach was its neo-functionalism, with ecosystem harmony becoming a mechanistic, soulless harmony, underestimating the cognitive dimension of human behaviour, over emphasising self-regulatory features and de-emphasising the human capacity to transform the physical environment through social action. Winterhalder (1984), described the ecological approach in both cultural and ecological anthropology as "functionalism recast in an idiom borrowed from biology".

Its emphasis on homeostasis and self-regulation contributed to a view that humans were essentially disruptive of natural processes. Another major shortcoming of ecological anthropology and the general ecosystems approach, is that, like cultural ecology, it ignored history, consequently its ahistorical models over emphasised stability and homeostasis rather than cumulative change. Long term demographic studies, such as Viazzo's (1989) and Netting's (1981) in the Alps, Boserup's (1965) on agricultural growth, and our own studies in the Aspre, provide evidence for a shift from models emphasising closure and negative feedbacks, towards open systems across whose boundaries energies, people and goods cross and are best depicted in terms of evolutionary change. Increasingly within the field of ecology there is a shift towards conceiving the ecosystem as 'thermodynamically open' and out of equilibrium (cf. Margalef 1981). Redfield (1955) rightly suggested that the ecosystem concept (like that of cultural ecology), is best applied to primitive communities, closely dependent upon the land and the seasons, and is problematic when applied to more complex communities.

Within the ecosystems web the human being was still cast in a relatively passive role, within a predefined niche. Hawley (1986), describes the ecosystemic position of the individual as that of a 'postulate; a methodological unit of measurement'. Whereas today we find that far from adapting to nature, humanity is controlling many ecological dynamics and plays a large part in the evolution of natural systems, including global climate. The ecosystemic negative feedback control mechanisms are changing to a reinforcement of positive feedbacks, emanating from technological, political and economic systems, highlighting instances of evolutionary 'maladaptation'. However all these approaches to human-environmental interaction have no doubt accumulated a large body of observations and the way they were interpreted being a reflection of the concerns and conceptual tools of the time. Perhaps on the whole it is true to say that the science of ecology, offers a perspective on nature and life rather than a firm body of scientific findings, its major paradigm shifts being testimony to that. By extrapolation the same is true for human-environmental studies. Perspectives may be based on notions of interest, for example it has been argued that Social Darwinism,

with its notion of competition and survival of the fittest - 'nature red in tooth and claw' - provided a compelling ideology for imperial capitalism (cf. Peet 1985). Perspectives are inevitably affected by values, attitudes and assumptions, once more confirming that we do not have access to a neutral world or environment 'out there'. Therefore it is not enough to amass environmental 'facts', one must also address the nature of the human being creating and interpreting those facts, i.e. the sociology of science.

In the 1980s there was once more a radical shift in our perception of the earth partly as a result of space exploration and the holistic pictures of the earth it brought back. There was a shift in thinking from viewing the earth as an inanimate habitat for life, to that of a living whole. The earth as an autopoietic system, that is a living system that continuously renews and regulates itself, was the basic idea of the American microbiologist Lynn Margulis, which was expanded on and popularized by James Lovelock (1979), as the Gaia hypothesis. The Gaia evolutionary theory postulated that 'the physical and chemical conditions of the surface of the earth, of the atmosphere and the oceans has been and is actively made fit and comfortable by the presence of life itself' (Lovelock 1989). This holistic, co-evolving view of life on earth marked a radical move away from deterministic concepts. The Gaia hypothesis still presumed homeostatic regulation at a global level, but the ecosystemic mechanistic view is replaced by that of a tightly coupled living 'superorganism'. The co-evolutionary aspect of organic and inorganic life stressed the lasting interdependence of the parts, within a single indivisible system, which could not be analytically studied apart, as demonstrated by the impact of humans on climatic cyclicality. Even though the Gaia hypothesis is speculative, there is more and more evidence for the dynamic role of living systems in determining biospherical conditions (cf. Holling 1973, Bolin & Cook 1983, Latour 1993). The image of humans within the Gaia context is as a part of, 'or partners in a very democratic entity', but it is clear they are also quite expendable (Lovelock 1989). Gaia offers a far more sophisticated and less deterministic view of the human being within nature than what has preceded it, and marks the rebirth of human consciousness.

Continuing within a dynamic perspective recent discoveries in physics and chemistry indicate that non-equilibrium may be a source of order (cf. Prigogine et al. 1973, 1984; Nicolis & Prigogine 1977; Allen 1987b). The new field of non-equilibrium thermodynamics has postulated the principle of 'order through fluctuations'. The theory of dissipative structures, (cf. Glansdorff & Prigogine 1971; Zhabotinsky 1974; Jantsch 1980), provides a description of the dynamics of spontaneous self-organization (arising from microscopic change) through symmetry breaking bifurcations. These systems exhibit irreversibility and move to a new meta-stability, which is again open to dissipation once the boundaries of the systems resilience domain are surpassed. Thus the concept of order through fluctuations and the emergence of one self-transcendent system from another. The old view of the universe as an equilibrium centred machine, made up of hard separate atoms, although at one time useful in understanding things, is now theoretically obsolete. Modern physics presents the world as a constant flow of transforming energy within a shifting stability domain. It takes the Gaia co-evolutionary concept one step further by replacing global homeostasis with emergent properties. Classical science emphasized stability, permanence, and determinism; nowadays we talk in terms of fluctuations, bifurcations and probabilities. The eminent ecologist Margalef (1990) declared: "There is no clockwork universe, but an open universe in which living beings are polarized in relation to time, and short of reaching terminal constancy, have always to be prepared for the unexpected. Almost anything can happen". The world of nonlinear dynamics, which is replacing that of the 'balance of nature', should have a significant impact on human-environmental relations. As Prigogine (1990) remarked, "the awareness that we live in a world of large scale transition, long range correlations and limited predictability will lead inescapably to a new attitude towards our global environment".

There is growing evidence that biological and socio-cultural systems exhibit similar self-transcendent and emergent properties. An important impetus in a movement away from static equilibrium concepts, is Holling's (1973, 1976, 1986) research on ecosystems resilience. Following on from his work on spruce budworm in the forests of eastern Canada, he provided evidence for a shift to a dynamic, rather than static perspective

on ecology, which emphasises the existence of more than one stable state. Holling suggests that the equilibrium centred view generated by mechanical physics is unsuited to ecology, where qualitative results are important, and equilibrium of less concern than persistence. Thus, he put forward the concept of resilience as 'the ability of a system to maintain its structure and pattern of behaviour in the face of disturbance' (Holling 1986).

Along similar lines McGlade (1990, 1993a, 1995); Allen (1985, 1987a, 1989) and Jantsch (1980), have shed new light on the emergent and self organizing properties of socio-cultural systems. Within the human ecology debate McGlade's concept of *human ecodynamics* provides an alternative approach to the study of human modified landscapes on non-functionalist lines. Human ecodynamics is defined as a "transdisciplinary subject, concerned with the dynamics of human modified landscapes set within a long term perspective and viewed as a non-linear dynamical system, involving the co-evolution of socio-historical and natural processes and their time space intersection" (McGlade 1995). Within this perspective a dialectical mode of socio-natural interpretation is advocated as an alternative to the existing human ecological functionalist models. Its theoretical background seeks a rapprochement between Prigogine school of non-equilibrium dynamical systems and social theory. Ingold (1986, 1987, 1992, 1993) has also made an important contribution to our understanding of temporality and the mutualistic relationship between people and environment. The current perspective on human environmental interaction developed in this thesis is consistent with the general thrust of these ideas.

Complexity is at the root of human-environmental interaction. Attempts to reduce that complexity by naive reductionism have failed. It is clear that current thinking does not support the conventional opposition between 'nature' and 'culture', 'society' and 'habitat', 'people' and 'environment'. These concepts which have locked disciplines into either environmental determinism or cultural determinism are in fact based on false assumptions. The perspective we have adopted in this thesis is that people and environment are irreducible and dynamic, something which is of profound significance

when we come to study notions of land degradation in human modified environments, like the Aspre. An essential component in understanding this mutualistic and reciprocal relationship is the role of human perception and cognition.

1.5 Environmental Perception and Cognition.

Terms such as 'perception', 'cognition' and 'behaviour', have been applied in a confusing variety of contexts by different psychologists and other behavioral and social scientists, to the extent that it is not possible to come up with some definitive definitions, the meaning of the terms being dependent on the theoretical and epistemological base one is coming from. Our interest in this very complex subject relates to how best we should conceptualise and thus approach the study of the environmental perceptions of the people of the Aspre, which we have previously argued is integral to a better understanding of land degradation. We speak of environmental perception rather than the perception of land degradation, because as shall become clearer later, we view perception as holistic, and thus the inability to study discrete subsets in isolation of the whole.

All theories of environmental perception and cognition either implicitly or explicitly incorporate basic assumptions about the nature of people and the nature of the environment. From the literature it is possible to discern three fundamental psychological orientations, 'empiricism - behavioursim', 'rationalism - idealism', and 'interactionalism - transactionalism'. Several other viewpoints have developed from these historical watersheds, including Gibson's (1979) 'realist' approach to ecological perception. The behaviourist approach starts from the contention that behaviour in general and knowledge in particular, are strictly under the control of the environment. Reality can only be contained in sensation, knowledge is built up from a succession of sensations impressed on a *tabula-rasa*, a blank slate of the mind (Moore & Golledge 1976). The unit of analysis is the cause and effect model of stimulus-response relationships, in which observable behaviour is elicited by equally observable and measurable stimulus. The basic rationale of the behaviour approach, is the machine analogy and not surprisingly is marked by a general analytical orientation (cf.

Weichhart 1993; Ittelson 1973; Altman & Rogoff 1987). It assumes a separate existence between context - person and - psychological processes, the environment being treated as an independent variable and psychological functions as a dependent outcome variable. One of the leading advocates of behavioursim in his day was B.F. Skinner. For our purposes the obvious shortcoming of this approach is that people are not considered as part of the environment, so much as objects in it with consciousness and the psyche being all but ignored.

In direct opposition to this view point the idealists/rationalists, influenced by such philosophers as Descartes, Leibniz, and Aristotle, start from the contention that knowledge is given immediately as an innate idea before experience (Moore & Golledge 1976). Although an external reality is admitted, its form and meaning are seen to be given 'a priori', in the sense that innate concepts precede and determine sense data, human knowledge and cognition being a product of pure reason. Thus, for the strict idealists the world cannot be reduced to sensations, and in addition nothing exists apart from mind; in short they view the world as an object of consciousness. Behaviour is basically determined by hereditary and biological factors and knowledge is innately given before experience, for example Freud's work on psychoanalysis and inherited instinctive drives. Thus we move from the empiricists adage that 'seeing is believing', to the rationalists notion that 'believing is seeing'.

Both behavioursim and rationalism present a very deterministic and programmed model of the human being, and not surprisingly they have not been able to address the immense complexity of environmental perception and cognition outside the confines of the laboratory. Transactionalism, initiated by the 19th century philosopher Kant, is in a sense an attempt to synthesise the above polarized views and appears to offer the most possibilities for an interactive human ecology. Its roots are in the Gestalt psychology of Kohler (1929) and Koffka (1935), who emphasised 'holism' rather than 'reductionism'. The transactionalist approach of researchers such as Ittelson (1973,1974), Lewin (1951), Barker (1968), Gibson (1979), assume that the person and context co-exist, jointly define one another and contribute to the meaning and nature of

a holistic event. Moore and Golledge (1976) summarized the approach as follows; "Far from being given simply through sensation and reinforced on a passive organism, and far from being given by innate ideas before experience....., knowledge is treated as constructed through intentional acts by an active organism from the interaction of sensation and reason". This broadly phenomenological approach to cognition and perception assumes that behaviour can only be understood in the context of the 'Total Organism-in-Environment' situation, and as a function of the particular ongoing transaction between the two. Within the transactionalist approach humans and the environment are inseparable and dynamic. The observer is of necessity a participant and consequently the dualistic split between object and subject, organism and environment, mind and body does not hold. Similarly the emphasis on holism precludes the compartmentalization of cognition into discrete stimuli, such as attitude, belief, perception, image etc.

Gibson's (1979) influential 'realism' approach to ecological perception fits with the transactional world view (cf. Lombardo 1987; Landwehr 1988; Carollo 1993, Ingold 1992). In keeping with the transactional approach he emphasised the reciprocity of the perceiver, be it animal or human, and the environment. The complementarity between organism and environment is articulated by his concept of 'affordance'; "the affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill" (Gibson 1979). Gibson's affordances, being 'objective, real and physical', are said to exist as inherent potentials of the objects themselves, independent of their being put to use or realized by a subject: for example, a stone may be perceived as a missile, anvil, paper weight or shelter. Consequently, Gibson's realism emphasised that environmental features are perceived directly without the imposition of cultural layers interposed between the perceiver and their environment, or the mediation of mental or cognitive processes. In this way he claims his 'affordances' cut across the subjective - objective dichotomy.

Gibson's realist account of ecological perception has come in for criticism not least because it deals mostly with tacit knowledge. If the animal under consideration happens

to be a human being, cognition and culture must also be recognised. Both a stool and a throne are 'sit-on-able', but it is culture rather than tacit affordance that differentiates between the two. We shall see in the Aspre that its multiple environmental 'affordances' are as much a function of the beliefs, values, culture, history and the socio-economic system to which the perceiver belongs, as they are to the actual tacit affordances of the physical environment itself. As rightly noted by Landwehr (1988), the most serious shortcoming in Gibson's ecological approach, it that an "environment is what it is to humans as an animal species, not what it might be to them as a cultural society".

Subjectivity and social meaning, symbolism and the whole system of culture are phenomena which cannot be conceived exclusively by a theoretical structure centred on visual perception. The relationship between humans and their environment cannot be adequately explained in terms of human culture imposing order and meaning on a benign environment. But neither can we close our eyes to culture and the tricks played by cognition and concentrate on the surface layers of the environment, as much of the 'mental map' research in geography attempted to do in the 1970s. We cannot ignore the social dimension of ecological perception.

From the above theoretical overview of the perception field it is clear that it remains ambiguous, very complex and lacks universally accepted theories, methods and techniques. Because of the nature of the complexity of the problem and the inability of psychology to come up with a unified framework, many other disciplines have also theorized about the nature of the physical environment and human response to it. What appears to have emerged are various viewpoints which attack one aspect of a broad problem, and as a result only makes sense in the light of their particular focuses. The environmental perception and behaviour field as a whole remains unorganized and disjointed (see Brookfield 1969; Craik 1970; Lowenthal 1972; Bunting & Guelk 1979). Disciplines such as Behaviourial Geography, Anthropology, and Sociology have tried to apply environmental psychology concepts to real life studies, but with major differences in methodology, the definition of the psychological terms used and in the

interpretation of research results. A lot of interesting work has been produced, combined with a lot of trivialization and lack of rigour, to the extent that today concepts like environmental perception, cognition, behaviour and attitude tend to mean all things to all people.

Take for example the substantial work on image perception in geography, emanating from the seminal work of Boulding (1956) and Lynch (1960), who put forward the concept of the 'image' or perceived reality as the mediating link between environment and people. Their innovative approach provided an immediate response, with classic studies such as Saarinen's (1966) use of surrogate techniques in the Perception of Drought in the Great Plains, Sonnenfeld (1967) work on environmental perception and adaptation in the Arctic, Gould and White's (1974) place preference 'Mental Maps', and work by White (1960), Burton and Kates (1964), and Kates (1968) on hazard perception. Although this genre of work opened up the field and helped dispel conventional assumptions such as rational economic man and notions of perfect information, the theoretical assumptions and methodologies used have subsequently come in for serious criticism. Major assumptions inherent in these approaches are that identifiable environmental images exist in isolation from the totality of mental images, which can be measured accurately; and that a strong relationship exists between revealed images and preferences and actual real world behaviour (cf. Bunting & Guelke 1979).

It would appear that the methods used frequently did not match the job at hand. For instance, Tuan (1974b) aptly summed up the basic nature of Gould and White's 'mental maps' as opinion and information surveys represented in cartographic form. They simply elicited verbal place preference opinions, which they plotted on maps, without any follow up of the relationship between professed attitude (place preference) and actual behaviour. The complexity of perception and cognition was reduced to verbal responses to a questionnaire, and thus solely relied on images of the environment filtered through language. Hall (1966) reminds us that semantic responses explicate only a fraction of all that individuals perceive and do in the environment. Neither is

the assumption that there exists a clear relationship between peoples professed perceptions in questionnaires and their overt behaviour born out in subsequent research (cf. McPhee 1980; Walmsley 1984; Arcury 1990; O'Riordan 1973). For any given stimulus (question) there may be a variety of meanings and responses at different times, in different contexts giving rise to what may appear like major inconsistencies. A classical study as early as 1934 by LaPiere, comparing expressed verbal attitudes versus behaviour to minority groups in America, showed just how flawed that assumption is. Similarly in the case of Saarinen's (1967) use of easily quantifiable projective devices, there was no attempt made to correlate responses to a simulated environment to those of real environments.

Strictly speaking most so called environmental perception studies using the standard methodology of questionnaires, rating scales, projective techniques etc., are not dealing with perception but environmental description. While this may be a valuable contribution in its own right, the overly ambitious terminology and claims made about the findings are not. The concern with methodology and technique often became a substitute for substantive contribution. Bunting and Guelke (1979), summed up the situation when they commented on the fact, "that many of the inherent problems in environmental psychology were forgotten in the apparent race to apply ever more sophisticated testing and statistical techniques to poorly understood, if not inadequate data reflecting serious misguided reasoning". It would appear that the emphasis on descriptive rigour is characteristic of disciplines seduced by the allure of science but devoid of its essential qualities, the result being an illusion of precision. The overwhelming characteristic of environmental perception and behaviour in the 'real world' is that they are contradictory, dynamic and ambiguous. Our understanding of the relationship between cognition, perception, verbalized attitudes, and actual behaviour remains very incomplete.

There has been a noticeable absence of work on cognitive approaches in Human Geography in more recent times. It may have something to do with Buttimer's (1976) pronouncement; "if our mental maps, charts and cognitive schemata are the best we can

deliver in the service of imperial interests since the time of Alexander the Great, it is high time we moved on". So how do we get out of this 'cul de sac', where do we turn to in our search for a meaningful way of interpreting the environmental perceptions of the inhabitants of the Aspre? We can start by eliminating the unsatisfactory options. I did not assume that the people of the Aspre held frozen environmental attitudes and perceptions in isolation of their other mental images, nor that they could express these images if asked to in a questionnaire or by reconstructing 'ink blobs' (projective devices). Neither did I assume that perception and cognition could be compartmentalized into discrete attitudes, images, mental maps, beliefs etc. The belief that perception is holistic militates against trying to extract perception of the surrounding environment from the historical, cultural, social, political and economic context they are embedded in. One of the most fundamental features of perceiving is that it is relevant or appropriate to the situation in which it occurs, context being critical (Ittelson 1973). Neither do I perceive perception solely as information processing in preparation for action, it is also about discovering meaning and identity in the environment.

From transactionalism we have taken ideas about the complementarity and mutualism in the relationship between people and their environment and a holistic approach to perception, which is closely compatible with notions of self-organization and evolutionary world views expressed in section 1.4.2. Since it is our hypothesis that the social and the physical work in combination not isolation, it is necessary to set out from a situational analysis of both the environmental and cultural context. We have adopted what could broadly be described as a humanist approach to environmental perception. Walmsley (1984), summarized the main features of a humanist perspective on cognition as follows: "Humanism is against the fragmentation of the totality of human behaviour in the interest of analytical convenience; it is against any attempt to reduce man to the status of a bundle of responses awaiting a stimulus; it is against the abstraction of behaviour from the context in which it occurs; it is in favour of a much greater emphasis on subjectivity, intentions, values, meaning and the affective bond that develops between man and the environment". Merleau-Ponty (1962) was one of the

pioneers in the development of a humanist/phenomenological approach to perception. In keeping with his approach and that of people like Tuan (1974, 1975, 1976, 1977); Lowenthal (1961, 1967, 1972); Buttner (1976, 1978); Meinig (1979); Vidal de la Blache (1911, 1902, 1926, 1941); Bertrand (1978, 1984) and the Annalist's 'structures mentales', our objective was to discover some part of the systems of meaning and symbols by which the people of the Aspre organize their world and identify with their environment. To understand the environment in living terms is to experience it in terms of its inhabitants. To this end we have adopted a holistic ethnographic approach, which will be described more fully in the following chapter on methodology. In the light of the preceding literature review, we can now define more precisely our research objectives.

1.6 Aims and Objectives;

As set out in the introduction, the aim of this research is to explore the complexity of socio-natural interaction in the Aspre with respect to land degradation. In order to achieve this the following research questions will be addressed:

- (a) How should we undertake research that spans both the social and natural sciences?
- (b) How should we conceptualise human-environmental interaction in the Aspre within 'la longue durée; and to what extent does the historical structuring of its landscape and society inform us on processes operating there today?
- (c) How are the social boundaries of the Aspre created and maintained?
- (d) How does environmental perception condition the reading of land degradation in the Aspre?
- (e) How do the people of the Aspre identify with its landscape, and what meaning are they drawing from it?
- (f) Where does the Aspre sit within the larger socio-economic context?
- (g) What are the policy implications for sustainable futures for places like the Aspre?

In the following chapter on methodology we commence by addressing the very real problem of undertaking socio-natural research.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH.

Part 1: Theory.

2.1 Criteria for Valid Knowledge.

Our knowledge is critically shaped by the pre-occupations we bring to it. Different data on the same phenomenon are gathered according to the focus and theoretical tools used by the researcher. The positivist assumption that one merely interprets on the basis of pre-existing evidence is rather naive. There is a strong element of truth in Fish's (1979) claim that; "more often than not the interpretation is determined by what will count as evidence for it, and the evidence is able to be picked out only because the interpretation has already been assumed". Since the world can only be known through conceptual frameworks, beliefs about how the environment and society 'hang' together will dictate how one goes about human-environmental research, and what sort of data will result. Research that is situated within the socio-natural domain, is inevitably presented with epistemological problems arising from what constitutes valid knowledge. The infamous divide between the social and natural sciences, what C.P. Snow (1959) referred to as 'the two cultures', presents one with a formidable obstacle when one tries to study them within a single framework, as is our objective.

Natural scientists are rarely confronted with such a dilemma, because it is taken for granted that if their approach conforms with the 'scientific method' it is beyond all doubt valid. Envious of such a comfortable position and partly in awe of its success, the scientific paradigm of the seventeenth century was in time extended to the study of human nature and society. By the end of the eighteenth century there was a call for a social science, and in its desire for hardness and purity it was to be modeled on physics rather than on the softer humanities. The question we need to address here is whether the scientific method can unify both the social and natural sciences, because if it can we have a ready made framework within which to place our research? It would not appear to be so straight forward, other branches of the social sciences, in particular those influenced by the philosophical orientation of humanism, hermeneutics and

phenomenology, categorically maintained that due to human consciousness and reflexivity, there was a fundamental difference between nature and society, animate and inanimate objects, the laboratory and the real world, and that such differences must be reflected in the choice of methods. The resultant split between the empiricists or positivist and the humanists-phenomenological approach pervades both theory and method in the social sciences. Since the choice of research methods cannot be divorced from epistemological justification, we might usefully sketch the philosophical underpinnings of the scientific method, which we take as the umbrella for the objective as opposed to subjective mode of knowing the world and its inhabitants.

2.1.1 Scientific Method: Objectivity Versus Subjectivity.

In the early seventeenth century the new science of Descartes, Galileo and Bacon among others, aimed at a system of knowledge of the world constructed entirely by the individual human subject. The standard model for such knowledge was mathematical physics. Human sense-experience would provide the only data and reasoning the only programming. The resultant scientific method is based on an empiricist philosophy which regards all knowledge to be primarily obtained by random observations, - i.e. Bacon's principle of induction. Induction is built on the assumption that (a) reality is out there to be discovered, (b) direct observation is the way to discover it, (c) material explanations for observable phenomenon are always sufficient, metaphysical explanations being superfluous (Bernard 1988). This method assumes that nature is fixed and stable, to be known by equally fixed universal laws. The way to discovering such laws is via reductionism, a technique by which scientists seek to understand the nature of complexity by breaking it up into its component parts, preferably under laboratory conditions. To rationalise such an approach it was believed that the world was made up of discreet mechanistic units, possessing only mathematical properties. The way the units were organised was seen to be no consequence for understanding how they function, hence the inference that they can be understood in isolation from the system of which they are part (Goldsmith 1990). The whole being perceived to be the sum of its parts. Alternatively it has been argued that, "with the atomism of the physical reality goes an atomism of our knowledge" (Ravetz 1986).

Since there was perceived to be no difference between animate and inanimate objects, the empiricist's claims were extended to the social world, with Comte (1824) declaring that, "we shall succeed in having it recognised that there are laws as well defined for the study of the human species as for the fall of a stone". The difficulty in discovering social laws lay in the fact that the scientific method has no means of dealing with the phenomenon that characterises life and distinguishes it from inanimate objects. Science consciously disassociated itself from the speculative metaphysics, and from the kinds of questions there could be no hope of ever answering. Philosophers like Dilthey (1833-1911) pointed out that the positivist methodology of the natural sciences was inadequate to the understanding of human phenomena except as natural objects. It left no room for the idea that history and society were human creations, brought about by conscious, purposive 'actors'.

Failing to recognise such essentially human and social characteristics as culture, cognition, feelings, emotions, spirituality, creativity, intentionality etc., none of which could be directly observed and accurately measured¹, (and were thus classified as speculative and metaphysical in nature, i.e outside the remit of science), risked imposing what Schutz (1964) referred to as "a fictional non existing world constructed by the scientific observer". Consciousness was reduced to a mere epiphenomenon of the electrochemical functioning of the brain. What's more the scientific quest for universal knowledge rest upon the capacity of the human researcher to 'decenter' themselves. The central tenet of which is based on what Barthe (1973), referred to as the claims of Westerners for rational thought, which is seen to have endowed them with the unique ability to consciously separate themselves from the socio-historical condition of their existence. The resultant untainted 'matters of fact' are thus regarded as the very 'mirror or nature', i.e. external reality. Theories and interpretations may

¹The tools used by the natural and social scientists were not considered to be ideologically tainted. Mehan & Wood (1975) described how, "surveys dip into everyday life and take a reading as if people were oil in an engine and the interview a calibrated dipstick. The sociologist assumes that what adheres to the stick is itself not important, except for what it indicates about something else." The above Ethnomethodologists argue that all one 'traps' is interview induced reflection.

change, but not 'matters of fact' (Shapin 1985).

Sociologists seeking models of explanation like those of the natural sciences, assume that formal logic is a natural scaffolding upon which to hang their explanatory descriptions. However, as pointed out by Mehan & Wood (1975) the imposition of a logic that is foreign to a reality creates distortions. If nothing else the work of Cultural Anthropology has shown that every person's experience of the world is always from the point of view of the 'reality' that person has learnt. Similarly their cross cultural studies highlight the problems in extracting data out of the complicated cultural matrix, that gives the data meaning. Our knowledge of perception and cognition today (see chapter 1) indicate that it is far from the objective measuring instrument that it should be if empiricism were to make sense. And neither do we believe that the mind at birth is a 'tabula rasa', which it must be if we are to maintain that all knowledge is the product of observation. The problem arises as to how data that are of necessity filtered through human perception can be anything other than subjective. As stated by Mertz (1987); "while relativism is necessary to the attainment of scientific objectivity, it also forbids the law-making that a scientific social science requires". In relation to which the eminent anthropologist, Evans Pritchard (1962) reminds us that, "nothing ever remotely resembling a law of the natural sciences has yet been adduced".

Ironically the bewildering proliferation of obscure sociological theories that set out to create universal order and coherence in the name of 'rationality' and 'progress', in time elicited a suspicion of the non-rational character of society (cf. Seidman & Wagner 1992). The true complexity of the relationship between the natural world, subjective understanding, human agency and objective social reality, could no longer be glossed over in the name of rationality. Objectivity had not conquered subjectivity, it was lying dormant all the time. The tension between science and relativism continues to present a crucial epistemological and methodological paradox. Besides, we are long past the time when scientific experts could come to an unanimous agreement among themselves. The invention of non Euclidian geometry went a long way towards questioning the geometrical frame of reference of the scientific method. In summary, classical science

was built on the assumption that it was possible to look at things from the outside and study them without altering them or without letting the scientist's personality and biases interfere. Modern physics has shown that the first hypothesis was false, while modern social science does not believe the second holds any more. However, as remarked by Goldsmith (1990), "empiricism is dead in theory, but not in practice being still the only acceptable method of acquiring information". This is undeniably true, but the 'myth' has been seriously dented, somehow the heart has gone out of it and humanity is left waiting for another 'Godot'.

There are problems with the adoption of the scientific method in both the social and natural sciences. Alternatively a totally relativistic approach is equally problematic, thus we are forced to work in a somewhat messy grey area. Distortion is inevitable and cannot be remedied, but ignorance of that distortion is not inevitable and can be remedied. As Geertz (1984) concluded, if cultural relativism is not an entirely satisfactory answer, neither are the attempts to do without it. It must be acknowledged that the scientific method has known its greatest success within the realm of closed systems, such as the workings of a turbine engine, the splitting of the atom, or placing a man on the moon; all of which are undeniably significant achievements. However, such methods have proved to be far less reliable when it comes to the study of open systems, such as ecology and society². Not only can the ecosystem not be confined, but more and more it has become apparent that it cannot be studied in isolation of the human system impacting on it, because of the reciprocal nature of the relationship, as discussed in the previous chapter. The appearance of what Latour (1993) referred to as 'hybrids', i.e. the new entities produced by the blending of nature and human culture, such as the ozone hole, the greenhouse affect, deforestation, or the humanized landscape of the Aspre, calls into question the foundations of the whole framework and the practice of breaking everything down to its simplest parts, in oblivium of its

²Lloyd (1986), rightly points out that science as a mode of explanation should not be characterised by empiricists epistemology, or by technical methods such as quantification and experimentation, but by the structure of its logical inferences, the rational, critical and public nature of its results.

surroundings. Rachel Carson's (1962) book, 'Silent Springs', was one of the first to demonstrate the limitations of the above framework.

The startling proliferation of the 'hybrids', or the so called 'modern disease', culminated in the twentieth centuries questioning of our blind faith in progress, science and technology. The Postmodernist movement sprung up in response to this condition, and once more raised the question of the problem of the 'reality' of the world itself. It questioned science as a privileged form of reason or the mediator of truth. Its irony and criticism went a long way towards demythologizing science. It argued that we do not have access to an arbitrating real cosmos, because meaning and truth belong only within the world of human language, a world of endless interpretations (Cupid 1990). In particular it put the common sense of science in the context of its time and cultural epoch. Absolutes and certainties collapsed, fact and fiction were becoming inextricable as the world was plunged back into context, culture, history and value judgements, and the two most irksome words of all - subjectivity and relativity - once more fell on the ears of the hard nosed realists. In short the bear facts no longer spoke for themselves, (even in such fundamental areas as forensic science), it was the interpretation of the 'facts' that mattered.

Where does this discussion on epistemology lead us in our choice of methods for studying socio-natural interaction in the Aspre? Our interest in 'hybrids', in the form of the human modified landscape of the Aspre, forces us to reject the views of humanised nature or mechanised man as perpetuated by the natural sciences. Such a methodology denies our key concern for the mutual interdependence between the two; the ability of society and all living things to affect their environment in the same way as they are affected by it. Similarly, we accept that it is as impossible to universalise nature and society as it is to reduce them to a narrow framework of cultural relativism alone. We do not want to continue, in a form of splendid isolation with humans on one side of the great divide and nature on the other. Linking the two poles by as many arrows, feedback loops, cognitive maps and other complex acrobatics will not join 'humpty dumpty' together again. Our thesis is that 'humpty' never fell off the wall in

the first place. It is the 'Internal Great Divide' which perpetuated a dualism between nature and culture, that accounts for the 'External Great Divide' (Latour 1993). We are trained to see them as separate, we have devised tools that reflect and reinforce this arbitrary division, which in reality does not exist, as our hybrids starkly remind us. We all know that the basic most important feature of the biosphere, or the world of living things, is its interdependence.

Nature and culture were never separate, and science has failed to provide us with a vantage point that was supposed to allow humans, in the excesses of their youthful enthusiasm for progress and arrogant universalism to dominate and control nature. The concept of 'nature' is meaningless without humans to perceive it as such, just as 'society' cannot exist without nature; and no clear distinction can be made between the two. Latour (1993) is right, there are only 'nature-cultures'. Steiner & Nauser (1993), argued that in the course of cultural evolution (of which science is a part), what is right or wrong becomes less and less environmentally, and more and more socio-culturally determined; meaning human societies create their own realities. The question arising from the above statement, is to what extent such 'realities' are compatible or incompatible with the biophysical realities of the environment? What is society to do about the 'unintended' consequences, the positive feedbacks, that turn the relativists cognitive dreams into nightmares, or the Dantean nightmares that the positivist's insist on telling us are but dreams? Outright positivism and outright relativism leave us with two equally unpalatable alternatives.

When we come to study the human modified landscape of the Aspre, we cannot neatly distinguish its reflection from politics, culture, history and socio-economic interests. Neither can we separate nature from the social representation we have formed of it. It is not just animists and primitive tribes that project their social categories onto nature, we shall find in chapter 8 that the practice is rife in the twentieth century cosmopolitan Aspre society, and included in this category are the scientists who insist in separation the soil from the people and misclassifying 'change' as 'degradation'. The 'a priori' common sense of the seventeenth centuries visions of the world does not make quite

such good sense as we approach the twenty first. Since we can no longer carry on breaking things down to their simplest parts, where does that leave us in our search for an appropriate methodology?

2.2 Transdisciplinarity.

Interdisciplinary work, ... is not about confronting already constituted disciplines. To do something interdisciplinary it's not enough to choose a 'subject' and gather around it two or three sciences. Interdisciplinary consists in creating a new object that belongs to no one.

Roland Barthes, 'Jeunes Chercheurs'.

The terms 'multidisciplinary', 'interdisciplinary', and 'transdisciplinary', are often used interchangeably, even though their specific meaning is quite different. 'Multidisciplinary' is frequently used as a generic term for any alternative to single disciplinary research. More specifically a multidisciplinary research approach occurs when people from different disciplines independently study separate aspects of the same topic (Lockeretz 1991). It is essentially an additive approach, with the end result reflecting the coordinated sum of disciplinary solutions. Integration is left to the decision maker, who commissioned the research, with possibly some editorial linkages being pointed out in the final report. Rossini (1984), likened the final result to a 'patchwork quilt' effect. An example of this research approach being the 'Multiple Perspective Concept' advocated by Linstone et al. (1981).

The term 'interdisciplinary' applies to research that does not lie within any single established discipline. The approach is characterised by the extension and modification of disciplinary contributions to interrelate them within a single research investigation, the end result being the production of an interwoven joint product (Rossini 1984). Unlike the multidisciplinary approach it demands the intense co-operation of researchers from the disciplines involved. Emphasis is placed on linkages and interaction rather than addition. If these activities are undertaken on a permanent basis, new disciplines or sub-disciplines may evolve, as in the case of bio-chemistry or bio-physics.

Before going on to discuss the 'transdisciplinary' framework, which is the approach adopted in this research, it is necessary to highlight the limitations of the preceding sister approaches and my reasons for not using them. Aside from the entrenched academic and institutional barriers, highlighted by Heberlein (1988) and Stern (1993), common to all forms of 'multidisciplinary' research, there are major obstacles at the paradigm or basic conceptual framework level. For example, the possible incompatibility in the theory and assumptions of natural and social sciences. As outlined in the previous section, unlike the natural sciences, the social scientists do not have an established coherent theoretical structure supported by empirical findings. In the search for an interdisciplinary superstructure of theoretical constructs the rigorous and reliable natural scientific method is still frequently put forward, with researchers such as Heberlein (1988), encouraging social scientists to parallel this approach in order to aid integration. Ingold (1987) rightly remarked, that the fallacy of this view hinges on the postulate that an objectified 'nature' constitutes the final arbiter of true knowledge, excluding any consideration of the world of subjectivity, which in fact constitutes the essence of humanity. As should be obvious from the previous discussion we do not accept such illogical reasoning; there are no shortcuts, forced fits or 'conceptual gimmicks' that will resolve the very real difficulties confronting interdisciplinary research among conceptually different disciplines.

Co-operation between disciplines as they presently exist is extremely difficult. The question remains as to how one works across disciplines that are based on different criteria of what constitutes valid knowledge. With no widely accepted definition of 'scientific research', objectivity, or even logic, one is left with the eternal problem of trying to mix 'apples and oranges'. One may well ask if disciplinary integration is possible when methodological and theoretical distinction is presented as the hall mark of mono-disciplinary research in the first place? The root of this problem was expressed by Goldsmith (1990) when he stated that; "because the different disciplines have developed for so long in isolation from each other, they are rarely compatible and much of today's 'multi-disciplinary' research can only occur at a superficial level".

Strictly speaking the multidisciplinary approach does not really address this problem, the decision maker presented with a fragmented picture is free to choose which ever 'patch' appeals most to him or her, and there in lies its weakness. Reality is not composed of discretely separate sections, such as economics, technology, society etc, rather it is an interwoven tapestry which provides a very different picture. Pluralism is not a question of addition but multiplication. Interdisciplinary work makes some attempt along these lines, but one is left with the feeling that there is something of an 'imposed unity' about its approach, because it does not adequately address the disciplinary communication problem. Granted some disciplines share more or less a common language, and in such cases the results can be very impressive.

Before embarking on a research approach one must always ask why use a multi-disciplinary approach in the first place? Blackwell (1955) rightly criticised the faddism of multidisciplinary research undertaken as an end in itself, and urged researchers to avoid a 'shot-gun wedding of disciplines'. In response to this one must never loose sight of the fact that it is the research agenda that ultimately must dictate the most appropriate research approach. If an established mono-discipline can satisfy that need, so be it. However, the subject matter of this thesis relates to human-environmental interaction, and is of necessity a 'multi-disciplinary' (used as generic term) problem 'par excellence', requiring a combination of theory and analytical tools from both the natural and social sciences.

Multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research has undoubtedly come about due to the expressed dissatisfaction with existing artificial disciplinary specialization, but they may unwittingly serve to add yet a further layer of separate fragments (cf. Bohm 1980, de Batselier 1984). One must also acknowledge that all these approaches are in their infancy and that some studies conducted in this vein, have produced very impressive results. But, in the final analysis I sympathise with de Batselier's (1984) comment, that they are 'post factum' attempts to restore 'reality' from mono-disciplinary shreds. Any such search for synthesis after analysis, is equivalent to closing the stable door after the horse has bolted. By so doing they fail to address the root problem that mono-

disciplines are in the first place artificial and distorted fragments of 'reality', reflecting what Bohm described as man's fragmented self-world view. Toynbee (1934), more cryptically referred to it as, "the pathological exaggeration of the industrial spirit.... leading to assembly-line scholarship". Being guided by such a vision all our efforts are placed at reinforcing the fragments, by devising distinctive methodologies and theories, as apparent proof of the distinctiveness and correctness of this fragmented self-world view, that in the end they seem to take on an autonomous existence all of their own (Bohm 1980).

To break this vicious circle and undertake true 'transdisciplinary' research one has to confront the root of the problem; reductionism and the Western concept of the scientific atomistic method, which as outlined in the previous section operates by breaking complex phenomena into ever simpler components, obtaining the larger picture simply by reassembling the details. What started out with the study of inert matter in a physics laboratory, has now infiltrated all areas of Western knowledge, in what Hewitt (1983) aptly described as the 'face saving formula of a natural science style of analysis'. It will not be easy to change the insular and comforting consensus, not least because the structure of science has become a social institute. The analysis of the unified view demands the necessity of transcending science oriented interests and adopting a more encompassing attitude of open value conscious rationality (cf. Vermeersch 1984).

Realistically, one must acknowledge that it is not possible to study the 'whole of reality' all at once, certain fragmentation and division is inevitable and the wearing of disciplinary blinkers is at times desirable. As previously stated some problems may effectively be solved within a single discipline, besides all forms of 'multi-disciplinary' research will always need to feed on the expertise of single disciplines. The problem arises when; (a) the research topic does not lie within a single discipline, (b) when one stops using fragmentation as a necessary convenience in order to gain an insight into a specific aspect of a problem, and begin to see the fragment as 'stand alone' absolute knowledge of how things are. Viewing the fragments as an end in themselves rather than as a means to an end is equivalent to discovering the world through the end of a

microscope, and never getting a glimpse of how all the microscopic images fit together. It is then that the holistic unity of life is shredded, and humanity aimlessly spends its time engineering solutions to fit problems, applying simplistic cause and effect models without ever standing back to conceptualise and try to understand the entirety of the situation, how and why the problem (should there be one), arose in the first place.

Transdisciplinary Framework.

Over 150 years ago William Blake observed that, 'Nature hath no outline, but the imagination has'. The driving force of this research is the reciprocity of human-environmental relations; the embodiment of people in the environment and the environment in society. From the outset this objective recognises the essential and necessary unity of society and nature, the interior world of human subjects and the exterior conditions of existence. To approach this research in the conventional disciplinary, separatist manner, followed by a listing of interactions, would be to prejudice every other aspect of the thesis. The nature of this work required a framework which allowed the blending of physical and mental environments, economics, history, demography, psychology, anthropology, culture, politics, agriculture etc., into a holistic synthesis, but always maintaining a logical conceptual integration. In transdisciplinary research (sometimes referred to as non-disciplinary), the governing consideration is what is being investigated, disciplinary considerations are subordinate to the subject matter.

Rossini et al. (1984) defined transdisciplinary research as involving the development of an overarching paradigm encompassing a number of disciplines. Personally, I find Henry Glassie's (1982) description closer to the transdisciplinary spirit, when he stated; *'We have but one enterprise.....whatever its name, study is distorted and reality is mangled whenever disciplines harden into ideologies, categories freeze into facts, and the sweet, terrible wholeness of life is dismembered for burial. ...if work is good old categories will slip and shift, and then melt away as we find the place where social science joins the humanities, where art and culture and history, time and space, connect, where theoretical and empirical studies fuse'*.

The price one pays for this 'poetic licence', is that there are no given theoretical, methodological or disciplinary safety nets. One has to create their own conceptual framework into which specific disciplines will undoubtedly feed, but only when they contribute ideas or techniques that clearly serve the larger purpose.

The approach may free one from the confines of disciplinary restrictions, but it certainly does not eliminate the need for constructing a logical and conceptually integrated piece of work. An obvious pre-requisite for such a 'multiple choice' approach is the researchers need to learn about areas outside their previous training and expertise, since choice is only meaningful within the knowledge of what exactly one is choosing and rejecting. Leaving ones own field, is generally accompanied by strong feelings of insecurity, but as highlighted by Vermeersch (1984), one cannot deny that a lot of important theoretical and practical problems may remain unsolved when everybody sticks to their well known activities. Similarly, it is not enough to simply skim the surface of other disciplines, it is only after a solid knowledge of the depths that one can so to speak, 'cream off' the surface. Lockeretz 1991 suggested that the transdisciplinary approach is not suited to team research, because it involves far more than the willingness to learn the language and substance of other disciplines; it also calls for scientific creativity and intense personal involvement if new insights or observations are to emerge from the blending of the mix. Disciplinary synthesis of this kind must overcome strong conceptual obstacles, but an over all conceptually integrated framework is essential, and it is that which will dictate the use of the most appropriate methods. We stress this thesis is not an interdisciplinary study, rather it is a study in transdisciplinarity. We must now ask ourselves what are the most appropriate conceptual and tangible tools available to unravel the socio-natural complexity of the Aspre, and advance our understanding of land degradation in operation there? How are we to move forward in this transdisciplinary vein?

2.2.1 Fields of Enquiry.

As argued in chapter one, the issue of land degradation needs to be positioned within the broader context of human-environmental interaction. Essentially our objective is first to understand how the people and natural environment of the Aspre co-habit. This automatically necessitates an understanding of the rhythms of both the physical environment and the society that dwells upon it. One cannot understand the present in isolation of its past, thus we need to know where is this 'place' coming from, and where does it appear to be going? In this quest for understanding the appropriate fields of enquiry will no doubt touch upon the socio-natural and political history of the landscape. In order to capture the long term rhythms of both the people and the land of the Aspre, we have drawn up its socio-biophysical system, which is summarised in Appendix A and whose main story line is recounted in chapters 4 and 5. Our preamble through historical time not only provides us with a more correct conceptualisation of the nature of human-environmental interaction in the Aspre, but is also essential to an understanding of how we have arrived at the present. However, one must not see the 'past' and 'present' as mutually exclusive elements in the thesis, rather there is a constant trafficking too and from, as one informs on and illuminates the other.

Having anchored the research in a solid historical bedrock we are then free to cast our eyes on the present day inhabitants and environment of the Aspre, and the interplay between them. An indication of the present day geographical and physical environment of the Aspre is provided by the tools of environmental science. Original research was not undertaken in this field because it was felt that such information already exists in the form of technical reports and natural resource maps and data. Naturally all this information had to be collected and collated. Since we are arguing that one cannot fully separate the social from the natural we have made a conscious effort to imbue life into the rocks and soil of the Aspre by presenting the physical data in terms of the human experience of its enabling and constraining potential. In this respect I have been influenced by the work and style of some of the Annaliste historians: in particular Braudel's (1975) masterpiece on the Mediterranean, which is exemplary on how one can display the interworkings of physical and biological conditions with social and

economic endeavour, without resorting to separate chapters on each theme. As noted by Kinser (1981); "his verbal formulas used to describe an object also create it, even help discover it, long before the formulas are put together in narrative historiographical form". By the careful use of this 'art' the physical media is no longer presented as a backdrop for human activity.

The landscape of the Aspre cannot be 'read', without acknowledging the imprint of the human hand. The stone wall terraces are undeniably human artifacts, but with geomorphological impacts. Agriculture, past and present is seen as a vital element in the evolution of the essentially agrarian society and landscape of the Aspre. It was and still is the traditional means by which the indigenous human population of the Aspre 'manipulated' this land, and is thus central to their present day perceptions of land degradation. In order to provide some historical depth to our agrarian analysis, we present in chapter 4 a specific socio-agrarian example of life in Saint Marsal, a typical commune of the Haute Aspre, in the mid nineteenth century; a period which corresponds with its demographic watershed and maximum land use pressure. Back to the present, chapter 6 deals with the very important agricultural agenda in the Aspre today, whose reflection is once more to be found in the landscape, and whose dynamics cannot be understood in isolation of the larger European context.

As to how one goes about studying the present day inhabitants of the Aspre, their identities, world visions and perceptions of the physical environment depends to a large extent on ones concept of the individual, society and perception. As should be apparent from the preceding discussions, our approach to social enquiry is consistent with that of the hermeneutic tradition. We have in particular been influenced by the work of people such as Merleau-Ponty, Schutz, Geertz, Cohen, Marcus and Fisher. In keeping with the hermeneutic-phenomenological philosophy we view the task of social science not as gathering 'facts' and measuring how often certain patterns occur, rather we approach the field; "not as an experimental science in search of laws but an interpretive one in search of meaning" (Geertz 1973). Consequently we did not set out to study the Aspre community from the point of view of a Structural-Functionalist morphology of

institutions and behaviour patterns capable of objective definition and description. Rather we are trying to capture the members experience of that socio-natural *milieu*. As advocated by Cohen (1985), we are attempting to penetrate the structure and look outward from the core. Our orientation is away from the 'common mask', the surface appearance of things, to the depths of the 'private face' beneath; because it is in these 'subterranean waters' that we find the ways of thinking, perceiving and interpreting the reality that surrounds us. We do not deny that formal structures, be they social institutions, economic, political and agricultural systems, influence human behaviour and decision making, but they do not determine it. People, as purposive agents, act on the basis of how they define the situation at hand, rather than on some objective definition of that situation, (as is assumed under such concepts as 'economic rationality'). Members of different communities, or even different groups and individuals within a community, may view and interpret the same structures in very different ways. Context inevitably grounds us, and we reject the tendency to view diversity as surface and universalism as depth. Or as Geertz (1984) put it, the belief that "if something isn't anchored everywhere nothing can be anchored anywhere".

In short our objective is to understand, how the present day inhabitants of the Aspre, given their environmental, historical, cultural, geographical, political, psychological and economic context, interpret their world and their place in it, rather than trying to uncover the 'objective' construction of that world. Since meaning is largely contained in symbols it is precisely the subjective nature of both perception and identity that renders them inaccessible to the more formalized behavioural or survey approaches.

This research is not a case study of the Aspre, rather the Aspre is the grounded context we are using to inform us on the complexity of land degradation. We make no universal claims, this work rests upon a contextual mode of understanding. However, since the Aspre forms part of a tightly connected world system (and always has), it cannot be studied in isolation of that larger macro socio-economic context. Similarly, it is reasonable to expect that a contextual study of the Aspre will inform us on some of the broader issues afoot in that larger Mediterranean and world stage. In this respect

intensive field work in a limited area both draws on and helps to make sense of wider patterns.

Having defined land degradation as essentially a perceptual issue, and in our totalising attempt to grasp the ideological world view of the various actors in the Aspre, the question of psychology, in particular perception and 'mentalité', constitute a vitally important part of our approach. In respect to the French term 'mentalité' (which shall be explained more fully in chapter 7), we have again been influenced by Annaliste concerns with the mental climate of their subjects; something that is particularly prevalent in the works of Febvre (1958; 1973; 1982) and Ladurie (1980; 1981). As stated by Febvre (1973): "*One cannot understand a period or it's ideas without access to the basic standpoint, i.e. the psychological standpoint,.... which implies the concern to link up all the conditions of existence of a society with the meaning it's members give to their own ideas*". Our key to unlocking the mental climate of the Aspre is hermeneutic insight, based on an intentional depth analysis, interlocking past and present 'nature-cultures'. Similarly, as previously argued, we view perception in a holistic rather than in an object specific manner. Thus, our approach to environmental perception necessitates a holistic understanding of society and the meaning its members imbue their environment with. To achieve understanding of another's subjective world is essentially a problem of interpretation; something Geertz (1973) cryptically defined as, "guessing at meaning and assessing the better guesses". However that interpretation and the resultant 'thick description', must be situated, placed in context and backed up by supporting evidence. In this light the most substantial part of the field work was concerned with constructing a reading of what is going on in the Aspre from the peoples perspective.

Asking the question 'what is going on here', is at once disarmingly simple and incredibly complex. In the light of the preceding theoretical debate and taking into account the aims of this research, it was decided that the most appropriate way of constructing such a reading, was by participating in the drama of its daily life. To this end a social anthropology approach was adopted, in particular participant observation

and semi-structured interviews were combined with background contextual analysis. The holistic open ended approach of interpretative social anthropology complements the transdisciplinary approach, since it was felt that prior to commencing the field work, enough was not known about human-environmental relations in the Aspre to formulate an 'a priori' hypothesis on 'land degradation' there. The 'problem', should there be one, was to emerge after an in-depth study of the areas environment and people. That is to say, the starting point was a situational analysis and not the perceived 'problem'.

Research involving participant observation is inevitably subjective, because it is the researcher who is the main instrument of social investigation. Its critics claim that it is unscientific, lacking in intellectual integrity and raise questions of observer bias and the temptation of going native. Similarly, questions of the impact of the researcher on the situation observed and the non-quantifiable nature of the results are frequently highlighted as serious problems. All of this is true, (and a lot of it is true of most social science research), but the major point of the preceding theoretical debate was to show that this is inevitable, and in a very real sense irrelevant, because it cannot be overcome. One could equally strongly argue that attempts to remove the biases in order to do an 'objective' study of 'subjectivity' is far more ludicrous. In a literal sense the acceptance of relativity, subjectivity and interpretative science can as stated by Rainbow et al. (1979), be called a "return to the objective world, seeing the world within which we find ourselves and the circle of meaning which we can never fully surpass". There are a range of other research methods from statistical measurements, experimental methods and survey research, that aim to reduce the observer bias, but as Burgess (1984) reminds us, none of those methods can fully encapsulate the subjective elements of social reality. They cannot get at the 'heart of the matter'. However, in this research subjective perceptions lie at the heart of peoples interact with their socio-natural milieu.

There are few guidelines on how to do participant observation. Bernard (1988), described it is a strategy rather than a method that facilitates both qualitative and quantitative data collection in the field. It is a human interactive process and depends

on the nature of the research and the human beings involved. It is based on the principle that in order to understand people's behaviour we must use an approach that gives us access to the meaning that guides their behaviour (Hammersley et al. 1983). Its strength lies in the fact that it provides the researcher with the most comprehensive means by which they can share and thereby enter the everyday world experiences of those he or she wishes to understand. Participant observation is not only about observing people, inevitably one enters into conversation with them. Neither is it enough simply to record such conversations; Boon (1982) reminds us that, "what a person means to say is only a small part of what his or her saying means". The other and major part (which no tape recorder or video camera can trap), being the meaning attributed by the listener to the symbols used by the speaker. Since the same words can be used to portray different meanings, semantic responses on their own, i.e. without decoding the symbols, can be rather vacant. Or as the old adage soberly reminds us, 'people speak to hide their thoughts and write to hide their society', thus what is not said or written also demands attention. The value of being a participant observer lies not only in the opportunity it provides for collecting rich and detailed data based on observations and encounters in natural settings, but it is also a prerequisite to understanding and thus interpreting the symbolic language of every day life. It creates context, without which an interpretation of someone else's symbols risks being empty and misleading.

PART 11

2.3 ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELD WORK.

A prerequisite for ethnographic fieldwork is knowledge of the local language. It gives access to concepts used in everyday life, allows one to conduct their own interviews and conversations, thus avoiding the inevitable distortion of working through a translator. In this research it was also necessary in order to gain access to the relevant archival and other written literature. A personal command of the situation is important because one of the major strengths of ethnographic work is that the researcher becomes the instrument for both data collection and analysis through their own experience. Besides as Bernard (1988) reminds us, "the most important thing you can do to stop being a freak is to speak the language of the people you are studying".

2.3.1 Initial Contact.

My first introduction to the Aspre was a two week stay in the company of a team of Geographers and Soil Scientists. My first impressions related to the overwhelming natural beauty of the place. It was Spring time so it was looking its best: - the neat little vineyards, the fields of poppies, the interlocking dark hills playing 'peek-a-boo' with the clouds, and the snow capped Canigou in the distance casting a cool eye over its earthly 'paradise'. Throughout the ensuing field work its pleasant company was a constant source of elevation.

During this initial visit I spent some time in the field with the physical scientists, but I also started walking to the local villages, visiting the 'Mairie' (municipal council), telling them about the research I intended doing and asking about accommodation. I noted any relevant contacts they mentioned in the Department of Agriculture in Perpignan, or the Directors of the local wine co-operatives, all of whom in due course I contacted. It was thus that I meet, what was to become for me key figures in the Department of Agriculture and at the University of Perpignan, who at a later date were to open many doors for me and greatly ease my access to information. In fact

throughout the field work I was extremely fortunate in having total cooperation from the administrative and academic community in Perpignan. This meant that the collection of supporting evidence and background information relevant to the research could be assembled in weeks rather than months. I was also to learn that in the Mediterranean milieu, contacts and the personal touch of face to face meetings are very important, in fact that is how business is done.

From the initial field trip I gained a superficial acquaintance with issues that were later to become far more important. It provided me with the opportunity of finding my bearings, establishing contacts, and assessing the feasibility and suitability of the area for my research purposes. It also allowed me to plan more carefully the second, month long field trip, which was essentially taken up with the intensive collection of existing documentation and statistics on the Aspre and the Department in general. Most of this data was to be found in the various Public Administration Departments, with Agriculture being particularly relevant, Public and University Libraries, University Departments, Catalan and Departmental Archives etc. I also spent a productive few days at INSEE Montpellier, i.e the Regional Capital. However, the collecting of existing contextual information was not just a once off exercise, it continued at a less intensive pace throughout the field work. In the course of the second field trip I also interviewed a number of relevant people within the Perpignan administration and at the university. These were basically exploratory interviews, whose purpose was to inform me on key issues, relating to the local socio-physical environment, the land question, and issues in agriculture. My intervention at this stage was at what could be called the Meso-Departmental level, and contact was maintained with many of my 'informants' in Viticulture, Elevage (animal husbandry), Forestry, Soil Science, Hydrology, Agronomy etc., throughout the ensuing field work. This hierarchical link between the macro and micro level was important, as these were 'hands on people' who knew the area and its problems very well, but were nevertheless sufficiently removed to take a broader perspective. They are also the people who 'translate' and operationalise, via their extension workers (whom I later interviewed), the macro National and EEC policies, at the grass root level. In trying to piece together the 'jigsaw' puzzle of the

Aspre, the different hierarchical levels provided different perspectives on issues which swing in and out of focus depending on the level one is working at.

Once more back in Britain, I spent a few months going through the substantial quantity of data I had collected. Not only was this statistical, cartographic and documentary data to form supporting evidence throughout the thesis, but it allowed me to ask 'sensible' questions when I commenced my eight months uninterrupted ethnographic field work in the villages of the Aspre, i.e the micro level. It meant that I could link with the taken for granted names, places, events and issues that came up in conversation, thus allowing me to get straight into the work, without perpetually interrupting my informants for explanations. Since raw data on its own is of limited use, my next task was to discover the people behind the 'mask', and put some flesh on the 'skeleton' of the Aspre.

2.3.3 Gaining Access at the Micro Level.

Living in Tordères, one of the villages of the Aspre proved to be a big asset to my work and the general integration process³. It also put me in the way of those chance meetings and observations, which can materialise as some of the most enlightening. I became friendly with some people in the village who not only provide me with valuable social support, somewhere I could drop into for a chat and a coffee, they were in hindsight 'key informants', who often provided me with background information on events or people I had meet in the course of the day (naturally I never discussed the content of the interviews with anybody). These bits of information were more than 'gossip' they gave me a more realistic picture of what was going on. They also knew several people in the area, and added to my list of potential contacts. It was with the shepherd from the village that I attended a number of farmers meetings involved in the implementation of EEC Agro-Environmental policies. This was key access which as an outsider I could never have got on my own. In time other 'key informants' were to

³Finding accommodation in one of the villages of the Aspre proved to be no small feat. I was constantly advised that my best bet would be an apartment in the near by town of Thuir.

emerge. However it helps to bear in mind Agar's (1980) comment; "you should wonder about the kind of person who would befriend an ethnographer"! In Tordères, as in most villages of the Aspre, were to be found many other 'blow-ins', some of whom had lived there and worked the land for over twenty years. I found that some of the well integrated 'others' often made some of the best informants, because they had maintained a critical eye. They were part of the tapestry, but still somewhat apart, a position any anthropologist would be envious of.

The participant observer must always maintain a critical stance, and check out the information they receive from their 'friends' just as they do for all their other informants. When you arrive in a place where you know nobody it is all too easy to be over influenced by those (often misfits themselves) extending an attractive 'life line'; accept this help initially but in full awareness that in time you must learn to swim on your own. Otherwise one would succumb to the subtle pressure to meet only the people they want you to meet, or be intellectually won over by some of the highly articulate and convincing 'key informants'. Neither must one be seen to be associated with any one person or group. The researcher in the field has several 'strings to their bow', and is basically there to investigate their own story, listen to all sides, and in the light of supporting evidence deliver their own judgement on what they think is going on there. However, the line between distance and closeness is often a tense one, consequently it may be best to do the final analysis away from the field.

I also made a point of shopping locally, buying my wine from the local co-operative, and petrol in the nearby village, even though all these things were more expensive than in town. Local patronage is important, not only was I one of their clients, but in time they willingly became one of mine. In the country ones reputation precedes them, and thanks to the same rural 'grape vine' network, in time many of the people I came in contact with had either seen or heard of me. Due to the fact that I lived in a small village, it was apparent from the outset that I would have to go to meet the disperse population of the Aspre, which I did by combining participant observation with semi-structured interviews.

2.4 Semi-Structured Interviews.

2.4.1 Sampling:

My sampling strategy would in technical terms be referred to as Snowball Sampling. It is a technique where by one locates a few key individuals and ask them to name other likely candidates for your research. I started out at the local wine co-operatives in Terrats and Fourques, explained my research to the Directors and asked for the names of some of their suppliers, with a view to contacting them. I realise there is an unavoidable bias in this approach, because one would expect the Directors to give me only the names of their respectable and satisfied members. But it was a start and an important introduction to the wine growers of the Basse Aspre. In fact I did not go through these lists, because I was accumulating other names and phone numbers from the viticulteurs interviewed and from my other informants in the village where I lived.

The snowball effect was working and I was in a position to selectively select those I wanted to interview, taking into account whether they were big or small viticulteurs, organic growers, whether they owned their own 'cave', or simply deposited their grapes at the co-operative, with a view to obtaining a balanced cross-section of the growers. Thus in time my sampling technique also became 'Stratified', in the sense that I selectively targeted the different groups of people in the Aspre; - the viticulteurs of the Basse Aspre, the Catalan mixed farmers of the Haute Aspre, the Neo-Rureaux⁴, the 'Outsiders' be they retired, holiday home owners, or commuters. None of this was statistical done, I was basically looking for a conceptual overview of the various 'actors' in the Aspre. In pursuit of which I followed my own judgement deciding when I had a sufficient knowledge of the issues, perceptions and mentality of one group before moving on to the next. I do not mean to imply that the groups identified were internally homogenous, far from it; however it is undeniable that vine growers have a specific relationship with the environment that is not shared by, for example, retired

⁴The term 'neo-rureaux', which will be explained more fully in chapter 7, was essentially coined to describe the hippies of the 1968 movement, who moved into the 'arrière pays' of places like the Haute Aspre in order to work the land, in a direct back to nature experience.

outsiders. Similarly the agricultural issues affecting vine growers differ from those impacting on the mixed farmers or 'éleveurs' of the Haute Aspre. Overall I conducted seventy interviews taken from a sample of sixty people (25 Catalan farmers, 15 Neo-Rureaux, 10 'Rich Outsiders', 10 Administrators & Academics), the ten repeats being either key informants or interviews that took more than one session to cover my agenda. However, one should note that I came in contact with a lot more people than this, for whom I did not open a separate file, but noted under 'daily observations'. Similarly, at many of the interviews there was more than one person present. Neither did I work simply on one group at a time, rather the meetings ran concurrently, but I did initially concentrate on the wine growers. The stratified snowball technique worked very well, and I ended up with far more names and phone numbers than was possible to contact.

2.4.2 Arranging Interviews.

The interviews were set up by first phoning a potential interviewee, explaining how I had got their name, generally 'de la part de quelqu'un', the nature of my research, and asked if I could meet them in order to get their views on the subject, while assuring them of the anonymity of their cooperation. Most people were very cooperative and I arranged a time to come and meet them there and then. Others involved a number of phone calls, they may ask you to phone back next week when they had less work on etc. I received only a few outright refusals, which I fully accepted as their prerogative and did not push the issue⁵.

Gaining access to the wealthy 'outsider' population was by far the most difficult, generally entailing several phone calls and always preceded by an introduction. In the Calcina hill overlooking the village of Llauro, there was a very large concentration of mostly retired ex-colonials. My initial contact there was via an academic in Perpignan who knew a Northern French man on the 'Conseille Villageoise'. I also evoked the

⁵Unfortunately my first two 'tender' phone calls in the field were refusals or rather postponements. I picked on two elderly Catalan ladies living alone, thinking they would be an easy 'target'.

assistance of the Catalan village Mayor in this case, but even then as the following anecdote demonstrates, things did not always go to plan. One of the names I received from the Mayor (whom I found very helpful), was that of a Belgian woman whose husband was working in Perpignan. After a number of phone calls I arranged to meet her in her home in the Calcina. Both herself and her guard dog meet me at the door, declaring that I could go no further because my identity was in doubt, and given what she perceived as the frequency of drug pushers and religious freaks in the area she did not want to take any chances. Apparently after my phone call she phoned the Mayor to verify my story. The Mayor duly declared that she had ever heard of me, and between them they arranged for the Mayor to come to her house and verify my identity on the appointed day and time the interview was arranged for. Now this was a rather sordid story the details and interpretation of which I will not go into here, suffice it to say the Mayor knew me very well. Myself and my Belgian friend remained for fifteen minutes outside her mansion, waiting for the Mayor to turn up, who alas never arrived. The formal interview never took place, but during those fifteen minutes outside the door I learnt a thing or two about this woman's 'world vision'. That evening I phoned the Mayor, to politely remind her of my existence. Sometime later we meet in the local butcher shop, she 'kindly' interrupted her order to allow me to be served first. This tale is simply an anecdote, but among other things, it highlights the fact that no matter how well you think you have integrated (the above happened towards the end of my field work), you are very definitely a 'professional outsider' and what's more as a researcher a rather unsettling human being.

The above access problem was highly untypical of the vast majority of my pre-arranged meetings, where it was far more common to turn up at an isolated mas, find the door of the house wide open and nobody in sight. Overall gaining access in the sense of setting up meetings with people in their own homes was trouble free, provided you were 'disponible', i.e. prepared to work around their time table. If it suited them best to meet you in the early morning or late at night, weekends or week days, you had to be 'disponible'.

2.5 The Nature of the Semi-Structured Interviews.

I interviewed everybody in their own homes (except for the administrators), which not only exposed me to the people but also to the environment in which they lived. In this way the environment and society were entwined and followed me where ever I went. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in the light of what de Salo Pool (1957), described as an "interpersonal drama with an unfolding plot", the product being jointly constructed by two (or more) co-participants. By semi-structured I mean a situation that maintained the free wheeling quality of an unstructured interview, the only difference being that there were certain topics I wanted to cover and thus steered the conversation around those issues. Again these topics varied according to the group being studied, for example there was no point in trying to hold a detailed discussing on viticulture with a retired outsiders with no knowledge or interest in the subject, however one should note their perception of the industry and of the local wine growers. The interviews were set around the land, environment, society 'problematique' in the Aspre.

At the initial interviews I had a list of questions and topics that needed to be covered, but as I became more proficient, I simply read through my agenda before each meeting, confident that I could retain the details in my head. Besides I got the impression that pulling out a list of questions was off putting for the informants, who responded best to an informal approach. Generally I found that if you get people onto a topic of interest to them, one can effortlessly cover everything on your agenda (and a lot more with it) without making it seem like a chronological task. Even though the interviews were semi-structured, I specifically wanted the people to tell their own story, what they considered relevant. This must not be confused with a totally relativistic approach, and neither was it 'rambling' and loosing control over the interview, on the contrary allowing the informants to move into areas that most concerned them, or that they deemed most important, was an essential part of the emergent process. Had I imposed a rigid survey type agenda, I would have eliminated their own assessment of the situation. Besides everything was relevant, as previously argued how people interact with and perceive their environment cannot be divorced from the rest of life. One must acknowledge, I was in the fortunate position that what I wanted to talk about was

generally close to their hearts. I never directly asked awkward questions about tax or exact incomes, but from the size of their vineyards, herd, or swimming pools as the case may be, one can easily deduce a rough estimate of their income. However, I was able to get an income breakdown, including their financial dependence on subsidies from some of my agricultural 'key informants'.

The interviews generally lasted from one to three hours, in the course of which one was frequently offered a glass of wine or a coffee. From some of the encounters, I got the impression that not only did these people want to talk as if unburdening themselves, but they also wanted your opinion. Not surprisingly this phenomenon was most apparent among the neo-rureaux, who were in a sense relegated to the margins of society, and felt that their heroic efforts were not being appreciated. It was also common among 'ordinary' Catalans, especially in the Haute Aspre, caught in the grip of change. The world was not making sense to them any more. They wanted you to know how good things were in the past, and as the messenger from outside they also wanted to know what sense you made of all the changes affecting their lives and troubling their minds.

I worked on creating empathy, which is a rather loaded and idealistic concept and something one can only ever achieve to a limited degree. As Geertz (1973) reminds us, "the trick is not to achieve some inner correspondence of spirit with your informants, preferring like the rest of us to call their souls their own The trick is to figure out what the devil they think they are up to". When I speak of empathy I simply mean putting people at ease, not threatening or challenging them, being appreciative of their cooperation, assuring them of the anonymity of their information, never forgetting that I was the guest there to learn from them. I worked on the basis that lower reactivity means higher validity of data. I did not use any formal interview techniques, like probes or heavy silences, nor did I use a tape recorder (or video camera). One must remember the nature of these people, many of them live in isolated farms and would not have a lot of social interaction. I do not think they would take kindly to a foreigner with a quaint accent taping every word they said, as indeed I would not, had situations been reversed. Given the context, it was felt that the

disadvantages of such tools outweighed their advantages. I fully sympathise with Polsky's (1969) recommendations that; "successful field research depends on the investigators trained ability to look at people, listen to them, think and feel with them, talk with them rather than at them. It does not depend fundamentally on some impersonal apparatus such as a tape recorder or questionnaire, that is interposed between the investigator and the investigated".

Some ethnographers anxious to represent the 'native' in their own words, express a preference for 'dialogue', and argue that the tape recorder is essential so that the 'informant' can have a place in the text. I am in agreement with Tyler (1986), who referred to such practices as a rather 'comic routine', because it is undeniable that the researcher still exercises total control over the discourse. With one finger on the 'fast forward' button and another on the 'delete', they also decide what discourse is included in the final text, the context it is put in, and what is left out. They have missed the true import of discourse, which is not how to make a better representation, but how to avoid representation, the crucial point being the 'other as us'.

Such an interpersonal approach puts a lot of onus on the researches, as conversation is of necessity a two way process, to which you must contribute and inevitably reveal a bit about yourself. I made a point of highlighting the fact that I came from a rural agricultural background. This generally created an immediate empathy or link point with the farmers, (who constituted the majority of the inhabitants of the Aspre and of my informants), and watered down the inevitable impact of the 'researcher'. Equipped with this bit of information and from ones general approach and composure, one would hope they did not accuse this 'country girl' of possessing the much spoken about urban biases, which they felt classified all of them as 'ignorant backward peasants'. It would be wrong to delude oneself into thinking that they considered me one of themselves, far from it (as the previous tale with the Mayor demonstrated), but I believe that generally we were able to understand each other, we could connect. Alas that is a major asset, something which cannot be got by sticking a microphone or video camera under somebodies nose, in full assurance that their every word and gesture has been

'captured'. I sympathise with Clifford & Marcus's (1986) comment that, in the twentieth century the 'savage' is no longer 'primitive', she or he is only 'data' and 'evidence'. In the final analysis the joke is on the 'data hunters', because as previously noted raw data, in either numeric, verbal or photographic form is rather meaningless without interpretation, for which one must have understanding and context. In short, empathy is what allows us to perceive people as rational and logical, which of course they all are in their own fashion. Similarly, in order to 'break the ice' among the ex-colonials, we frequently started off by discussing our mutual experiences in Africa.

In hindsight the advice I received from the anthropologist, Dr. Dick Papousek, prior to commencing the ethnographic field work, who described it as a question of identities, both yours and theirs, was sound advice. While the researcher is trying to figure 'them' out and get a glimpse of their conceptual world, you can be sure that they, 'the informants' are similarly preoccupied. The idea of the non-involvement and strict neutrality of the social science researcher is a dangerous myth, which supposedly allows such 'non-tarnished' researchers to speak with objective authority about their pasteurised knowledge. On the contrary, I was there body and mind, and once more in agreement with Geertz (1973), believe that a good interpretation of anything is that which "takes us into the heart of that of which it is the interpretation ... when it does not do that, it is something else than the task at hand". The balance between the rational and the emotional is an inevitable constant. Similarly, it is only after reaching the heart of the matter that one can tell their story from the inside out, something one will never get at encumbered with the shackles of aseptic neutrality. Naturally one must acknowledge that the final interpretation is unique to the researcher.

Finally to round off my inter-personal field experiences, I am aware of the extensive literature on the problem of female researchers in the field. I do not want to enter into that debate, except to note that being a female researcher, in what would be classified as a 'Macho Mediterranean Society', was not a problem for me. One of the few gender restrictions I came across, was that it was not acceptable for a woman on her own to go into the local bars and cafes. The Mayor of one of the viticole villages having heard

reports that I had done just that in the course of my initial visit several months previously, (which naturally every one still remembered), advised me that if I continued to do so I would 'be taken for a joke'. I certainly did not want that. In my naivety I thought that those would be the best places to meet the locals, showing once more the importance of context and the fact that a researcher in a different culture cannot take much for granted. However, I did not see this as a serious infringement on my liberty (actually I was very relieved), there are restrictions on both men and women in every culture and one would be naive to think otherwise. My own experience of the gender issue is that its impact is far more pronounced back in the echelons of academia, inspite of the articulate concern expressed and the setting up of Department uniquely concerned with the issue. Overall my field work was fraught with the normal frustrations and insecurity of all field work, but above all else it was a highly rewarding and enriching experience, and without a doubt the most enjoyable part of the Ph.D⁶.

Note Taking.

Throughout the interviews I took short notes, generally key words or phrases to help recall. The note taking did not interrupt the flow of the conversations. At night, or during any other free time, I would write up the notes, plus any other observations, in a hard back Diary, following the sequence of the notes. The only classification I used in the Diary, prior to each entry was the date and name of the informant. Generally speaking writing up an interview took longer than the interview itself, but it was also an opportunity to contemplate and reflect on the issues raised in the interview, and in this sense was probably the first stage of the analysis. Similarly this immediate feedback allows one to follow up leads and hunches, or simply things that do not fit. As my understanding deepened so too the study evolved from 'land degradation' to 'land transformation'. The flexibility of the ethnographic approach allowed this to happen and to accommodate the change in direction. One should note that throughout

⁶Re-reading my early diary entries, I was shocked to find the following; "On the whole the people here tend to be rather gruff and rude, they seem a bit like their land, harsh and closed". I did not leave the field with those sentiments, but it served as a reminder that it was not all plain sailing either.

the ethnographic field work, I was simultaneously working on the historical bio-social aspect of the thesis, which involved some archival work, and following up relevant literature sources.

2.6 Analysis of the Ethnographic Fieldwork.

Qualitative analysis in common with all forms of analysis, is a search for patterns in data and for ideas that help explain the existence of those patterns (Bryman 1988). Both during and after the field work themes, hunches and patterns begin to emerge, indeed in the ethnographic approach one cannot separate the act of gathering the material from that of its continuous interpretation. There are very few guidelines on how to analyze such voluminous, rich but amorphous data. In the past there was often the problem of ethnographic field work being presented in a polished '*fait accompli*' form, with no indication of how they got from the field work stage to the final text. In recent years Postmodern critique has reversed the process to such an extent that it is difficult to separate 'the wood from the trees'. Geertz (1988) defined the problem as follows: "The difficulty is that the oddity of constructing text ostensibly scientific out of experiences broadly biographical, which is after all what ethnographers do, is thoroughly obscure". There are no clear cut text books on the subject, because as Okely (1994) rightly points out: " The understanding and ways of making sense of the material and of writing cannot be routinized and streamlined as instructions for methodological text-books..... nor can the material be fully assessed at this stage by a non participant". Essentially it is a creative process, the hallmark of which is a period of great turbulence and intensity, involved in the transition of the researcher from the instrument of research to that of its vessel, allowing the 'other voices' time to mature and gain their independence. I fully acknowledge that it is impossible to reproduce the 'other', however some reproductions are more convincing than others. I think it is important for the researcher to give some indication of their particular creative route, including the blind alleys they went down.

2.6.1 Field Diary Analysis.

The Blind Allays:

Having investigated some computer packages, such as Nudist and Ethnography, which are specifically designed to organise and thus help analyze ethnographic field work, it became apparent that they were of limited use to me, and militated against my holistic approach. My biggest problem with such software, was the sensation that I was loosing both control over and contact with my data, which I realised only I knew intimately. These packages were missing context, the very reason why I had invested so much time and effort in doing field work in the first place. They did not have that intimate feel for the data, that priceless ability to distinguish the 'winks from the nods'. They were relying solely on the spoken word, oblivious of the varying symbols contained within the words. In short they were imposing an introspective closure on the data, taking words and sentences as stand alone facts, oblivious of context and the rich contextual information I had collected, which enabled me to read between the lines. The fact that my data was not in systematic form, i.e did not ask the same questions to everybody, also complicated matters. Of course these packages do not claim to analyze the data, rather their purpose is to organise it into relevant categories. However one must acknowledge that the way data is organised profoundly affects the analysis which follows.

Both the Nudist and Ethnographer software packages were developed with the Grounded Theory approach of Glaser & Strauss (1967), specifically in mind (cf. Richards & Richards 1987; Seidel & Clark 1984). But I do not aspire to the philosophy of grounded theory, I did not conduct my field work in that vein, nor did I want it analyzed around those assumptions, concepts and categories; proof of how ideologically tainted such organizational aids can be. The ability to stream line the analysis of qualitative data is very attractive, but it is equally dangerous. No computer programme can think through the field work, discover emergent themes and make all those serendipitous connections which comes from the knowledge of having been there, and the awareness of solid supporting evidence. In essence that is what analysis is about.

Analysis of Field Diaries.

I returned to my hand written Diaries, read and re-read them, constantly jotting down comments, observations and making linkages as I went along. In short I was getting close to the data, thinking things through, doing validity checks in my own mind, and cross-referencing with the supporting data; basically trying to figure out what were they really saying, what was really going on there. It is also important to allow time for things to simmer on the 'back burner', rather than rushing straight into 'formal' analysis. There are times when contemplation and thinking are more important than action. Themes and patterns were beginning to 'emerge'. One cannot categorically explain that creative process, but I have no doubt that my eventual choice of categories and sub-categories was influenced by the frequency with which certain topics were either observed or mentioned in the interviews, and by my own conceptualization of the 'drama' I had witnessed. One should also note that throughout this process I was simultaneously analyzing my supporting data. Frequently diary statements did not make sense without this knowledge; for example, I was perplexed by the recurrent comment that when people from the Haute Aspre sell their land they frequently still consider it theirs. The clues to such an apparently 'non rational' statement was only revealed when I made the connection with communal property ownership in the past, something I came across while studying the agrarian history of the area. This was obviously a vital clue to grasping their environmental perception, which none of my informants actually expressed in words.

My first reduction of the Diary material was into ten categories; - Mentalité and Culture, Environment and Ecology, Agriculture, The Land Question, The EEC, Tourism and Outsiders, Neo-Rureaux, The Past, The Future, Local Politics. I fully accept that the categories and the subsequent sub-categories were not rigid structures (other people may have come up with different ones), their function was simply to help me organise the Diary data, aid conceptualization and thus analysis. Geertz (1988) sapiently reminds us that; "the illusion that ethnography is a matter of sorting strange and irregular facts into familiar and orderly categories - this is magic, that is technology - has long since been exploded".

At this stage all the material in the Diaries was typed into a word processing computer package, in sentence or paragraph form (depending on which was most relevant). At the start of each statement was placed a code of 1-10 indicating which category it was to be classified under, and at the end of the sentence/paragraph was placed an alphabetic code indicating the name of the person who made the statement. Those alphabetical codes appear throughout the text, following diary quotations. By the use of a sort command all the statements were classified under the appropriate categories. Naturally there was overlap and some statements were relevant to more than one category, such statements were duly duplicated. I followed the same procedure in the creation of sub-categories; firstly reading through each category several times, deciding on sub-category titles, coding the material accordingly, and performing a 'sort' command. Thus the classification of the field Diary material was made after rather than before or during the field work. The resultant classified field diary material is contained in Appendix C. In hindsight, computers cannot substitute for the imaginative and in depth knowledge that is a necessary ingredient of analysis, but they can help with 'cutting and pasting', and in this way help organise the data, provided the researcher maintains a clear vision of how they want it organised, in other words they must control the technology rather than the other way around.

Having outlined my classification technique, one must acknowledge that there is also a slightly disconcerting element attached to such procedures, as coding, cutting and pasting, because chunks of text are cut out of their natural context, and if one is not careful they risk loose their moorings, so to speak. Because my data set was relatively small this was less of a problem, as I could generally visualise the person and context surrounding every statement. However, when it came to the actual writing up stage, I frequently found myself going back to my original diaries, or rather I used both the Diaries and classified material concurrently. Clearly some form of classification is necessary to help structure the amorphous field Diaries and arrive at overarching themes, but one must never lose sight of the fact that it is but a means to an end, rather than the other way around. The actual writing up process is also a form of analysis, requiring contemplation and the constant movement from evidence to ideas and

back again. The field worker turned analyst and author must never be alienated from their experience as participant observer, a vital link in the unbroken interpretative chain. In conclusion there can be no set analytical formula for ethnographic work, only basic guidelines sensitive to specific cases.

These are the techniques and concepts I am consciously playing around with, in my efforts to bridge the erroneous divide between nature and culture, past and present, internal and external environments, so necessary to interpreting the human modified landscape of the Aspre. The following chapter takes us on a journey through that landscape.

CHAPTER 3: THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERSONALITY OF THE ASPRE.

3.1 Introduction.

In the preceding chapters we argued that the human and natural processes impacting on physical space cannot be fully disentangled. Consequently, any meaningful description of the natural environment of places like the Aspre must be interlaced with temporally specific anthropogenic influence. The people of the Aspre have had a profound influence on its vegetation and physical geography, thus in our journey through this landscape we aim to write the people into the topography, rather than producing a purely technical description of its physical properties. In this respect the research has been influenced by the *Annales* socio-geohistorical approach, especially Braudel's interweaving of ecological considerations with social activities, exemplified in his masterpiece, 'The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip 11' (1975 [1949]).

3.2 Boundaries.

Before embarking on that journey we are first confronted with the geographical problem of locating the place. Within Roussillon¹, the Aspre is frequently spoken of but no two studies give it the same boundaries. The only consensus there appears to be is that it lies somewhere between the valleys of the Têt and the Tech. In fact it has no administrative or agricultural representation, rendering the collection of statistics for the area very difficult, forcing one to work up from the village/commune level. In Roman times the Aspre was totally contained within the Vallespir, a Roman name meaning 'Vallus-Asperis' - âpre vallée - (harsh valley). In the middle ages the Vicomté de Castelnou, the former seat of power in the area, always regrouped the Aspre and Vallespir. After the French Revolution the Aspre was administratively divided up between the three 'Arrondissement' (municipal ward) of Céret, Perpignan and Prades, and between the four 'Cantons' (Districts) of Thuir, Céret, Arles-sur-Tech, and Vinça.

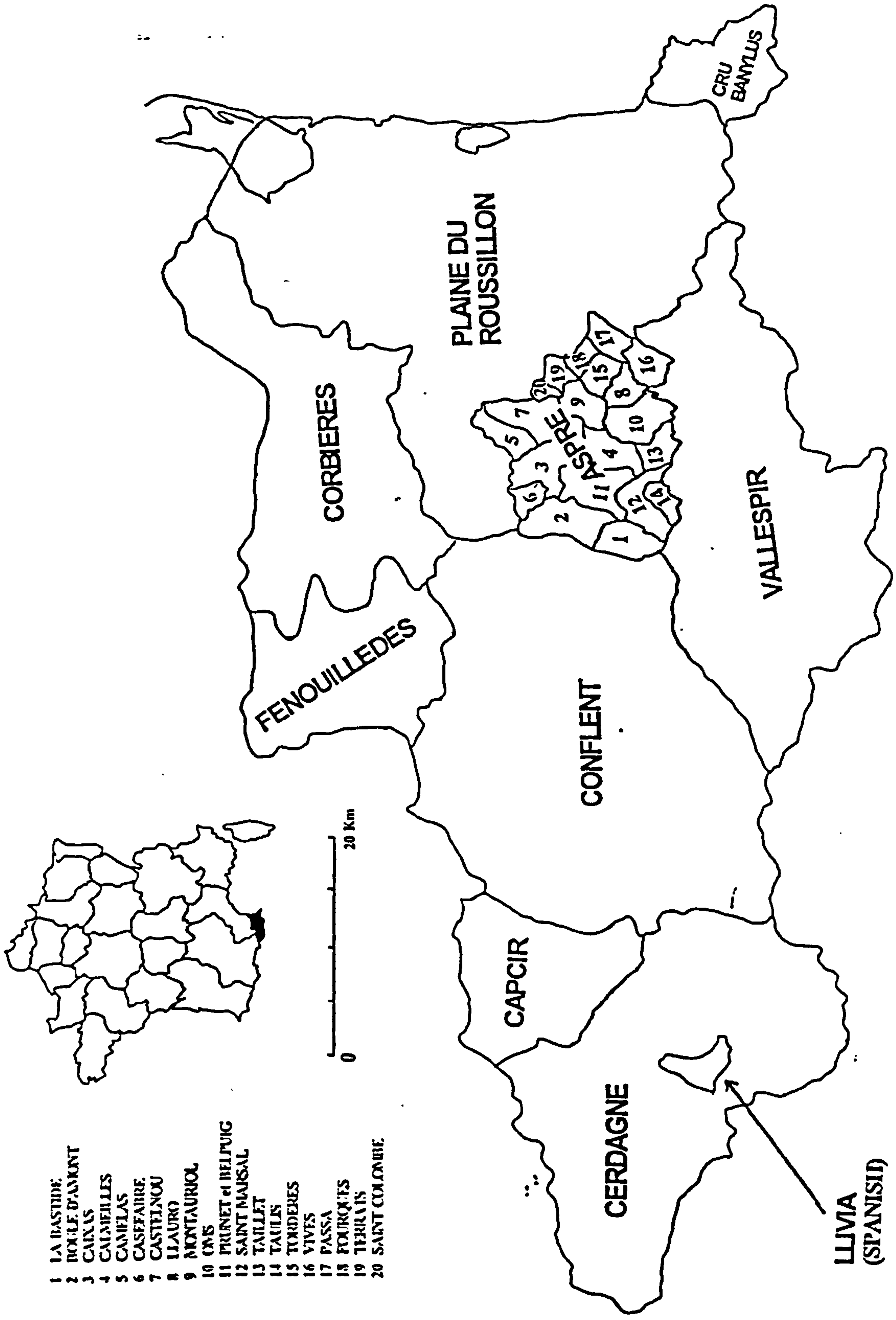
¹From 1970 the Provence of Roussillon became known as the Department of the Pyrénées Orientales. However, both names are still commonly used, and shall be applied interchangeably throughout the thesis.

These divisions continue to the present day (see Table 1). In the Agricultural Atlas one finds its communes dispersed between the Region Agricole du Conflent, the Vallespir et Albères, and the Plaine du Roussillon (see Map 1).

Barello (1981), speculated that the lack of definite boundaries for the Aspre throughout its long history has resulted in its present day lack of identity, its absence of administrative power, and the difficulty of pin-pointing the area. However, Bertrand (1990) reminds us that a 'natural region' does not constitute a clearly defined homogenous spatial unit, rather it is defined by an internal agency, an identity given to it by its inhabitants. As we shall see in what follows, there is no doubt in the minds of its children but that they emanate from its rock and soil. There is a core of sixteen communes retained by some of the most prominent researchers of the Aspre, including Bécat (1977), Barello (1981), and Amigo (1981). This core is made up of the communes of Boule d'Amont, Caixas, Camèlas, Calmeilles, Casefabre, Castelnou, La Bastide, Llauro, Montauriol, Oms, Prunet et Belpuig, Saint Marsal, Taillet, Taulis, Tordères, and Vivès. The ambiguity surrounds the boarder with the plain and the Ribéral. Following Rey (1960) we have in this study added the viticole villages of Terrats, Fourques, Passa, and Saint Colombe, and excluded the sometimes included, fruit growing, horticultural communes of Bouleternère, Corbère, St. Michel de Llotes and Thuir. Thus, for the purpose of this study the boundary of the Aspre is defined by the twenty communes, covering an area of 25,455 hectares, listed in Table 1 and outlined in Map 1.

Commune	Elevation (M)	Arrondissement	Canton	Region Agricole	Population	1990 Cadastral Surf. Area (Ha)
Basse Aspre						
Terrats	120	Perpignan	Thuir	Plaine du Roussillon	520	692
Fourque	120	Perpignan	Thuir	Plaine du Roussillon	673	913
Camélas	100	Prades	Thuir	Plaine du Roussillon	323	1212
Llauro	330	Perpignan	Thuir	Plaine du Roussillon	255	
Passa	135	Perpignan	Thuir	Plaine du Roussillon	487	3049
Tordères	192	Perpignan	Thuir	Plaine du Roussillon	75	
Montauriol	244	Céret	Céret	Vallespir et Alberes	165	1079
Saint Colombe	168	Perpignan	Thuir	Plaine du Roussillon	83	468
Vivès	228	Céret	Céret	Vallespir et Alberes	75	1066
Haute Aspre						
Castelnou	300	Perpignan	Thuir	Plaine du Roussillon	277	1857
La Bastide	800	Céret	Arles sur Tech	Vallespir et Alberes	64	1562
Boule d'Amont	400	Prades	Vinca	Conflent	71	2252
Caixas	400	Perpignan	Thuir	Plaine du Roussillon	84	2395
Calmeilles	480	Céret	Céret	Vallespir et Alberes	41	1291
Casefabre	535	Prades	Vinca	Conflent	30	673
Oms	528	Céret	Céret	Vallespir et Alberes	228	1781
Prunet et Belpuig	620	Prades	Vinca	Conflent	52	2086
Saint Marsal	720	Céret	Arles sur Tech	Vallespir et Alberes	77	1515
Taillet	600	Céret	Céret	Vallespir et Alberes	74	959
Taulis	530	Céret	Arles sur Tech	Vallespir et Alberes	84	605
Total					3,738	25,455

Table 1: Profile of the Communes of the Aspre.



- 1 LA BASTIDE
- 2 BOULE D'AMONT
- 3 CAIXAS
- 4 CALNEILLES
- 5 CANELAS
- 6 CASEFAIRE
- 7 CASTELNOU
- 8 LLAURO
- 9 MONTAURIOL
- 10 CINS
- 11 PRUNET et BELPUIG
- 12 SAINT MAISAL
- 13 TAILLET
- 14 TAILLS
- 15 TORDERES
- 16 VIVES
- 17 PASSA
- 18 FOURQUES
- 19 TERRAIS
- 20 SAINT COLOMBE

Map 1: The Geographical Position of the Aspre.

3.3 Journey Through the Aspre.

The combination of mountain, foothills, plain, and sea, so characteristic of Mediterranean geography creates a vertical differentiation of both its ecology and people. Within this context the Aspre occupies the position of 'amphitheatre of Roussillon', whose stage is the plain of Roussillon and the backdrop is the blue of the Mediterranean sea. However, when one turns their back to the sea it is transformed into the dark green roots of the Canigou. The Aspre, which raises from an altitude of 100m on the edge of the plain to 1,300m on its eastern borders (see map 6), effectively links the high mountains of the pyrenean massif du Canigou (2,784m) with the Mediterranean plain of Roussillon, and in so doing its personality and temperament reflect an intimately Mediterranean and Pyrenean world, which must always be born in mind when contemplating its character. In effect it marks a zone of transition, for whose efforts Broc (1955) dismissed it as, "a dry and thankless place having neither the majesty of the mountains or the opulence of the plain". But one must not forget that until recent times it was the hills of the Mediterranean (200 - 400m), that offered the best possibilities for life; the plain being overrun by invaders, swamps and mosquitos, and the tyranny of the high mountains and its people had a rhythm all of their own.

Trade and agriculture always linked the upper and lower reaches of the transect, as people went back and forth following the migration of their livestock, and the highland logs floated down to the plain. The mountain torrents were, and still are, another essential artery linking the mountains to the plain. In fact those mountain torrents played a large role in the formation of the plain of Roussillon, or as Verdageur (1139, cited in Brutalis, (1975 [1891])) put it; "les pierres de la plaine sont les ossement de la montagne". For generations floods descending from the snow capped mountains of the Pyrenees deposited their load on the plain in their race to the sea. The metamorphic gneiss and granite of the Canigou and high reaches of the pyrenees were not very generous in their fluvial gifts, except for detached large rocks and boulders. It was from the sedimentary rocks of places like the Aspre, that the torrents picked up their rich load of earth, sand and stones, which bound the boulders together and overlaid them with a fine alluvial coating.

Today as we follow the course of those torrents back up stream to their roots in the mountains, we remark on coming in off the coast that the blue of the Mediterranean is replaced by an ocean of green vineyards, so characteristic of the plain of Roussillon and the rocky coast of Cru Banylus, overlooking the old port towns of Collioure and Port Vendres. The symmetry of the vine mosaic is disrupted here and there by brown patches of 'friche'², some orchards and market gardening which thrives on the alluvial well irrigated soils of the plain. However, much of today's horticulture is conducted under tunnel shaped plastic green houses. It is here, on the plain of Roussillon that the harnessed mountain torrents most productively serve society. As we continue inland towards the 'arrière pays' (back country) of the Aspre the orchards and lettuces fade away and all that remains is the monoculture of vines, and there is not an irrigation canal in sight. At about 23 km inland from the coast (17 km from Perpignan), south of the Têt, we enter the world of the Basse Aspre, also known as the 'Aspre Viticole'.

The Tertiary and Quaternary pliocene deposits of the Basse Aspre are the first sign that the mountain torrents and ice sheets were slowing down and easing their load of gneiss, schist, granite, quartz, and limestone conglomerates. To the naked eye the upper horizons of these oxidised red ferric or reduced brown soils, technically classified as 'Brown Fersialitique', are of a stony sandy texture, the lower horizon being of a stony clay composition (cf. Simonneau 1985, Auvray 1987). This is ideal wine growing country³, but its soil is also very fragile and highly erodible, something the surrounding ravines and the MEDALUS (1993) field research testify to. The practice of using herbicides rather than or in combination with partial ploughing has added to the erodibility of these soils, by reducing water infiltration the baked topsoil is easily carried away (cf. Litzler 1988). The organic matter content of these tired soils is low

²The French term 'friche' is frequently used throughout the thesis, it refers to abandoned agricultural land.

³Vines grow on all soil types, but slightly acidic schist soils mixed with an element of limestone produce low yielding, high quality vines, of a lighter and finer texture than those grown on the alluvial soils of the plain.

due to a combination of over a century of vine monoculture, and the hot and humid Mediterranean climate at these lower altitudes, characterized by a long dry season, resulting in the rapid mineralization of organic matter. However, that sun is also a vital ingredient in the maturation of the vines. Another climatic boost to the industry is the influence of the winter, north to north westerly dry cold and at times violent 'tramontane' wind⁴, whose sanitary influence and high evapotranspiration means that vines sufficiently inland from the coast, may not need to apply pesticides against such diseases as mildew. The intermediary seasons are marked by the easterly 'Marinada' and 'Vent de Rosas' winds which bring a warm Mediterranean influence up the valley of the Têt. On the whole the viticole Basse Aspre situated to the north east of the Aspre massif benefits from drier, warmer and more windy conditions than the more humid and sheltered south west of the massif.

There is no mistaking that we are in wine country, as we pass through the narrow streets of the close knit villages of Fourques, Terrats, Montauriol, Passa, Vivès. Due to their proximity to the plain many of these villages were fortified during the turbulent middle ages; as a result of which their 'town planning' to this day reflects the notion of comfort and safety in closeness. Today those streets are frequently jammed with tractors, whose dimensions on first sighting are extremely peculiar to unaccustomed Northern eyes. The first thing that strikes one is their size, they appear like dinky toy imitations of their counterparts in the North of Europe, and in this viticole region they have the added peculiarity of being raised up on 'stilts', to ease passage over the rows of vines, and attached to the back one frequently find 'spraying wings'. The traffic jams are watched over by the old men, of short stocky build with large toil worn hands, sitting around the village square. They watch the strange cars and their occupants under their berets, but they do not salute. One gets a distinct whiff of insularity behind the half closed shutters in these viticole villages.

As one journeys further into the hills, it all changes again, as does the air. On the road

⁴After experiencing three consecutive days of its raw, biting influence, newcomers to the Aspre are credibly said to be driven to the edge of madness.

to Llauro, around the Tordères junction, one is immersed in the sweet smells of thyme, rosemary, lavender, gorse, sage, heather and poppies magnificent in their April burst of colour. One sympathise with Napoleon's claim that blindfolded he could recognise his native Corsica by its scent. I think he would have found that this part of the Aspre exudes much the same sweet smell of garrigue; it is claimed that only goats and Botanists can distinguish the variety of the garrigue. After Fourques the vineyards fade into the background. The passage from the stony red pliocene foothills of the Basse Aspre to the schist of the Haute Aspre (arbitrary taken as those communes situated above 300m⁵), is marked by intense gulling and steep ravines in such communes as Tordères, Vivès, Llauro (cf. Servat & Callot 1966). Mengel (1932) aptly likened these tears in the landscape, resulting from retreating ice sheets coming off the Canigou, to 'open wounds', continually deepening and within whose 'cannons' the torrential rivers of the Réart and Canterrane have transported over the years the deforested soil of the Haute Aspre onto the alluvial plain of Roussillon.

After Tordères one senses they are entering another world as one leave the order and symmetry of the Basse Aspre behind them, and ones vision from there on is distorted by the embrace of the interlocking hills, vertical steep slopes and plunging valleys of the Haute Aspre. The whole landscape is blanketed over in a carpet of dark green. The oak, (green oak, cork oak, pubescent oak, kerme oak), seems to claim the whole of this territory, with the leathery evergreen oak being the undisputed king. In fact the indigenous population of the Aspre are said to have such a strong sentimental attachment to that tree, that they tolerate little else. The foresters cite that obsession as one of the main reasons why the conifer (Pine Pignon, Pine d'Alep, Pine Maritime) and eucalyptus forest of the Réart planted on 107 ha of Tordères land in the early 1970s by the R.T.M (Restoration des Terrains en Montagne), was eventually burnt down, a deliberate act according to the foresters. However, they also admit that the growth of the Australian Eucalyptus (Gunnii), was stunted by the violence of the tramontane, and

⁵Note in Table 1, Llauro at 330m, is included among the communes of the Basse Aspre, because in the 1980s it was amalgamated with the communes of Passa and Tordères, and thus for some time individual demographic and agrarian statistics were not recorder for Llauro.

that the pine, especially the pine maritime, struggled with the poor soil conditions of the Aspre⁶. For the green oak to have won the hearts of the people of the Aspre you can be sure it was a functional, multi purpose tree that provided fuelwood, (some of which was sold in the towns of the plain, but especially to the famous Catalan forges which treated the iron ore of the Canigou), tannin was extracted from its bark, and its acorns and undergrowth provided grazing for sheep and goats. Similarly the cork oak, which thrives under 450m on the acid schist of the Aspre, was planted in the late nineteenth century on the phylloxered vine terraces of places like Llauro, Oms, Calmeilles. In the early twentieth century the cork oak was the source of a thriving cork industry in those little villages. Today the undergrowth of the Oak is invaded by a tangle of Maquis and Garrigue vegetation, posing a major fire risk.

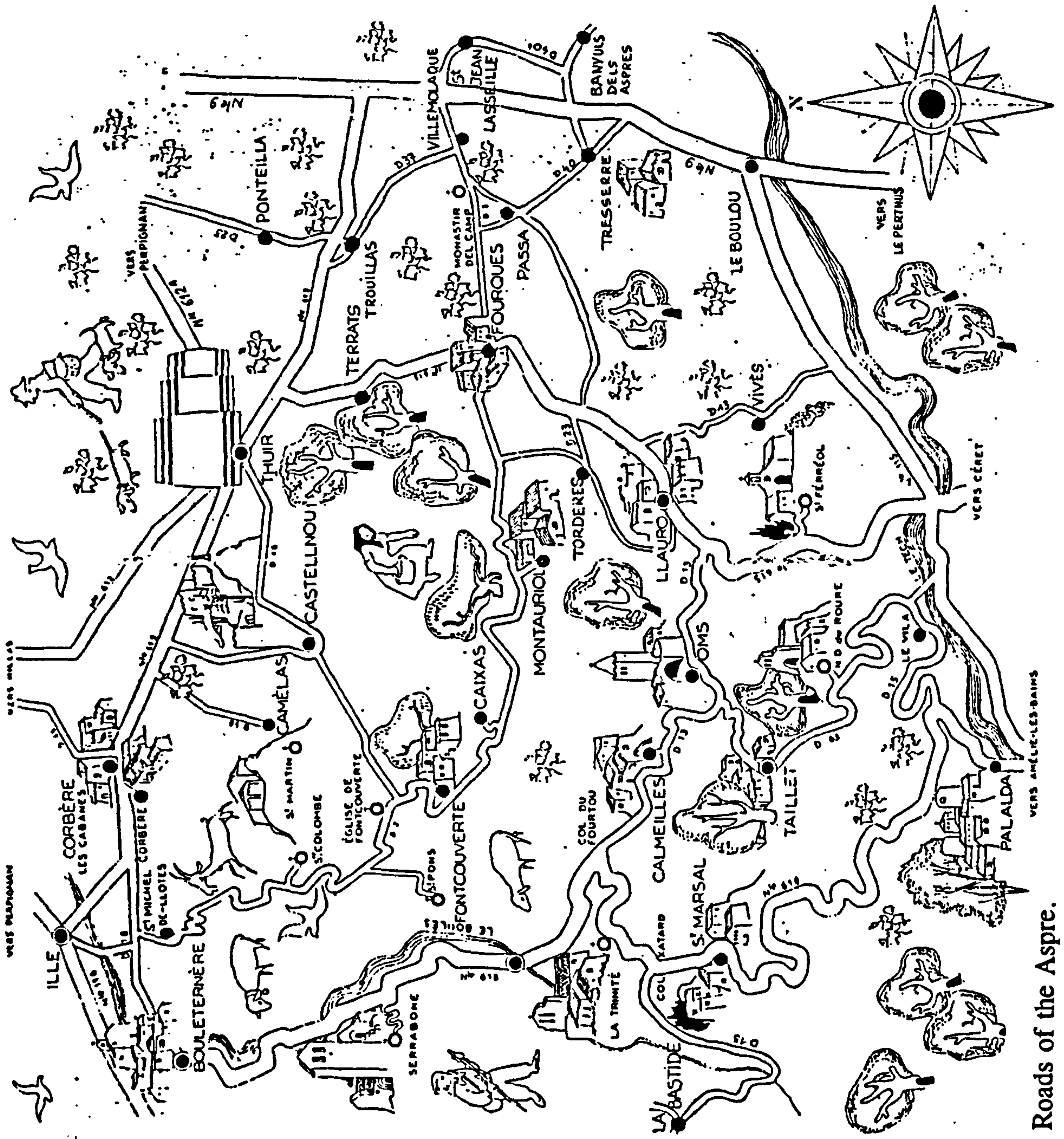
The closed and seemingly impenetrable cover of the Haute Aspre is broken here and there by the odd vineyard in Llauro and Oms, (before the vineyards spotted throughout the Haute Aspre formed natural fire breaks), the pink cherry blossoms in Llauro and along the road to Céret which claims to produce the earliest cherry crop in France, and curious small patches of light green, well tended grass or maize. I later discover that the latter islands of cultivation are planted by the strong hunting societies of the Aspre, in order to attract the wild boar (which strictly speaking are no longer wild, the majority being farm raised). The other visually striking breaks in this landscape are the vertical lines, some around 3m across others much smaller, running up and down or along the hill crests. The wide columns are fire breaks, many of which are planted with rejuvenating subterranean clover, as part of an EEC funded experiment to fight off the maquis and feed some heavily subsidised animals (cf. Masson 1990; 1988). The thinner lines are those created by the hunters in the process of bringing their kill back

⁶The planting of conifer and eucalyptus species in the Mediterranean has been questioned on ecological grounds by many researchers, including Naveh 1971 and Tomaselli 1977. The pine needles decompose slowly and release cholines, which have been found to inhibit germination, produce a very acid soil and prevent the development of a herbaceous layer (Yardeni et al. 1952). Similarly, the exotic Australian Eucalyptus grows rapidly initially, but after planting two to three times in the same place, its humus also displays auto-toxic characteristics (Yardeni et al. 1952). Both species have poor regenerative capacity and burn easily.

to base. Whatever about the visual impact of these 'bald columns', the hunters claim they are environmentally friendly and also serve as fire breaks!

It is said that the olive tree, which rarely growing above 400m, marks the limit of the Mediterranean zone. From Llauro-Oms onward we have passed that limit, but in the Aspre that transition is not demarcated by the olive, which has not made an appearance in these hills since the big frost of 1956 wiped out the crop. The narrow winding road into the hills of the Aspre, which form a major obstacle to tourist coaches, comes to a cross roads at the 'Col de Fourtou'. One branch goes on to Prunet et Belpuig (with its ruined castle dating from the Comte de Majorque period), Saint Marsal, La Bastide, Taulis, and down towards the ancient spa town of Amélie les Bains situated on the banks of the Tech (see Map 2). One is surprised to find that town, situated in what could only be described as a Medieval landscape, has a strikingly young face. This anomaly is explained by the fact that the 1940 flood in the Tech raised the old town to the ground, and thus its modern day face lift. We are now in the Haute Vallespir, very near the Spanish border and the source of the Tech which rises at 1,300m in these hills and flowing 80 km to the sea.

A few kilometres down the road is Céret, the administrative capital of the Vallespir, which was once a mecca for artists such as Picasso, Matisse, Broque, and claims to be the home of cubism. Today it is rewarded for its contribution to history by a shiny new modern art museum, in stark contrast to the ruins which litter the surrounding hills, more reminiscent of another Judea. But the mix of the old and the new is another constant theme in this part of the world, the past and the future are always confronting each other, but not in an warlike fashion, rather they tend to ignore each other. Back at the 'Col de Fourtou' the other fork in the road winds through Boule d'Amont, Serrabone (whose tenth century Augustine Priory set high up on a hill dominates the whole valley, just as the Augustines did in the past), Casefabre, and on to Bouleternère, after which we are back on the horizontal ground of the Ribèral and the orchards of Conflent. The torrential river the Boules, which drains into the Têt, marks the western borders of the Aspre.



Map 2: The Winding Roads of the Aspre.

(Source: *The Languedoc-Roussillon Tourist Board*)

In contrast to the viticole villages of the Basse Aspre, the Haute Aspre is a country of hamlets and isolated mas (farms). The population in these villages is today noticeably old⁷, but there are a few young faces around too, especially at weekends, and from a random survey of the 'posh' cars on these mountain roads it is apparent that the 'tourists' having left their coaches on the plain are also trickling through. We noted an air of insularity about the viticole villages, my initial contact with the indigenous population of the Haute Aspre smacked of suspiciousness. I got talking to an old woman in Saint Marsal and after the first five minutes of our conversation I realised, she was answering all my questions and comments by asking me back the same question - "Do you come from this village"? - "And where do you come from"? Later on I discovered they were very anxious to talk about the past. As Braudel (1975) observed, the steeper places tend to 'resist the march of history', as a result traditions and superstitions die hard in places like the Haute Aspre. The centre piece of all the stone villages of the Aspre are their Roman churches, many dating from the tenth century, the interiors of which are elaborately decorated with baroque art. However all the churches and holy shrines are not contained in the villages, many an ancient pilgrim site is hidden in those hills. There is something very emotional about their austerity and silence. I later discovered it is that appeal to ritual and the emotions which guarantees that even today they can draw a crowd to celebrate their Saint's Day.

In the upper reaches of the Haute Aspre the air of the Pyrenees dominates that of the Mediterranean, something one is always reminded of when they glance up at the year round snow capped Canigou. The vegetation differs accordingly, the garrigue which prefers the more alkaline and frequently burnt soils of lower altitudes gives way to maquis type vegetation and eventually at high altitudes to what the French refer to as 'lande', a non productive heath type vegetation found over 800m, resulting from the cutting down or burning of the forest in the past. The limit of the evergreen oak (*Quercus ilex*) marks the end of sub-mediterranean conditions and the start of temperate

⁷To crown it all Saint Marsal wanted to construct a large old peoples home on its commune, but was refused because of its distance from major urban medical centres, exasperated by poor access roads and severe winter weather which occasionally cut the village off from the outside world.

European (meso-mediterranean), announced by the presence of the pubescent oak (*Quercus pubescens*), which is also found along water courses and irrigation canals at lower altitudes. But like everything else in the Aspre, its vegetation also defies generalizations, and the green oak can be found at heights of 700m along its drier northern slopes (Amigo 1981). Accompanying the pubescent oak above 400m on the southern slopes of the Aspre, is the Chestnut tree (*Castanea sativa*), whose presence marks the existence of a shaded and humid microclimate, and generally an acidic soil, which it has no difficulty finding among the schist of the Haute Aspre. The chestnut was introduced to the Aspre on a large scale in 1910, its nutritious nuts were much sought after by man and beast, but its principal commercial purpose was in the fabrication of wine casks and stakes (from its cutaway branches), for the viticole Basse Aspre and plain of Roussillon. As with the green oak, tannin was extracted from its bark. Above 800m the hazelnut tree (*Corylus avellana*), was introduced for economic reasons at the turn of the twentieth century. On the exposed southern slopes of the Aspre above 1,000m, beech (*Fagus silvatica*) grows well on podzolic soil. More recently Cedar was introduced over 750m as part of the RTM (Restoration des Terrains en Montagne) reforestation programme. The anthropogenic introduction of new species to the Aspre, such as the cork oak, chestnut, hazelnut, cedar and later conifers and eucalyptus, have inevitably changes the composition of the vegetation. At the same time that the imprint of man is unmistakable, so too the term 'natural vegetation' has almost no meaning. The vegetation of the Aspre today is the product of the obsolescence of preceding rural societies, not forgetting the gastronomical preference of their animals.

The undergrowth of the above tree cover, or the dominant vegetation where tree cover is removed, is composed of Maquis type vegetation, whose presence in the Aspre is the result of human action (Amigo 1981). Typically maquis is referred to as a dense strand of xerophilous non-deciduous bushes and shrubs, commonly found on acidic mediterranean soils, where as garrigue is applied to a low growing, open vegetation interspersed with exposed bare rocks, and favours alkaline conditions. The maquis is well adapted to the drought and frost conditions of the Aspre. Its dense cover restricts

evapotranspiration and dissipates the erosive kinetic energy generated by rainfall. In the lower strata of the Aspre maquis are found tree heaths (*Erica arboréa*), broom heaths (*Erica scoparias*), kermes oaks (*Quercus coccifera*), *Genista* species - *Genista scorpius*, Genet à balai (*Sarothamnus scoparius*), *Cistus* sp. - most commonly Ciste de Montpellier (*Cistus monspeliensis*), Heather scrub (*Calluna vulgaris*) etc⁸.

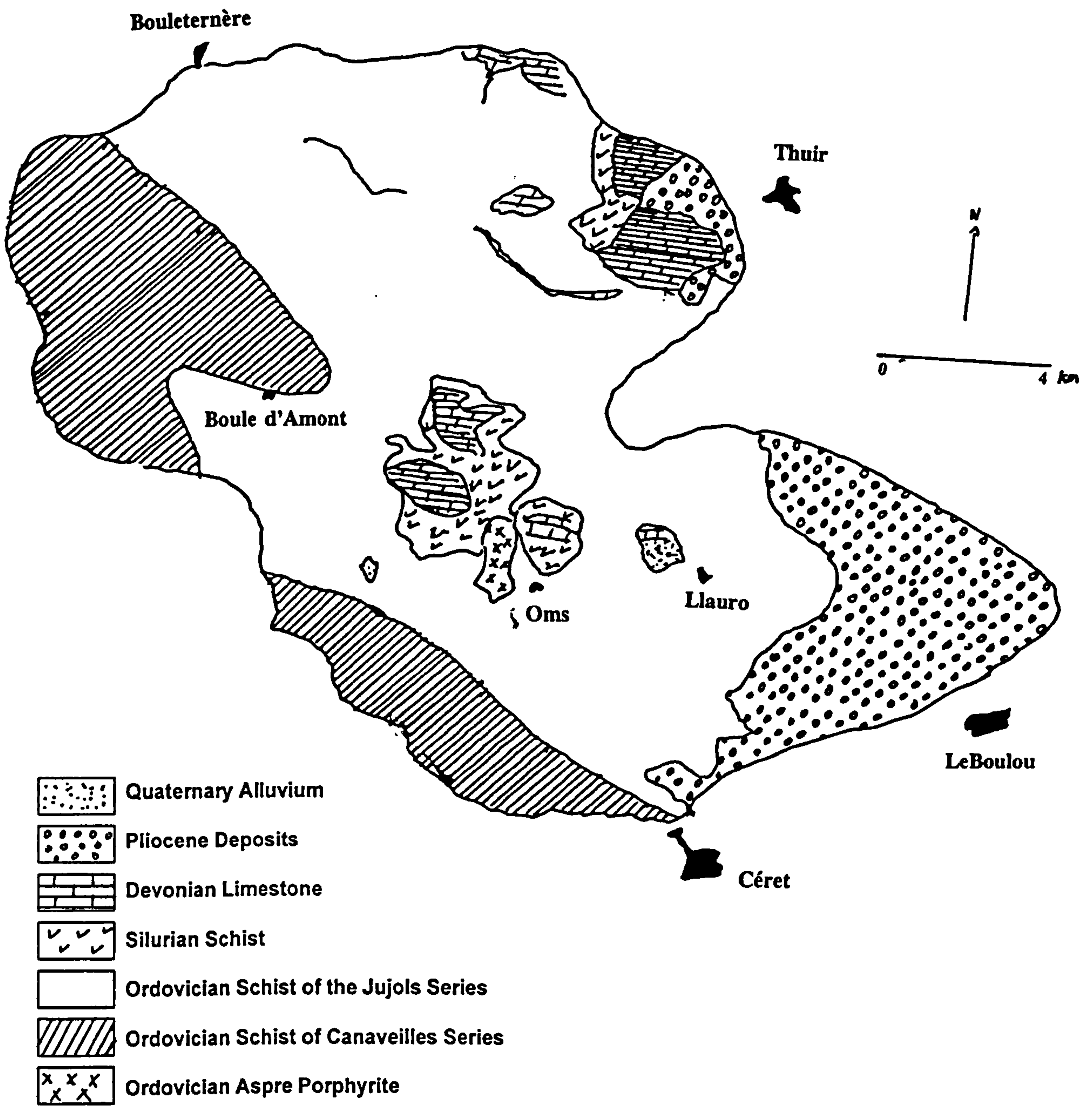
The removal of the human hand from the environment of the Haute Aspre in the twentieth century has had a major impact on its vegetation, as has the crumbling terraces on its soil and geomorphology. The abandonment of agriculture was followed by the invasion of the shrub vegetation and the emergence of the above uncontrolled undergrowth of maquis or garrigue, the reversion of the ravines to an impenetrable forest, and the invasion of the 'lande' and prairies by heath vegetation and the green oak. The general abandonment and closing in of the landscape is accompanying by a greatly increased fire risk, to which the big fires of 1949, 1966, and the most devastating of all that of 1976 which ravaged 7,000 ha of the Aspre from north to south, testify to (cf. Amigo 1979). The fire always passes in the same place, with the northern section of the massif being the most vulnerable, and under the same climatic conditions, invariably fanned by the tramontane. George (1933) stressed the part played by fire in creating maquis and garrigue type vegetation, whose highly combustible aromatic resins and oils, such as *Rosmarinus* sp, *Cistus* sp, *Myrtus* sp. and *Pinus* sp., reinforce the fire risk. More recent studies have shown that the effect of fire on Mediterranean vegetation is not always destructive and has come to be seen more in the light of a natural part of the ecosystem (creative destruction), contributing to the overall variety in the vegetational mosaic, with some plants, notably *Cistus*, *Erica*, *Pinus* & *Quercus* species requiring fire to encourage germination. However the duration and frequency of firing, time of year and heat generated are important factors when discussing the beneficial and adverse effects of fire on Mediterranean vegetation (cf.

⁸The vegetation of the Mediterranean basin has been studied by many researchers including Di Castri (1973), Le Houérou (1971), Tomaselli (1977), Naveh (1971) and Wright (1977). More specific studies on the vegetation of the Aspre and Pyrénées Orientales is provided by Gausson (1932, 1946), Fournier 1961, Flahault (1893;1901), Amigo (1981), and Auvray (1987).

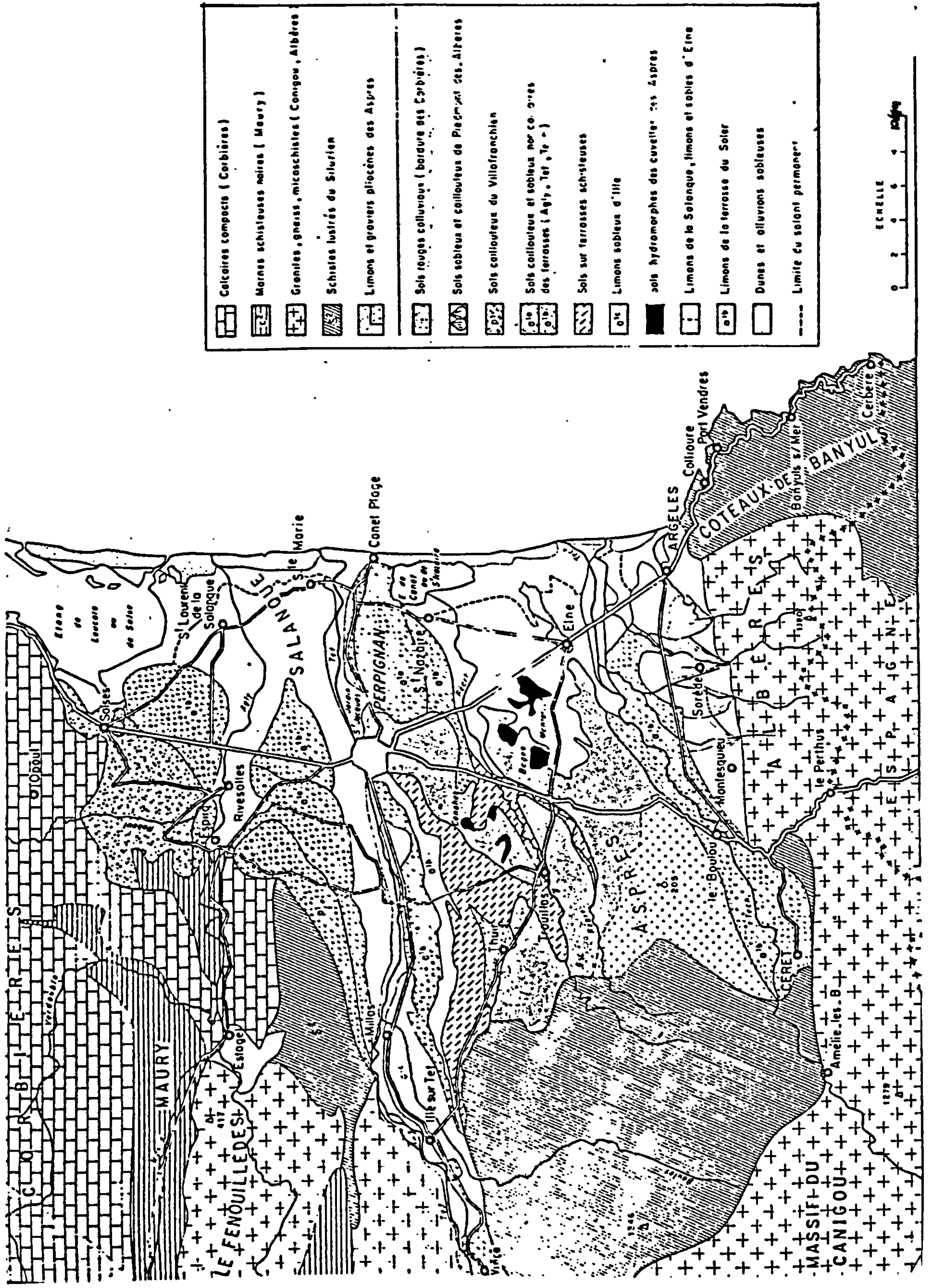
Wright 1977; Hopkins 1974; McGlade 1991; Naveh 1990). Any farmer from the Aspre can point out the difference in vegetation on a slope that has been repeatedly burnt and that which has not. Similarly the remaining 22 shepherds point to the difficulty of finding grazing for their animals, even though there is far more space at their disposal than before.

A local writer, Adrienne Cazeilles (1979), summed up the impact of fire on the Aspre Massif as follows: *"Devant cette horreur absolue, quelle dérisoire consolation d'étendre dire que la nature garde toujours ses droits, et que le printemps ramène la verdure avec la vie. Bier sûr, la vie reparaître, mais dans ce qu'elle a de plus rude, de plus agressif, de mieux armé. Le doux, le tendre, le vulnérable est parti à jamais dans la fumée de l'embrassement"*. After the fire of 1976, a surveillance system SIP (Secteur d'Intervention Prioritaire), was put in place, hence the fire breaks, whose purpose is really that of access roads, the installation of water points, and the availability of the 'Canadair' (water spraying aeroplanes).

To summarise our journey through the Aspre in geo-pedological terms, we note that the hacked topography and steep vertical slopes (up to 35% in the valley of the Boules) of the Haute Aspre is testimony to violent tectonic movements in the past. It was the collision of Iberian and West European continental blocks that is responsible for the formation of the pyrenean chain, which contains the Aspre massif within its axis. The metamorphic rocks of the pyrenees are in the Aspre covered over by two superimposed sedimentary marine series, formed under the water of a deep sea, emerging to the surface during the Cambrian, Ordovician and Silurian geological periods. It is the resultant series of schist de Canaveilles (microschist & graphite found in Taillet, La Bastide area), schist de Jujols (schist injected with quartz, covering a large area extending from Bouleternère to Céret), and small patches of Silurian schist (schist interspersed with limestone found in Oms, Calmeilles, Castelnou area), which forms the essentials of the Aspre Massif (see Maps 3 & 4). Superimposed on the schist are isolated pockets of karstic Devonian limestone in the 'Causse de Thuir', Llauro, Calmeilles, Caixas, Castelnou area.



Map 3: A Simplified Geology Map of the Aspre, (Source: Auvrey 1987).

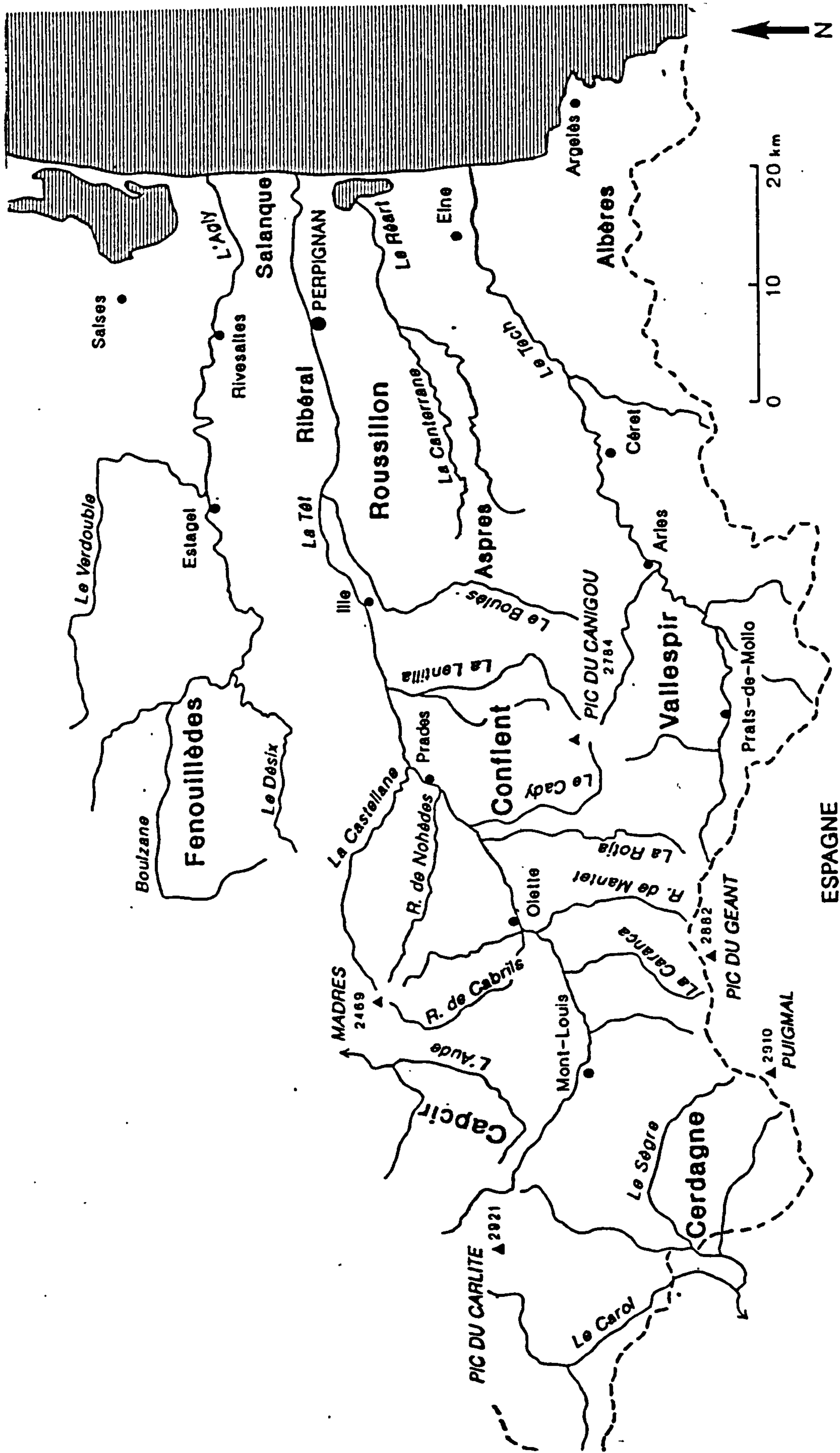


Map 4: The Pedo-Geology of Roussillon, (Source: Servat & Callot, 1966).

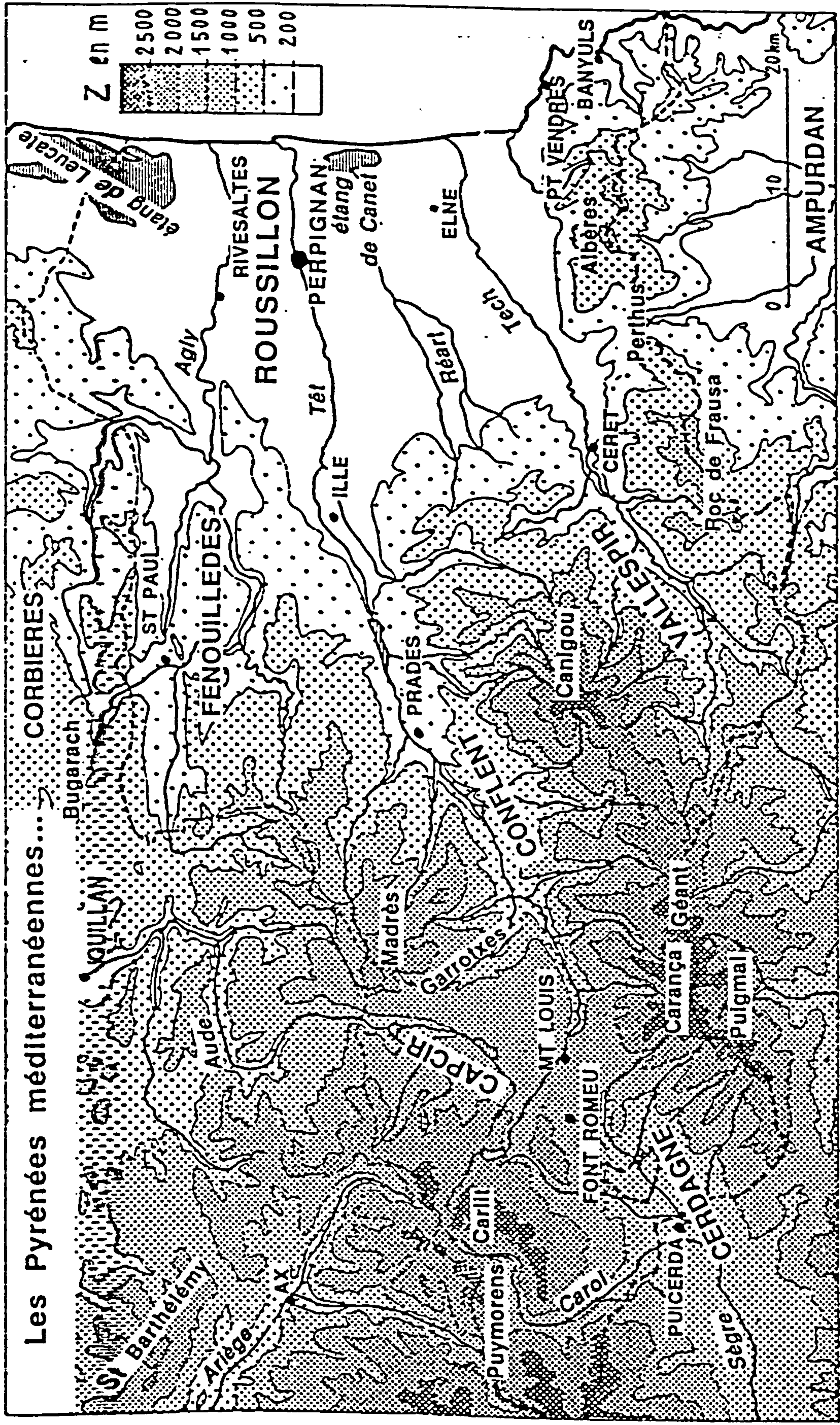
To the North of the massif in the viticole villages of the Basse Aspre, marking the point of contact with the plain of Roussillon, the schist is overlaid by highly erodible late Tertiary and Quaternary Pliocene deposits. On the plain of Roussillon these deposits are overlaid with an alluvium coating.

Despite the hard appearance of the schist bedrock it is susceptible to weathering and hydraulic erosion, due to its sheet configuration which falls apart easily, reinforced by the vigorous relief and the extremes of the climate (cf. Cavet 1959; Salvayre 1983; Gausson 1932; Auvray 1987; Simonneau 1985). The schist decomposes into yellow and red clay soils which fill the fissures in its own rock, preventing water percolation and retention. The siliceous mountain soils of the Haute Aspre are often shallow of an AC profile, with the accumulation horizon 'A', being only a few centimetres above the 'C' bedrock. The resultant thin, acidic colluvial soils are strongly linked to the nature of the schist bedrock. Scheepmaker (1980) measured pH's oscillating from 2.9 to 6.5 within the Aspre massif. The stony sandy clay pliocene soils of the Basse Aspre, with average pH of around 6, are well suited to the cultivation of vines, but are also highly erodible (cf. MEDALUS Report 1993). In general all the soils of the Aspre suffer from an organic matter, nitrate, lime and potassium deficiency (Simonneau 1985; MEDALUS 1993). The lack of lime particularly pronounced on the poorly developed schist soils, prevents the nitrification process. The elimination of vegetation by humans or fire, combined with decades of cultivation and violent irregular precipitation has contributed to the progressive deterioration of the soils of the Aspre, especially those on slopes. The reference in Roman texts to a deciduous forest extending from the Canigou to the coast, signals the presence of a more profound soil in the past.

Water is the major source of erosion in the Aspre, in effect the massif constitutes a centre for the dispersion of water. Its two principal drainage basins being the Têt to the north, into which the Boulés and St. Julia drain the western section of the massif, and the river Tech to the south, whose affluent the Ample drains the south western section of the area. In the east the Réart and its tributary the Canterrane drain into lake Saint Nazaire (see Maps 5 & 6).



Map 5: The Hydrology of the Pyrénées Orientales, (Source: Broc et al. 1992).



Map 6: Topographic Relief in the Pyrénées Orientales, (Source: Broc et al. 1992).

The Boulès, Ample, Réart and Canterrane are all seasonal rivers whose beds are dry for most of the year, the exception being a few autumnal (and to a lesser extent Spring) months when they are transformed into foaming torrents. The Aspre suffers from both a deficiency and excess of water. For the greater part of the year its scarcity inhibits life, but when it rains, frequently in the form of violent downpours, very little is retained due to the vertical steep slopes of its topography, the particular schist geomorphology, and the sandy texture of the pliocene soils. In effect the water which is not intercepted by vegetation, simply flows off its back. After a large down pore it is common to see the road side drains of the Basse Aspre run red with soil. It is the irrigation network of the plain of Roussillon that benefits most from the waters of the Aspre, which are frequently mixed with the added bonus of its topsoil and fertility.

Driving the hydraulic erosion of the Aspre is the deceptive warmth and light of its Mediterranean-Pyrenean climate. Sorre (1913) described it as 'sous-pyrénéen', and Gausson (1932) referred to it as 'sub-méditerranéen', in effect both meaning much the same thing. For four months of the summer the Aspre is annexed by the Mediterranean world, characterised by its hot dry summers, resulting from anticyclones from the Azores. In the winter especially at higher altitudes, the pyrenean influence takes over, resulting in relatively cold winters, strong winds and a blanket of snow on the ground for at least a few days of the year in the Haute Aspre (cf. Vigneau 1986).

Precipitation follows the altitudinal and longitudinal gradient passing from 560 mm at Llupia (100m) on the edge of the Basse Aspre where it meets the plain, to over 920 mm at Saint Marsal (719m), and is distributed on average over 78 days of the year. The annual average precipitation for Perpignan (altitude of 42m), calculated over a 113 year period is 594 mm, which is more than the Paris basin receives (Amigo 1981). The average number of frost days is also a function of altitude and distance from the sea, resulting in a variation of 20 to 60 days, essentially occurring any time from December to May (Canet 1983). The Aspre massif is situated on annual isotherms of 14 to 10°C, with the annual minimum and maximum temperature progressing from 10 - 5°C in the south west to 20 - 15°C in the north east (see Figure 1).

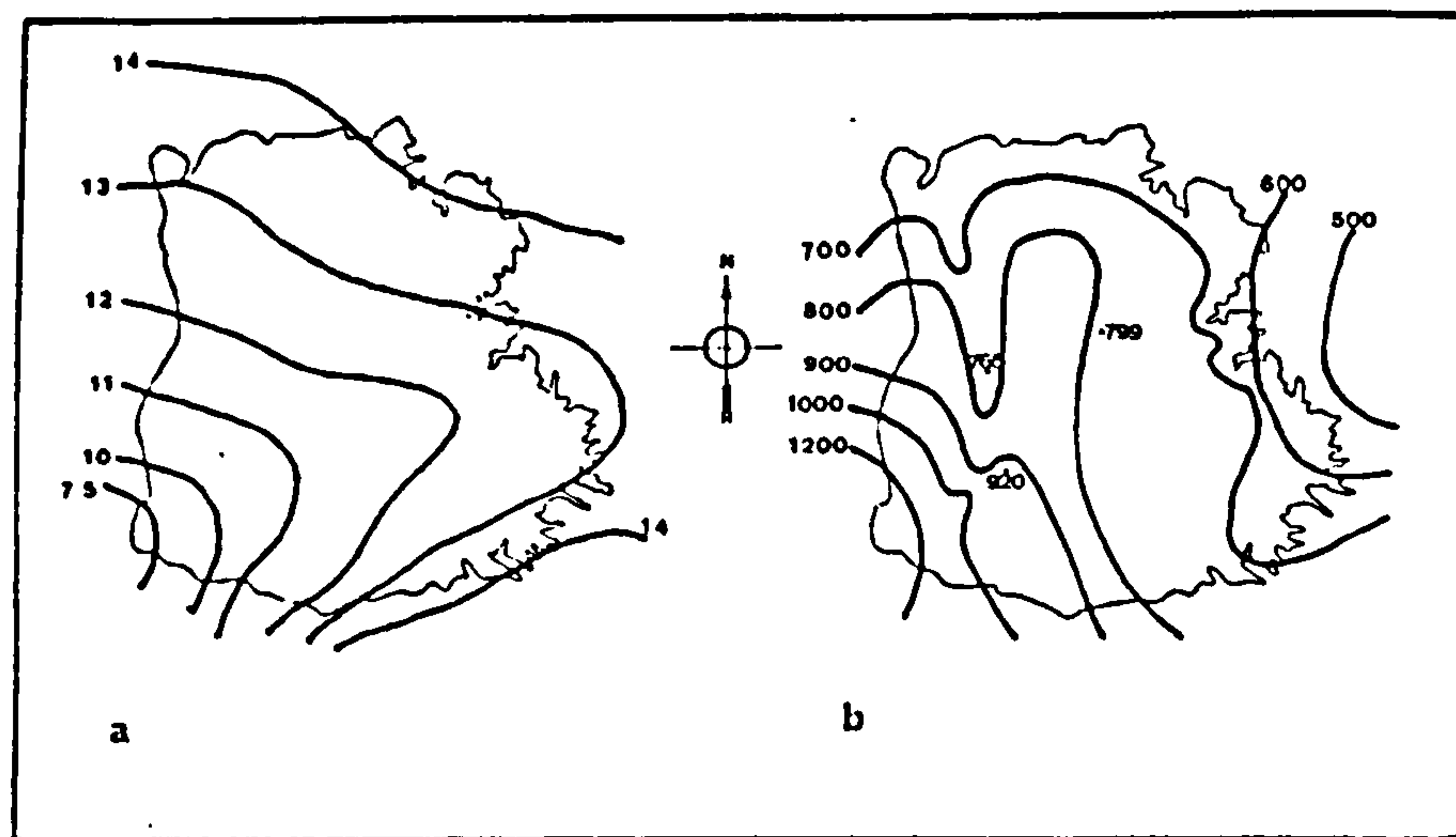


Figure 1: Average Annual, (A) Temperatures and (B) Precipitation in the Aspre.
 (Source: Amigo 1981).

Figures of average temperature and precipitation are very misleading when it comes to the reality of life in the Aspre, because it is the non average that gives it its character. Morand's (1941) remark that; "everything that touches the mediterranean partakes of eruption, torrent and tornado", rings doubly true in the Aspre. A single days rain in the Aspre can be equivalent to that of a month in Paris. Broc (1955) speculated that one violent flood in the Aspre could do more harm than a century of 'ordinary' erosion. History tends to bear this out, the 1845 'Saint Bartomeu' flood ravaged the countryside leaving ravines of several meters in its wake. On the 26th October 1914, 440 mm of rainfall was recorded at the Perpignan meteorological station in twenty four hours. One of the most memorable catastrophic floods in the Aspre occurred in October 1940, when 500 mm of rainwater fell within a 24 hours period. Speeds of 3,500 m³/s of rainwater flowed in the Têt (800 m³/s in the Boulés), and the Tech reached a record speed of 6,450 m³/s at 'El Cantaire'. A thirty foot wall of water swept down the valley of the Tech, sweeping all before it, including the town of Amélie les Bains, the roads, churches and soil of the Aspre. In all the deluge which was put down to snow melt over 1,500m, resulted in over forty deaths and swept away 2000 ha of land (DDA 1980). This time the soil was carried too far to be brought back. Similarly, in 1965, 748 mm of rainwater was recorded for the month of October alone, with a peak of 165 mm within twenty four hours on the 10 th. (Met. Station Records). In contrast to these

excesses the importance of the Catalan Saint Gauderique, the patron of water, indicates that drought and the lack of water is also a major problem here. In times of want Saint Gauderique's relic is transported in procession from its home in the church of Saint Martin du Canigou to Saint-Maria de la Mer, where it is dipped in the Mediterranean sea, in order to evoke the Gods to send rain. An examination of the records at the Perpignan meteorological station (the nearest station to the Aspre) for the last fifty years, show an annual precipitation variation from 310 mm in 1973 to 1,244 in 1959, with a peak precipitation of 190 mm in 24 hours on the 2nd of September 1959 (see Figures 2 & 3). The annual precipitation for the sécheresse year of 1973 was 310 mm, in stark contrast to the 500 mm which fell within 24 hours in October 1940. Other memorable dry periods include 1894, with an annual precipitation of only 300 mm, again between 1926 - 1929, 'un soleil de feu' raged (Queralt 1989). The meteorological records of the Aspre and Pyrénées Orientales are littered with the extremes of droughts, deluges and out of season occurrences. Frost may appear any time from January to May. In February 1954, the palm trees of Place Arago in the centre of Perpignan were under snow (Phalippou 1979). It was the clear skies of a February frost that destroyed the olives in 1870, a March frost repeated the performance in 1907 and again in 1956, after which they were not replanted.

The extreme oscillations which characterise the meteorology of Roussillon is not just a recent phenomenon, Figure 4 contains a list of some of the recorder floods from 1X to XX century. Archival records indicate that in 584 the rose bushes and fruit trees that normally bear fruit in July, were in full blossom in the month of January (Phalippou 1979). In the year 800, Roussillon experienced an extraordinary frost which lasted from the 2 - 22 July. The May and July frost of 892, were followed by serious droughts which burnt up the vines and cereals in the field. An abrupt frost in August 1219 again damaged the vines. In 1603, livestock, trees and crops were under snow in mid April. Traversing the centuries to 1750 when the poet Destouches (cited in Phalippou 1979), pleaded in verse with the Gods to restore some 'normality':
"Mesdames les saisons, soyez plus pacifiques. Le grand Dieu Jupiter instruit de vos débats, Vient de me commander de descendre ici bas pour redresser vos écarts lunatiques..."

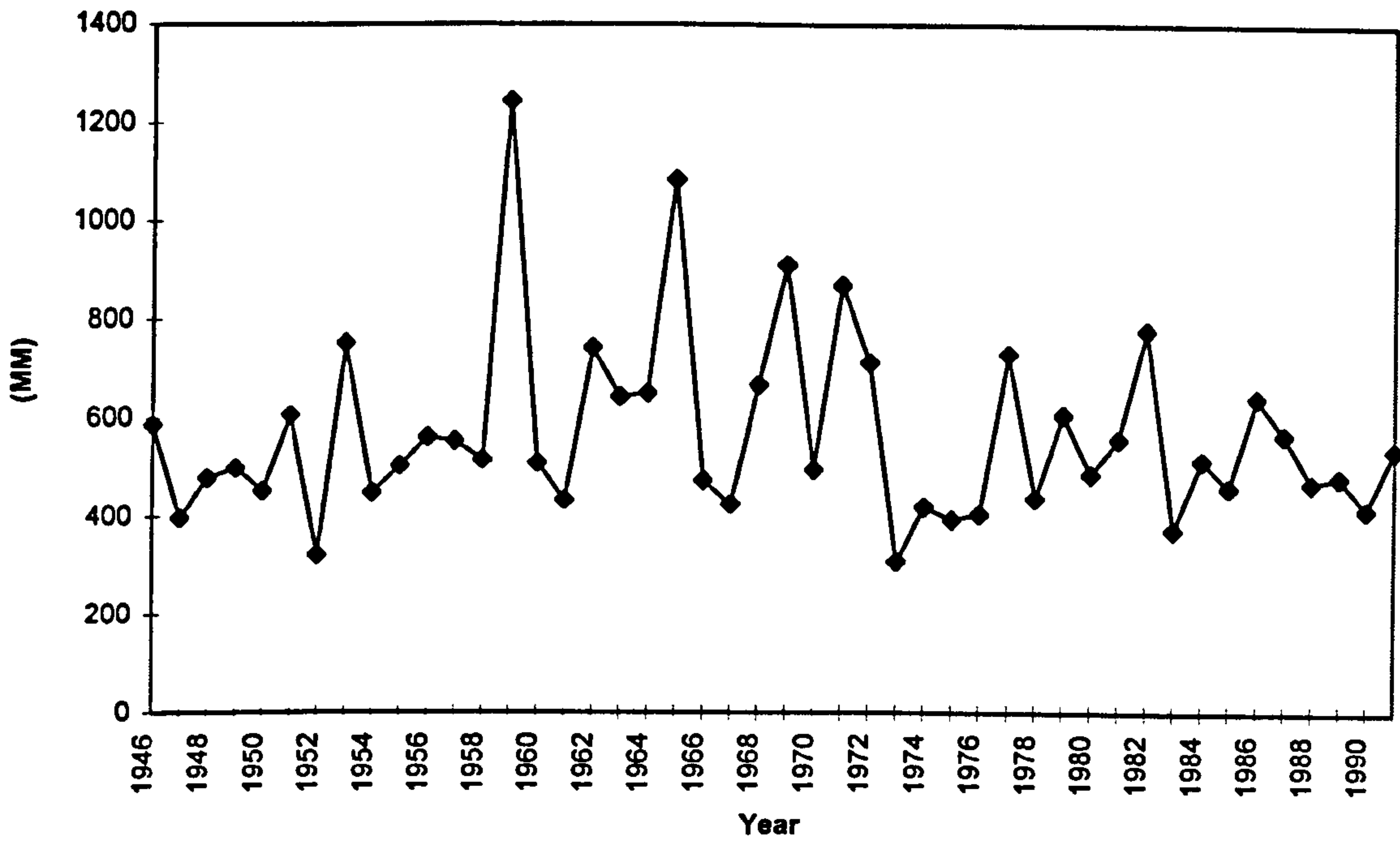


Figure 2: Variation in Annual Precipitation Recorded at the Perpignan Meteorological Station, 1946-1991. (Data Source: Met. Station Records).

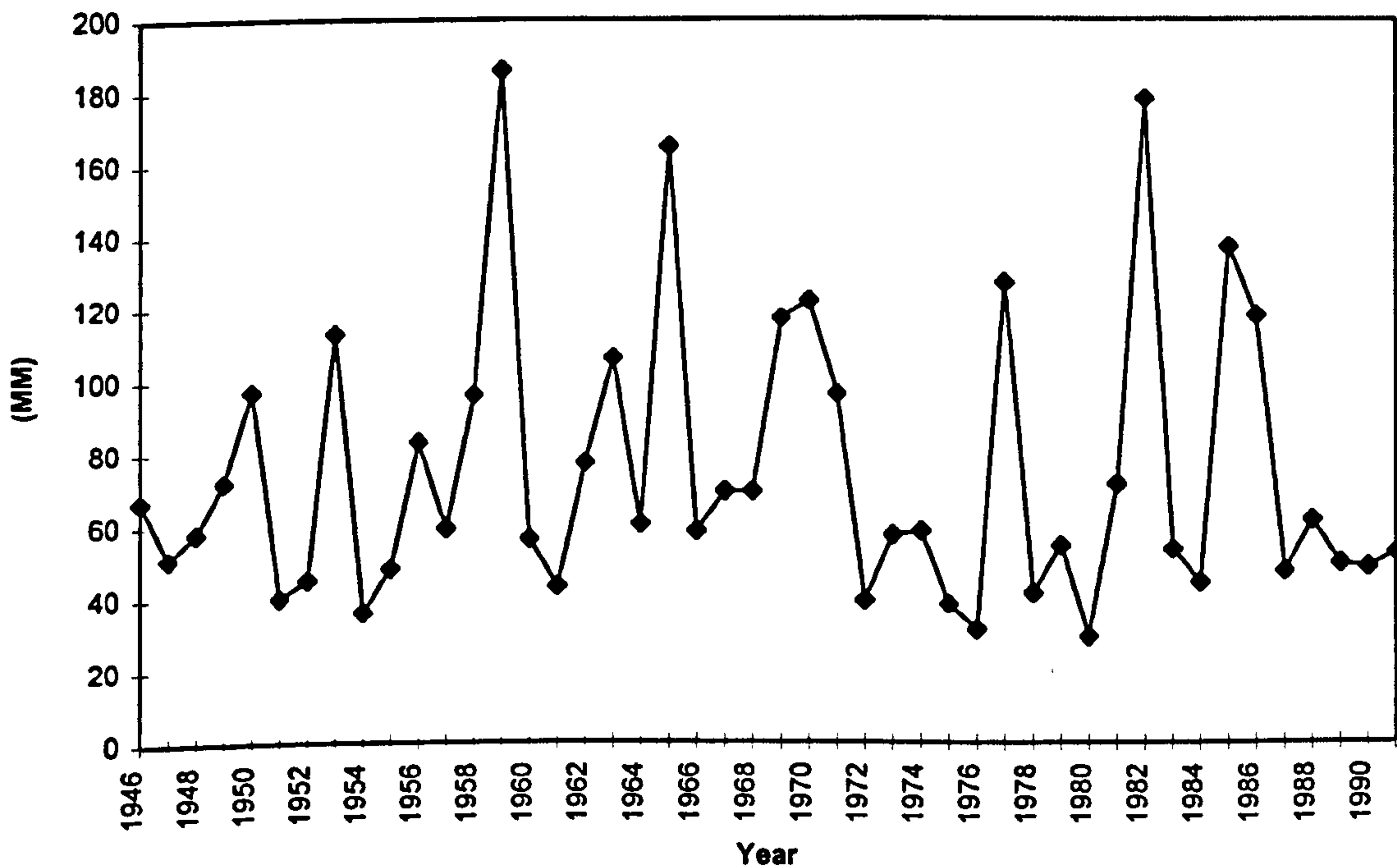


Figure 3: Maximum Precipitation in 24 Hours Recorded at Perpignan Meteorological Station, 1946-1991. (Data Source: Met. Station Records).

Date	Observation
1-13 9 878	: Destruction du monastère de St-André d'Exalada en Conflent.
1264	: Pont de Perpignan emporté.
8 10 1421	: Trois arches du pont de Perpignan emportées. Ruin du Canal Royla de Thuir.
8-19 11 1716	: Ponts de Perpignan endommagés. 50 maisons emportées à Urbanya en Conflent.
14-17 11 1732	: Digue Orry endommagées à Perpignan. Trois arches du pont de Rivesaltes emportées.
10-12 11 1737	: Deux arches du Pont de pierre de Perpignan emportées.
25-28 1 1740	: Une arche du Pont de pierre de Perpignan emportées.
10 5 1754	:
16-17 10 1763	: Dégâts considérables en Conflent et Vallespir. 11 victimes à Prats de Mollo.
19-20 6 1765	:
4-5 10 1766	:
28-30 9 1772	: Dégâts importants en conflent. Pont de Mont-Loui, martinet d'Olette emportés.
7-12 12 1772	: Probablement la plus forte crue du XV111 siècle à Perpignan.
14-15 11 1777	: Dignes et ponts endommagés à Perpignan. Pont de la Lentilla emporté en Conflent.
9-11 12 1795	:
30 4 1806	:
30-31 10 1814	:
22-23 10 1832	:
9-10 10 1833	: Digue Orry et Chaussée du Vernet renversées à Perpignan.
24 8 1842	: "L'aiguat de San Barthomeu".
22-25 5 1853	: Maisons détruites à Thuès (Conflent). Modification du confluent de la Têt et de la Basse à Perpignan.
18 4 1865	:
19-20 5 1876	:
19-20 10 1876	:
6 10 1885	:
25-28 10 1891	:
9 11 1892	: Seconde hauteur d'eau mesurée à Perpignan après octobre 1940 (la Têt à 5.25m). 3 victimes.
13-16 1 1898	: La Têt abandonne son lit à l'aval de Perpignan et envhait la Salanque.
20 11 1898	:
12-13 10 1907	: Très forte crue du Tech. 10 victimes en Vallespir.
20-21 2 1920	: Seconde hauteur d'eau mesurée à Perpignan au cours du XX siècle (la Têt à 4.8m).
15-19 12 1932	:
17-18 10 1940	: La Têt à 5.6m à Perpignan. 40 victims dans le Département.
28-29 4 1942	:
4 2 1959	:
22 11 1961	: Crue importante du Tech.
13 9 1963	: Cru importante de la Têt.
10 10 1965	: Cru importante de l'Agly.
7-8 11 1982	: Laves torrentielles dans la vallée du Carol (Cerdagne).
13 10 1986	: Grave inondation en Salanque, une victime.

Figure 4: Some Recorder Floods in Roussillon (1X-XX Century), Source: *Caucanas 1990*

The myth of a climatic 'Golden Age' or even an average year never existed within the recorded history of the Aspre or Roussillon, and their temperamental Mediterranean-Pyrenean skies can not be simply explained away by the fashionable 'Greenhouse' effect. Apart from its unpredictable eruptions the disadvantage of this climate from a human life point of view, is that its two essential factors heat and humidity are out of harmony. It rains a good deal, but it falls chiefly in short violent outbursts in Autumn and Spring, very little in winter and none at all in summer. In contrast the monsoon climate fruitfully combines warmth and water, which is the secret behind its lush vegetation. Suddenly ones first impressions of sun drenched vineyards, the smell of the garrigue, the gaiety, the colour and light fade away and one becomes aware of the poverty and precariousness of it all. So we come to see that by the symbolism embedded in its choice of name, the Aspre in effect wrote its own environmental epitaph.

3.4 Environment and Land Use.

Taking into account the soils, topography and climate of the Aspre it would appear to be a zone of limited agricultural potential. But this is a broad twentieth century generalization, which fails to convey the complexity of the environmental differences among the interlocking hills and micro climates of the Aspre. It is not just altitude and its associated climatic factors that determine agricultural potential. The local or edaphic factors can prove decisive, for example the difference between the shaded northern slopes and the exposed southern slopes, (the amount of sunlight being critical to the growing season), the degree of the slope, its facing and the height of the opposite slope are all highly significant. Similarly the wind direction, the small pockets of alluvial fertile soil along the valley floor, and the possibility of harnessing the mountain springs for small scale irrigation can prove decisive for agricultural purposes. Peattie (1971) was not exaggerating when he observed that although altitude gives a rough idea of vegetation and cultivation limits, nevertheless, each field in mountainous terrain has its distinctive climate and pedological characteristics. It was the optimization of this diversity which lies at the root of human 'subsistence' in these hills in the past, and is still the secret to its agro-environmental potential today.

Anthropological studies have frequently noted that agrarian fragmentation represents a rational and adaptive response to the environmental imperative of mountain habitats, allowing access to various crops and minimising the risk of total failure by utilizing different micro-climates (cf. Viazzo 1989; Rhodes & Thompson 1975; Burns 1961). In the Alps, Netting (1971; 1981) also argued that the diverse plots helped to effectively schedule labour, which in the case of the Aspre meant that it could combine the rhythms of its own work with paid labour for the harvesting of crops on the plain. Similarly the mixed agricultural strategy of combining cultivation near the village with stock raising on the higher reaches was another environmentally adaptive strategy, common throughout the Alps and Pyrenees in the past. Today the fragmentation of holdings, throughout the Mediterranean in general tends to be seen as a negative effect of partible inheritance practices. We shall see in chapter 6, where the French Government is funding a scheme (PIL) to regroup fragmented vineyards in the Basse Aspre, on efficiency grounds.

With or without fragmentation the diversity, fragility and topography of places like the Haute Aspre are not conducive to mass production, which Siegfried (1948) reminds us is only effective when 'monotonous and continuous'. This fact lies at the root of today's tangled green mantle which blankets most of the Aspre, except for its viticole fringes. But if we roll back that curtain its skeleton reveals the one time presence of a rich hillside civilization that lived by optimising the diversity of that landscape. Life in these hills was certainly possible, but always at the expense of effort. The fields had to be carved out of the hillside, the vegetation removed, the stones picked and turned into artificial terraces to buttress the soil and prevent the wind and floods stealing its fertility. To maintain that soil was as difficult as to reclaim it, and a common chore for the peasants of the Aspre was to return the ever sliding soil back up slope in 'paniers' attached to their backs. As Thouvenot (1979) rightly noted the function of production and protection was intimately linked in the 'subsistence' agriculture of the Aspre. Farm hands were essential for such work and could not be replaced by the machine, which never really took to upland terrain. The ingenuity of this agriculture, the constant vigilance and attention to detail required a craftsman rather than a peasant.

The craftsmen and women of the Aspre choose their crops carefully, rye was always the staple food here, wheat grew badly on its acid soil and neither could it support its harsh winters, white bread was the reserve of the plain. This rustic cereal held prime position on the rare arable soil (l'Ager) of the Haute Aspre, which according to Broc (1955) never exceeded 15% of its surface area; this statistic in itself is testimony to human ingenuity. Rye had the added advantage of producing a lot of straw, which was feed to the animals. It was set in November and harvested in July in the Haute Aspre, which did not conflict with the June wheat harvest on the plain. Simonneau (1985) remarked that cereals, indispensable for both man and beast, were always a bit precarious in the Pyrénées Orientales and frequently had not fully ripened before the summer drought set in. If floods lay waste the lowlands in winter the sowing was endangered, clear skies too early in Spring meant the crop that had not already ripened was attacked by frost. One could never be certain of the harvest until the last moment. The necessity of winter cereals left the arable soil bare and unprotected under the intense summer heat.

Prior to the agricultural revolution of the mid eighteenth century, the return yields for rye in the Aspre were four to five times what was set (Etude DIAME 1981). One of the best indicators of the agriculture of the past is to be found in the diet of the people. Along with rye bread or porridge the all important vegetable gardens ('le potager') rich in haricot beans, set on irrigated patches around the village, or along the alluvial banks of water courses, made a vital contribution to the household economy. Goats provided dairy products and meat on special occasions along with the pig, and olive oil pressed from olives grown on steep slopes, completed 'la nourriture de base' under the 'ancien régime'⁹ (cf. Brutalis 1975). The fruits of the forest complemented the diet of both humans and animals. Pastoralism provided the only way of making the large tracks of

⁹According to the description of some of the Aspre communes recorded in the Cahier de Doléances on the eve of the revolution, this diet was a luxury. Take for example the plea from Camèlas; "We find ourselves without bread, without oil, without wine and in a position where it is impossible for us to buy the necessities of life. Our food consists only of herbs which we collect in the countryside and eat with a little vinegar, so as not to die from starvation" (Frenay 1979).

non-cultivable land of the Aspre accessible to productive activities. It was this combination of cultivation and herding in what is variously labelled agro-pastoralism or mixed farming, that overcame the environmental impasse of the Aspre, whereby no single vegetational zone possessed the necessary potential to support a human population on its own for any length of time.

Hay was cut from the natural prairies, situated on the upper reaches, (Saltus), where once the forest stood. The meadows were fertilised by the Spring and Autumn grazing of sheep. Sheep were kept firstly to guarantee the fertility of the soil¹⁰, then for their wool which was either spun into cloth in the village or directly exported to the once thriving textile industry in the region. The sale of lambs or sheep at the autumn fair was a valuable source of liquid income, needed to buy salt, farm and household equipment that could not be made locally, and the outside luxuries of coffee, sugar and tobacco. In the summer the herd, composed of sheep and goats¹¹, were taken to the elevated communal summer grazing grounds, which in the case of Saint Marsal and La Bastide were found under the beech trees of their own elevated terrain; but for the majority of the flocks from the Aspre and those from the plain summer pasturing was in the higher reaches of the Canigou. In Autumn and Spring the animals feed on the lower meadows or in the pubescent oak and chestnut woods, thus keeping the undergrowth in check. In winter, from the end of December to beginning of March, at least a part of the herd, in the care of communal or hired shepherds, moved in inverse transhumance¹² down to pastures in the plain, to places like Argelès, Canet, Thuir. Some of the smaller peasant farmers kept their few sheep over the winter in the

¹⁰Sutton (1977), cites from an eighteenth century French parish register: "without wasteland there would be no sheep, without sheep there would be no manure for the farms, and without manure there would be no corn in the fields".

¹¹Bovines were never common in the Aspre, where they do appear it was generally for the purpose of draught animals. The dairy industry was generally confined to the plateau of Cerdagne.

¹²Inverse transhumance refers to winter herd movements from the uplands to the plain, in contrast to the more common summer transhumance from the lowlands to the uplands.

village, daily going out to graze on the lower pastures or among the undergrowth of the green oak (cf. Etude DIAME 1981). In Spring, the sheep having wintered on the plain returned home before the fruits appeared on the vines. Each season marked pasturing at one or two different vegetational levels. The 'poverty' of the place was overcome by constant movement, in an attempt to avoid overstaying their hosts welcome. A form of shifting agriculture was established around a permanent village base; the shepherds and the flocks in their care were constantly on the move. A crop rotation of three to five year (in contrast to the biannual rotation on the plain), including a long fallow period provided a rest for the arable soil. There was a living to be made here, but it was precarious and often had to be complemented by outside seasonal work on the plain, or in the local mines and forest. We shall see in the following chapter that central to the above agricultural system was a favourable legal environment, including access to communal property and grazing rights.

The first agricultural revolution on the plain, occurring around 1750, manifested itself by fodder cultivation on non-irrigated land, with plants such as lucerne, alfalfa and esparcett well adapted to its dry light soil. This development was followed by further clearance of prior to uncultivated land. Fodder did not replace cereals which were often deficient in Roussillon in the eighteenth century, but it brought more land under the plough, an instrument that first made its appearance in Catalonia around 1775. The crop rotation on the irrigated land of the plain at the turn of the nineteenth century is provided by the English traveller Arthur Young (1793):

November: plant wheat ----- harvest 20 th June ----(irrigate)--- August set fodder (clover, barley, lupin) ----Xmas---- end Feb.fodder grazed (green) ----15 May save hay from regrowth of clover---(irrigate)--- set beans(haricot) -----harvest in Sept. ---Nov. set wheat.

The inverse transhumance meant that herds pastured on winter fodder or fallow fields on the plain manured the soil before the setting of Spring crops. The consequence of the first agricultural revolution meant a rise in herd size in both the highlands and the

plain. This combined with the introduction of the potato and maize from the Americas in the late eighteenth century, both crops being well adopted to the humid climate of the Haute Aspre, allowed the mountain agriculture of places like the Aspre and other upland Mediterranean and Alpine regions, to accommodate its expanding human population. In the late nineteenth, early twentieth century Rives (1942), described the crop rotation in the Haute Aspre as potatoes, rye and maize, which varied depending on the natural local conditions. The most difficult areas still only cultivated rye, followed by long fallow periods, when the land was used by the herd. The more favourable areas switched from rye to potatoes and maize on a three to four year rotation. The setting of potatoes was preceded by a lupin crop, set in October and ploughed into the soil as green fertilizer in March.

The new rotation permitted an increase in herd size from 0.1 - 0.2 UGB (unite gross betail) per hectare under the fallow system to 0.25 - 0.35 UGB/ha (Etude DIAME 1981). The increase in herd size was accompanied by an increase in manure, which combined with the beneficial nitrogen fixing quality of leguminous plants assured a rye harvest of 8 to 10 quintal per hectare as opposed to the previous 5 to 6 quintal (one quintal = 100 killogrammes) (Etude DIAME 1981). Even though the land use remained the same as under the fallow system, the increased yields of rye, the cultivation of potatoes and the increased herd size, including more pigs for household consumption, was able to rise to the population increases.

Traditionally the villages of the Aspre sold at the Autumn fairs of Arles and Vinca the stock they could not keep over the winter. The same practice continues today with sheep and calves being sold to Italy for fattening over the winter, before slaughtering. The pig was the only animal brought into the Aspre, from the Saint Marsal fair on the third Sunday of October, over the winter. It was fattened on acorns, potatoes, maize, cabbage leaves, beetroot etc, and killed at eighteen months, in time for Christmas. We remark a similarity in diet and crops in the Aspre and that described by Chevalier (1956) in the Ariège Pyrenees between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Up to the mid nineteenth century bread was secondary to the 'bouillies', a porridge cereal

(frequently black due to its rye content), and the 'potager', a form of vegetable soup.

The above harmonious picture is rather academic, we shall find in the chapters that follow ample evidence that the natural ecological sensitivity of the Aspre was pushed by anthropogenic action, dispelling what Ellen (1982) referred to as a romantic myth that in the past these little 'self-contained and self-sufficient' communities were so ecologically sound and so harmoniously integrated into their environment that it is unbelievable that they might damage it at all. We are simply making the point that life was possible under the green mantle of today, and that this landscape was capable of supporting 32 people per square kilometre, as opposed to its present quasi abandoned state. In turn this is a good example of Blaikie's (1987) comment that "a resource becomes a resource only when defined as such", to which we may add that necessity appears to be a powerful catalyst.

So we see the natural conditions of the Aspre are at once favourable and difficult. The rock is always ready to tear a hole in its light topsoil, and yet where there is well situated soil, and if one adds sun and irrigation the results can be impressive, but always at the price of human effort and the threat of total extension. We shall see in chapter 7, where the results of that effort and physical hardship resurface in the cautious and frugal nature of the present day indigenous inhabitants of these hills. The structure of the Aspre did not lend itself naturally to the industrial revolution. Along with the genuine twentieth century 'achievements' on the plain of Roussillon and in the viticole Basse Aspre, anarchism still persists among the remaining agriculturalists in the Haute Aspre. We find in chapter 6, centred on agriculture in the Aspre today, one woman's vain search for a thrasher for her few hectares of corn and oats, and the remaining shepherds, apart from grazing the Australian clover of the fire breaks, still move to the beat and rhythm of the seasons. But, before arriving at the present we must first situate the human-environmental dynamics of the Aspre within 'la longue durée', which is the purpose of the next two chapters. Only then will we realise that the forest curtain call of the Aspre has known several 'encores'.

CHAPTER 4: EVOLUTIONARY DYNAMICS OF CHANGE IN THE ASPRE: Rhythms of Land and People over Time.

4.1 INTRODUCTION.

"If we confine ourselves to short periods of time on which progress makes no mark our argument will drag on and get nowhere. Instead of arguing fruitlessly within the over brief space of a few generations, let us look at the broad vista which science, palaeontology and history offers us".

Teilhard de Chardin (1959). The Future of Man.

In order to establish the direction and causes of change in the relationship between the people and the land of the Aspre, it is essential to have a sound knowledge of its socio-natural history. As Marx (1963) reminds us; "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please, they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past". Consequently, one of the reasons for taking a long term perspective in this research, is to chart a more profound understanding of the present by situating it within the vista of its broad history, in the spirit of understanding the present by means of the past. Secondly, as argued in chapter one, a long term perspective on socio-natural interaction is in its own right vital for a better understanding of that relationship, which in turn has a direct bearing on how we approach the issue of land degradation.

The dynamics of change inevitably call into question notions of temporality. McGlade (1993c), rightly points out that a linear conception of time involves the construction of "a ladder of history on whose rungs past events are placed". Such a conception of time as a succession of events, or of a linear continuity tends to imply notions of progress, in the sense that things are somehow getting better as a result of the passage of time. History is thus relegated to filling in the 'rungs of the ladder', and providing the comforting yardstick and proof of how 'evolved' the present is, and in this scheme of things we can anticipate even further progress in the future. Recent work in the field of nonlinear dynamics has done a lot to shatter this illusion of temporal processes (refer

to chapter 1). Evolution is not fixed a priori, rather it is the process in which choices of direction are made. The unpredictable non-linear dynamics embedded in temporal processes, highlight the discontinuous, the chance, and the emergent, all of which militates against equating the passage of time with progressive evolution. Rather what we observe is change, defined as differences observable over space or time, regardless of direction. The term transformation refers to a reorganization of the entire system resulting in change in the systems identity as well as its organization.

In this research when we chart the socio-natural history of the Aspre, even though we are for convenience using temporal 'rungs', they are not meant to be viewed as segments of time anterior to the present, nor is our vision of the future something posterior to the past. Merleau-Ponty (1962), remarked that: "One cannot explain the unity of time in terms of its continuity, since that amounts to confusing past, present, and future on the excuse that we pass from one to the other by imperceptible transitions: in short it amounts to denying time altogether". In effect what we are trying to capture is the duality of past and present; an account of how people 'make history and consume it', and in this way it is incorporated into on going social change. The Aspre belongs to its past through the constant interlocking and retention of experiences, just as the adult incorporates the child, and neither phenomenon can be explained in a purely linear or deterministic way. Rather, the past, present and future fuse and run into each other in an unbroken chain of 'becoming'.

Thus we turn to the tools of history to inform us on the significant events that have structured the space and society of the Aspre. It is the inter-connectedness and thus irreducibility of the social, biological and physical components of that system, along with an understanding of its historical dynamics that is the most important notion underlying the inclusion of the socio-biophysical system (summarised in Appendix A), a method adopted from Grzybowski & Slocombe (1988) and Slocombe's (1990). Grzybowski (1986) defined a socio-biophysical system as "one whose overall pattern, form and evolution are determined by complex, often nonlinear interactions among social, biological and physical subsystems". Such diverse activities as culture, politics,

economics, technology, ecology and geomorphology are inextricably interwoven in its tapestry of life, and so too must they be studied together in any meaningful representation of its 'reality'. To capture such a holistic overview we must as Braudel (1958) urges us, go beyond the 'photographic sociology of the present'; in short we need time depth in order to view the socio-natural system of the Aspre in process rather than as a synchronic snapshot.

The socio-biophysical system of the Aspre will be structured around its political ecology and biohistory; that is to say it will explore the linkages between socio-political activities and biophysical variables. In the Aspre this relationship is to a large extent epitomised in the saga of the commons, in particular the plight of the forest, which in turn is closely linked with the mountain - plain relationship. In a sense the forest serves as the physical expression of the metronome of the Aspre's society; when it retreats the people advance and vice versa, that is until the appearance of a twentieth century 'leisure society'. In prehistory and well into the middle ages the Aspre was covered by a forest blanket, which is again today fast descending over its rocks and soil. But, what happened to it in the interim, when the curtain went up so to speak and the bare stage was exposed, illuminates not only its intricate human-ecological struggles and the battles fought in its name, but also the mental scaffolding of that society. In effect the socio-natural history of the Aspre constitutes the silent voices carried around in the 'bones' and mental perceptions of its present day actors, and in the 'skeleton' of its landscape. How could we comment on the society and landscape of the Aspre today without such knowledge? At the end of the chapter a detailed socio-agrarian case study of a typical commune of the Haute Aspre, Saint Marsal, is presented for the mid nineteenth century, its moment of peak demographic pressure and maximum carrying capacity prior to depopulation and decline. The vivid details of this micro study helps to ground a lot of our forthcoming observations and historical extrapolations.

By taking a long term perspective on the human-environmental relations of the Aspre will the evidence uphold Ratzel's environmental determinism, whereby the soil is said to, "governs the destinies of people with blind brutality" (Ratzel 1899). Are the puny

human actors of the Aspre subject to Braudel's 'iron rule of the environment' over 'la longue durée'? Will Vidal's and Febvre's 'possibilism' reign supreme, or shall we give way to Julian Stewards cultural ecology with its notions of slavish anthropogenic adaptation to the natural habitat? Or will the homeostasis of the presently popular ecosystemic stance best explain the relations between the human population and the natural resources of the Aspre over time? Perhaps we may even discover that the Aspre was never an 'isolated niche', regulated by the negative feedback of a closed autarchic system, but part of a complex, interconnected and reciprocal socio-natural society shaped as much by forces at work in the external world as those within its internal boundaries. Or does the key lie in the chosen spatio-temporal scale, which may allow one to move from one or other of the above positions? En route to understanding the present a long term perspective on the socio-natural history of the Aspre provides an appropriate platform upon which to ponder the above theoretical issues, central to the question posed in chapter one concerning the conceptualisation of human-environmental interaction.

The socio-biophysical system which follows is far from exhaustive. We have adapted a synthetic approach, what Marc Bloch (1966) referred to as a rapid survey of the horizon before plunging into the depths from which the wider view is no longer possible¹. The chronology will concentrate on the relatively recent political and socio-natural history of the Aspre, i.e, post eighteenth century for which a richer documentation is available, and is arguably at the root of its present day 'transformation'. Nevertheless, it is essential that the much longer and mostly uncharted prehistoric and medieval period be briefly surveyed, not so much for the sake of an impossible completeness as to gain a more correct perspective, and to accommodate the far slower biophysical rates of change to those of human social evolution. This chapter and the one which follows form a sequence, and thus we have deferred any concluding discussion until the end of chapter five.

¹An attempt at that detail is provided by a more indepth study of Saint Marsal and present day ethnographic field work.

4.2 Prehistory of Roussillon:

The dotting of megalithic monuments and pre-Roman toponomes throughout the Aspre is testimony to a very ancient ancestry. When Homo Erectus first put foot on Roussillon soil about a million years ago, the landscape that greeted them was very different from that of today's. The Pyrenean chain delimited the southern horizon and the imposing Canigou marked its western point, but the plain of Roussillon trapped between the mountains and the mediterranean sea did not exist, being the result of more recent quaternary climatic events (Abelanet 1992). The long frozen Pleistocene glaciers (Gunz, Mindel, Riss & Wurn), arising from faraway Alpine torrents provoked a lowering of sea level, which rose again during interglacial periods. For example, at the start of the Gunz glaciation sea level was 100 m above its present level covering what is today the Plain of Roussillon. During the seasonal melting of the mountain snow, tumultuous torrents laden with rocks, gravel, sand and mud were deposited in a large nappe at the mouth of the valleys, eventually filling in the pliocene bay, resulting in the formation of the present plain. During this long period of its history one can legitimately suppose that human impact on the landscape of Roussillon was very inferior to the might of natural forces. Fresco (1992), puts things in perspective when she remarked that; "an ice age is an incident in human history, but a regular phenomenon in Earths history", the truism of which highlights the difference in natural and anthropogenic rhythms.

The passage from the palaeolithic to the neolithic, 10,000 years ago is arguably the most important transition humanity has known. After having been for a long time dependent on nature, simply predators among others, humans gradually shifted to becoming producers of their own food via animal husbandry and the cultivation of crops. The results of pollen dating indicate that human cultivation of cereals in Roussillon began about 7,000 years ago, marking the beginning of agriculture in the area (cf. Abelanet 1992). Pollen analysis from the plain of Roussillon for the periods 3,500 B.C and 500 B.C indicate a warmer and more humid climate than today's and an extension of the forest from the Canigou to the Mediterranean shore. The lower coastal strip was covered in dense pubescent oak forest, accompanied by cork oak on

siliceous terrain and alpine pine on limestone. The green oak, so characteristic of the vegetation of the Aspre today did not develop until the end of the neolithic, corresponding with the arrival of a dryer climate. With the passage of time cultivation fixed humans to the soil rendering the majority sedentary, which eventually lead to the development of villages, towns and cities, and the clearing of forest, scrub and the organization of fields.

Roussillon was not always the rich contrast between plain and mountain that we are accustomed to today. At the beginning of the middle ages the plain of Roussillon was a desert, overrun by forest, swamps and marshes. The pre-latin names of villages, such as Cabestany and Saint Nazaire, that are still to be found on the plain today, speak of lakes that have long since disappeared essentially due to human effort. This was the landscape that greeted the Romans, when they colonised Roussillon around 150 B.C, and added it to their 'Gaule Narbonnaise' Provence. Roman occupation most profoundly marked the plain of Roussillon and its valleys, but they initiated what must be one of the first official links between the mountains and the plain when they constructed a Roman way, used for transporting iron ore from the Canigou to the plain. The route crossed the Aspre at l'Oratori in Saint Marsal, where the remains of an old Roman forge has been recently excavated. This early mention of the Aspre already positions it as a zone of transition, 'zone de passage', between the high mountains and the plain. According to Brutalis (1975 [1891]), drainage on the plain of Roussillon did not start until the XII th century, and when it did its purpose was primarily to remove the malaria breathing grounds, rather than for cultivation. In contrast the first attempts at irrigation date from the Roman period (cf. Caucanas 1990). The Romans also left behind them the basis of the Catalan language, the religion of Rome and the trappings of a classical civilization. The Roman empire succumbed to a wave of barbarian invasions in the course of the V th century. The Vandals first installed themselves, followed by the Wisigoths, whose reign lasted for over two and a half centuries, during which time Roussillon formed part of the Province of Septimanie later known as Basse-Languedoc (Calmette & Vidal 1923). By the VIII th century Gothic Septimanie, was under Arab (Sarrasins & Maures) control, whose religious fervour was equalled only

by their desire for pillage. Nevertheless, the Arabs advanced the irrigation techniques on the plain, fashioning it on the system they had installed in Andalusia (cf. Broc 1992). However agricultural advancement was secondary to political and military interests.

4.3 Medieval Roussillon.

Throughout the middle ages the lowlands of Roussillon found themselves in the grip of violent invasions, political unrest and virulent diseases which fundamentally influenced its human ecology and the mountain-plain relationship, with the uplands being in a far more advantageous position than today. It is from this period that the Aspre takes on its role of 'safe haven', a place of refuge for Christianity and those fleeing the troubled, flood prone and mosquito ridden plain. The replacement of the Roman and Byzantine empires by people of nomadic origins rearranged matters every where in the Mediterranean. The political unrest and nomadic influence of the new conquerors favoured pastoralism and the keeping of wealth on the hoof, which was well suited to the geography of the Provence and in time contributed to the development of its textile industry. This in turn lead to more intense exploitation and burning of the uplands, and the making of inroads into the vast forest of the Aspre and Vallespir.

The Franks, under the Carolingian King, Charlemagne, recaptured the region at the end of IXth century. The Carolingian epoch strongly influenced the political and agrarian structure of the Roussillon, most notably during this period the Feudal system took root. The Franks bestowed vast properties on their friends, frequently as a reward for military services, for example, in 869 the King conferred the 'Villa de Prunet' (Prunet et Belpuig) and the hamlet of 'Villar de Mansald' (Saint Marsal) on his loyal friend Oden. He also gave to the church and the most influential Spanish immigrants fleeing muslim occupation. However there remained vast territories of uncultivated land, which the second Carolingian King, Charles le Chauve, repopulated under the motto of 'he who cultivated the land owned it'. When the Arabs left the people descended from the over populated mountains, and once more commenced their perpetual assault on the forest and marshes of the lowlands. Brutalis (1975 [1891]), presents evidence

indicating that by the end of the Xth century the hills and mountains of the pyrenees were not just over populated but 'saturated'. Between the Xth and XIth century a new era of large scale land clearance was dawning not just in the mountains of the Pyrenees but throughout France and Europe and was to last until the late XIIIth century. According to Bloch (1966), this period saw the most considerable addition to the total area of land under cultivation since prehistoric times. From early on we remark a critical relationship between demography and land clearance. In Roussillon, as elsewhere, at the head of the land clearance or 'défrichement', were frequently to be found the Benedictines creating their model farms, harnessing energy and discipline under the rhythm of the monastery bells².

The agrarian structure of Roussillon under feudalism was essentially divided between; (a) those who owned and cultivated their own land, and (b) a tenure system, whereby land was owned by a Seigneur and worked by serfs on his behalf. The church held seigniorial power. Rents were generally paid in kind rather than in money, for example, the Abby of Saint Marsal du Canigou received a certain quantity of iron in lieu of rent. Apart from communal property and that owned by particulars the remaining 'public property', such as rivers, highways, mines, forest, mountain pasture, wild animals etc., was under Seigniorial control (cf. Assier-Andrieu 1987). In 1068 the Counts of Barcelona introduced important legislation known as the 'Usages de Baecelone', which could be called the first code of Feudal Europe (Gavignaud 1980). Article 72 of the 'Usages', known as 'la Loi Stratae', tried to place all the above public property under the protection of the Seigneurs but for the express benefit of the people. The feeling that wild places and water could not lawfully be appropriated by an individual was deep rooted in 'primitive' social conscience. However Brutalis (1975), insists that 'la loi Stratae' was not widely applicable in medieval Roussillon, and Carolingian diplomats regularly counted rivers and fishing rights among their private property. He claims that its later success and popularity was due to a judicial search

²The Benedictines fleeing from muslim Spain founded the Abby d'Arles on the banks of the Tech, which in time mushroomed out in several directions. The Augustine Priory of Serrabonne, in the heart of the Aspre, was founded in the eleventh century. The Carolingian monasteries were at once an agricultural and intellectual centre, upon whom the crown conferred immense territories, assured they would be diligently cultivated.

for a text to defend communal rights. As long as unoccupied land was plentiful the struggle over waste and woodland was not very acute. As we shall see in what follows the encroachment on the commons over the centuries by the Seigneurs, Lord or State, figures as one of the oldest and most contested grounds of agrarian revolt in Roussillon. Similarly the laws of servitude, such as 'vaine pâture' (collective grazing right on meadows and arable land after the removal of the harvest), the 'droit de parcours' (grazing rights on communal land) and the 'droit d'usage' (the right to cultivate vacant land) were jealously preserved by the community (cf. Assier-Andrieu 1987).

The Mas³ was the cell of medieval rural life, especially in mountainous areas like the Aspre, and was made up of the dwelling house, fields and a share in the collective privileges. It was also the unit of assessment for rents and services. The peasants who lived isolated in their fortified farms were effectively minuscule Seigneurs. The Carolingian mas nearly always gave rise to a hamlet or village. As we shall see in Saint Marsal in section 4.7, with the destruction of the feudal system in Roussillon around the XVIth and XVIIth, the Mas which came to signify large dispersed properties, continued to dominate the agrarian, economic and social morphology of the Aspre, with the landless, small property owners and tradesmen lived in the hamlets or villages in a somewhat symbiotic relationship with the surrounding mas.

Due to the constant insecurity of the middle ages, many non fortified isolated mas, especially on the plain had to be abandoned. Similarly non fortified villages on the plain frequently had to move back to the security of the mountains, for example, Banylus les Aspres and Vernet les Bains. The more important villages were fortified and among the villages of the Basse Aspre, Fourques was granted permission to fortify in 1188, Llauro in 1272, Oms in 1253, Saint Colombe in 1292 and Castelnou where the Seigneur of the Vallespir and much of the Aspre resided, fortified its castle and village in 1290. Other villages such as Terrats only fortified the church and the buildings used

³Mas is a Provençal word, but the term appeared in a variety of names including 'manse' and 'mansus'. Strictly speaking the latter referred only to the house and agricultural outbuildings.

for storing the harvest. Protected behind the ramparts of their fortified villages and churches the peasants of the middle ages, especially on the plain and Basse Aspre, were incessantly troubled by pillaging armies and barons, so much so that the Comté de Vernet, on the plain of Roussillon, declared that work on the land was intermittent (cited in Calmette & Vidal 1923).

An important political move undertaken by Charles le Chauve in the late ninth century was to disconnect the administration of Roussillon from Basse-Languedoc and align it with what was to become Catalonia, a group of Pyrenean-Hispanic Counts, whose centre of gravity was Barcelona rather than Narbonne. This political decision was highly significant for the future of Roussillon. Also under his reign Roussillon took on its frontier role between Christianity and Islam. Due to their geographical distance from the centre the Counts of the Pyrenees were more or less left on their own in their perpetual Christian crusade, with the King being a distant theoretical leader. The religious fervour that overran its neighbouring Occitan province, in particular the heretic Cathar or Albigensian crusades of the early middle ages, was never as strong in Roussillon (cf. Ladorie 1980). The inquisition which arrived in Roussillon in 1243 was highly successful, and swiftly dispensed with any suspect heretics and sorcery.

Calmette & Vidal (1923), provide archival agrarian evidence from the middle ages which indicate the presence of market gardening and orchards around Perpignan and the plain of Roussillon; barley, wheat and Indian maize were interspersed with vines and olives on the slopes of the Aspre and Albères; and rye dominated the cultivation in mountain areas such as the Haute Aspre. The Anti-Pope in Avignon ordered his muscat wine from Clara in the Conflent on the borders of the Aspre, proof that these small communities were already part of a larger barter and exchange economy. The opening of the Canal du Midi in 1681 allowed an expansion of wine exports to England and the Netherlands. We note that the agricultural crops of the middle ages are not too dissimilar to what we find there today. Cereals and olives may have virtually disappeared, but vines, market gardening, orchards and pastoralism still form the mainstay of Roussillon's twentieth century agricultural economy. Brutalis (1889) who

has written extensively on Roussillon in the middle ages, concluded that one of the most remarkable things about its population in this epoch was the "confederation of several communities united in the defense of their interests and in the exercise of their rights".

When cracks became evident in Carolingian central power, the 'Comtes de Barcelona' progressively reinforced their authority over the region. For a brief period between 1276-1344, Roussillon enjoyed autonomy and economic prosperity when the King of Aragon, Jacques le Conquérant, in 1276 divided his estate between his two sons, giving Aragon to the eldest and to his second son, Jacques, the islands of Majorque, Ibiza, Seigneur de Montpellier and the Comtés de Roussillon and Cerdagne, in what became known as the 'Royaume de Majorque'. This marked a particularly prosperous economic period in Roussillon's history, and is remembered to this day as its 'Golden Era'. Its taste for commerce flourished, treaties were signed with African Princes opening up markets in Tunisia and Morocco. Perpignan also did business with the Orient, with Port-Vendre, Collioure and Canet serving as thriving maritime ports. Driving their commercial 'empire' was the textile industry which flourished between the XIIIth and XIVth centuries; during which time the transformed fleeces of places like the Aspre ended up in the 'four corners' of the world. Perpignan boasted over 400 textile experts, the dying industry was also strong (cf. Calmette & Vidal 1923). Arles sur Tech and Prats de Mollo, in the Vallespir were thriving textile centres. Roussillon's leather and metallurgic industries also prospered.

It was during the Roi de Majorque reign that the 'Royal de Thuir', the largest irrigation canal (35 km) on the plain was constructed. Initially the canal was used as river water for tanneries, fishing, draperies, transporting logs and most importantly to power water mills (Broc 1992). The use of the canals for wide scale agricultural irrigation came much later, but note the system was being put in place bit by bit, and the assets of the plain were building up. After the construction of the 'Royal de Thuir', a minutely thought out legislation was put in place to regulate the use of canal water, which stills forms the basis of canal legislation today. Most importantly it took exclusive ownership of water from the hands of the local Seigneurs, which from then on was to be centrally

controlled (cf. Caucanas 1990). Over the years the natural fertility of Roussillon, inspite of wars and epidemics owed much to the harnessing of its water first for industrial purposed and later to irrigate the soil. During this brief period of 'home rule' Roussillon and the Aspre were far from the industrial hinterlands that they are today.

According to Broc (1955), by the end of the XIII th century the essentials of the Aspre population was established; all it would undergo from then on was an influx of refugees during troubled times, and of course the demographic collapse associated with the Black Death of the mid XIV th century, which halved the population almost every where in the South of France. Plague was also frequent in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, with the epidemic of 1631 killing 4,500 of Perpignan's 12,000 inhabitants (Brutalis 1975) When the people retreated the forest, gained ground.

With the dissolution of the reign of the 'Roi de Majorque' in 1344, Roussillon returned to the Aragon confederation. Catalan and Roussillon commerce and industry continued to flourish, probably reaching a peak on the death of King Pierre IV in 1387. Ferdinand and Isabelle the Catholic Spanish kings, reunified Aragon with the Castilian Monarchy in 1493. The old Catalan institutions lost their power, and neither was Castilian centralization favourable for Catalan commerce. Rivalry between the two big Pyrenean powers, France and Spain, plunged Roussillon back into political turmoil, which was often played out on its plains, and was again reflected in the architecture of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries which took on heavy fortification. In the 1542 siege of Perpignan the French tried and failed to take the city, instead they ravaged the countryside before moving on the Narbonne. The Huguenots arrives on Roussillon soil at Estagel in 1570. Bandits, known as 'les movais étrangers', who recognised no frontiers roamed and pillaged the countryside during the French Hundred Year's War. There reached a point where people were afraid to leave their villages or towns, and the Aspre once more profited from its position of 'Chateau Fort du Roussillon', with inhabitants from the nearby town of Thuir or Perpignan, frequently fleeing for safety into the bosom of its hills. Roussillon's checkered past is frequently given as justification for why they are somewhat un-welcoming of the 'new invaders', in the

guise of the 'tourist' of today (see chapter 7).

All this political turmoil was detrimental to Roussillon's commercial interests and the advancement of agriculture on the fertile plain. The Catalans revolted against Castilian imperialism in the early seventeenth century, and when Spain lost its Thirty Year's war with France, Roussillon was once more annexed by France under the 1659 Treaty of the Pyrenees. Once more administrative and economic modifications were felt throughout the region. Essentially we can conclude that the two most important medieval phases marking the terrain of the Aspre was the dispersion of land in large domains before the Xth century and the construction of feudal parishes in the XIth and XIIth centuries. However one must remember that the feudal system was never as pronounced in the Midi as it was in the North of France (cf. Bloch 1966). We also remark that up to and including the Middle Ages, the light soil of hilly and mountainous places like the Aspre were favoured over the politically insecure, flood prone and malaria ridden heavier soils of the plain of Roussillon. Geographically the ideal zone for settlement lay above the reach of malaria and below the timber line, thus during this epoch the Aspre occupied an optimum socio-natural 'niche'. We also note that the further central power was geographically removed from the Province, eg. Madrid, Paris, the less it prospered, rather it was turned into a battle field where the external big powers played out their diplomatic and military conflicts. Throughout the history of Roussillon its frontier geographical position and fluid political identity, doggedly reinforced its marginal status. In a sea of such insecurity, one is not surprised to find that its own identity over the years has remained close to home, rarely extending beyond the church belfry, as epitomised in the expression 'l'esprit du cloche'.

4.4 Political Identity: Treaty of the Pyrenees to the French Revolution.

The Treaty of the Pyrenees marked the end of the political toing and froving of Roussillon up to the present day. In 1659 it was a boundary defined by the jurisdictional limits of specific villages, much would happen before it became a delimited boundary defining National Territorial Sovereignty. The arbitrary nature of the boarder is epitomised in the enclave of Llivia, a single Spanish commune marooned

in France by a sub-clause of the treaty (see Map 1).

Up until the French Revolution, Roussillon existed as a sort of protectorate or micro-society attached to France, but without being totally annexed. It continued to play on its historical ambivalence, distance from the centre, and its frontier position. The relatively favourable conditions of the treaty allowed the province to conserve to a large extent its own personality, organise its own life and hold the political authority of the State at arms length (Sahlins 1989; 1990). Economically, Roussillon did suffer from the rupture with Barcelona, with the textile and iron ore 'cottage industries' of places like the Aspre and Vallespir exporting their produce directly to 'la Principality'. The Province found itself surrounded by custom posts, with frequently the custom taxes on the border with Languedoc being heavier than those with Spain. Roussillon turned what was theoretically a very difficult situation to its advantage by effectively ignoring the boarder with Spain, its main trading partner. What was once exchange now became contraband.

Contraband.

The small contraband conducted in the frontier villages of the Vallespir, Albères, Conflent or Cerdagne, centred around such things as salt, traditional Catalan costumes and household objects, olives, figs; sometimes it was a false contraband like the transhumance of animals. Along side this local contraband, which was generally conducted in the direction Catalonia - Roussillon, the inverse was true of the large scale contraband which played a central role in the economy of the provence, at times even having National consequences. Products such as coffee, silk, wax, grain, tobacco, textiles, chestnut wood and iron ore were exported under armed escort across the Pyrenees or by sea from ports such as Banylus and Collioure. Much of the grain and animals, needed to supply industrial centres like Barcelona came from as far afield as Languedoc. Within this large scale contraband trade the local notary and administration often played double and triple roles. Brunet (1990), argued that on the whole it was an excellent affair for France, and brought in much needed gold. Many of the smugglers organised themselves in bands, some better armed than the authorities. At

one stage the 'Angelets de la Terra', held the Vallespir beyond the bridge at Céret. The dotting of innkeepers (Aubergistes) and transporters - 'porte à col', in border villages such as we find in Saint Marsal in section 4.7 is testimony to a lucrative contraband trade, well suited to the torturous mountain terrain of the Aspre and Vallespir. Far from a marginal or delinquent occupation, contraband was considered an honourable occupation with most people in the borderlands having some involvement in it. Besides, it was seen as a modest revenge of a people under difficult circumstances.

Michel Brunet's (1990), classic history of Roussillon (1780 - 1820), depicts a society on the eve of the French Revolution, whose personality was expressed in 'opposition', and where the imposition of all laws were resented. The State, either Spanish or French was not welcome in this semi-autonomous 'no mans land', ruled by the law of silence, 'l'Omerta', by which they regulated their own affairs. Under the 'Ancien Régime', Roussillon's patriotism rarely extended beyond the village church tower ('patriotism du cloche'), where identity was defined in the anarchism of inter-village quarrels and relations, renewed at local fêtes and fares. They were not interested in the form of the State, Monarchist or Republican, as long as it was more or less absent and preferably weak as was the Ancien Régime. The French Revolution was to change this state of affairs.

The French Revolution.

The French Revolution marked a turning point in the ambivalent and competing sense of identity in the borderland. Roussillon did not support the Revolution of 1789, or welcome its new ideas. It had a particular mistrust and dislike of 'centralisation', where by it feared the Nation was getting too close to home. Its fears were confirmed when in 1791 customs posts were established along the former highly permeable frontier. Besides, the Revolutionary battle cry set against the seigniorial feudal system rang empty in Roussillon, where it was already in ruins. They were far more concerned about urban oppression, and a regime supported by the Perpignan Bourgeois prompted little sympathy (cf. Brunet 1971). The secularization of religion and the dismantling

of church property was also highly resented, and neither did they appreciate the antagonism towards their close kin and trading partners in Spain (cf. Marceti-Juncosa 1991). Theoretically, it also brought to an end the use of Catalan rather than French law. It made the play on nationality and the evasion of national obligations more difficult.

A precious test of how 'French' the province had become over the previous 130 years, since the treaty of the Pyrenees, was offered when on the 17th April 1793 Spanish troops (in response to the Revolutionary Government's war declaration), followed by hundreds of Priests and 'émigrés' entered French territory, via the village of Saint Laurent de Cerdans in the Vallespir. They were for all intent and purposes welcomed, gaining total collaboration throughout the Vallespir and Cerdagne, being stopped only at the gate to Perpignan by Peyrestortes battalion on the 17th of September 1793. Roussillon, whose name by 1790 was changed to the Department of the Pyrénées Orientales and to which was added Fenouillèdes an Occitan Region formally part of Languedoc, was once more presented with a choice of national identity, between the conservatism of the Spanish Monarchy or the Revolutionary path of France. Historians who have studied this period, warn against reading too much into the ideological choice. The identity of the people of the Aspre and Roussillon in general was still defined in relation to their village world, with National allegiance being but a tactical element in a personal and collective struggle. For economic reasons and the previously outlined grievances towards the Revolution, St Laurent de Cerdans (along with most of the Vallespir and Cerdagne), had far closer links with Catalonia, its sandals, textiles, iron and chestnut barrels being exported there. In contrast the French Committee of Public Safety's declaration of the 'Fatherland in Danger' was an appeal to disinterested patriotism in defence of an alien 'Great Nation'. However, it is surprising if the people welcomed with open arms the new collectors of taxes and the ensuing pillage. For the majority in the reoccupied territory, the priority was protection and survival at the least cost.

The chaos of the province during this period was captured by Greer (1935), when he

wrote: *"During the year of the invasion, Roussillon was one of the most chaotic regions of France. The Spanish pillaged and ravaged, the French irregulars looted and extorted, and the French conscripts were scarcely better behaved.... The 'levée en mass' was a lamentable failure, for a great many conscripts either ignored the call to arms or deserted by the hundreds, in either case automatically becoming fugitives from the Republic. And as the conflict moved back and forth, the inhabitants fled, some with and some from the Spaniards."*

Immediately after the Revolution, Roussillon was in ruin, with a general break down in public services (except for police), roads, hospitals and schools. The province was ostracised by the Revolutionary powers and Jacobin imperialism looked very badly on the political amphibians of the Departments and their attempts to preserve its separatist Catalan autonomy and identity. Added to all this was the economic crisis provoked by the English Maritime blockade. All that was left was agriculture, which according to the conclusions of Gavignaud's (1983) research, was little affected, simply a change in hands rather than structures. The bourgeois remained the dominant class; "the rich remained rich, and the poor remained poor" (Marceti-Juncosa 1991). The sale of church and National property had little impact on the social distribution of land. But after the revolution individual property ownership, including the former communal forests and mountains, were no longer safe-guarded under the medieval Code de Barcelona. The Revolution also marked the official passage from a feudal market system to a capitalist economy.

The most dreaded imposition of the new regime was the obligatory military service and conscription from 1792 on, which was met with outright resistance. During the Spanish invasion the province showed little patriotism, twenty years on, in 1813, according to the Prefet the Department was still playing with the rhetoric of National identity in the service of their own interests; *"they want to follow alternatively French or Spanish law according to which one will exempt them from National obligations"* (quoted in Isern 1972). In a letter to the War Minister in the same year he added: *"C'est un effet de la localité qui, placée à l'extrémité de la France, ne participe ni au*

commerce ni a l'instruction de l'intérieur" (quoted in Isern 1972). In chapter 7, we shall find that much the same sentiment still rings true today.

Under the Second Republic (1845-1852) feelings of ethnic solidarity, the fear of reprisals and an ingrained suspicion of government agencies continued. In the words of the Sub-Prefet of Céret in February 1850; "*Depuis long-temps dans ce pays, les campagnards apprennent à leur enfants à considérer le Gouvernement, quel qu'il soit, comme leur ennemi naturel et personnel*" (cited in McPhee 1977). Later on the Left, 'Rouge', was to capitalise on the nascent anti-government feeling, with the swing throughout the Midi in the years 1815 - 1900 from Royalism to Socialism. Socialism was never deeply rooted in this highly individualistic Department, it was just another way of showing disrespect for Central Government, another sign of 'opposition'. Undoubtedly the French Revolution laid the foundation for French unity, in Roussillon it shook the old society to its foundations. However, more recent scholarship suggests that it was during the Third Republic (1870 - 1914), with the creation of a national road and railway network, compulsory primary education under the Juliès Ferry laws of 1881, the universal military conscription and the 'great letting of blood' in World War One, that Weber's peasants became Frenchmen⁴ (cf. Kohn 1967).

There can be no doubt but that the ambiguous political identity of Roussillon, its frontier geographic position and economic isolation, was etched in the morals and values of the local character. As we shall see from the analysis of recent field work in chapters 6, 7 & 8, Roussillon or at least the Aspre has retained to this day a vague sense of sacrilege and refuge from Central Power.

4.5 The Commons - The Plight of the Forest.

In a society where central power always had difficulty making itself felt, the forest became the ultimate site of transgression where politics, economics, ecology, and social

⁴The economic decline, civil war and political unrest in Spain until recent times did not render the opposing identity very attractive. More often than not the advantage was seen to lay in the French Welfare State.

pressures under the weight of demography and poverty, were played out. Commercial logging in the Mediterranean basin dates back to ancient times; navies from the Phoenicians to the Venetians and later the Spanish Armada, had always taken their toll. The Spanish colonization of America in the 1600s is held responsible for the denuded limestone hills of the Corbière du Roussillon. An even greater pressure exerted on the forest of the Aspre were the Catalan forges, (mentioned as far back as the twelfth century) used to treat the ore of the Canigou, which were in full swing in the XVIth and XVIIth centuries and continued to operate right up to the late XIXth century. The renewed onslaught on the forest of the Aspre and Vallespir seriously disrupted the hydrology of the rivers and canals on the plain. The ensuing serious flooding seems to have prompted the construction of several canals on the Têt in order to protect such towns as Thuir, Millas, Ille (Broc 1992). Abbé Marcé observed in 1784; "*Quand les montagnes étaient couvertes d'arbres c'étaient les inondations d'eau; aujourd'hui ce sont des inondations de pierres et de sable*". Without the sponge affect of its forested watershed, Roussillon was inundated with floods from 1716 to 1783, with the most devastating of the century being that of December 1772.

The official royal politics of the XVIIIth century encouraged forest clearance, once more as a response to increasing demographic pressure. Between 1730 - 1790 the population density of the Haute Aspre rose from 12 to 20 people per km² (Broc 1955). The objective behind the Royal land clearance decree of 1766 (with the incentive of tax exemption for fifteen years), was to increase agriculture production in line with increasing population, and in particular to achieve security in the quantity of grain, necessary to maintain social order in a country where bread was the staple food. However most of the so called waste land and forest had previously been used for grazing purposes, but cultivation was to have predominance over pastoralism, something that in time was to prove highly significant for the Aspre. Gavignaud (1983) provides statistics for Roussillon-Vallespir between 1767 and 1782, indicating that 2,000 ha was cleared and brought under cultivation. In reality the figure was far higher, because much of the cleared land, essentially composed of garrigue and maqui, was planted with vines (being more suitable to the terrain than cereals), which were not declared since

it was illegal to defy the drive towards grain self-sufficiency. The land clearance or 'défrichement' stopped in 1782, it was deemed dangerous to the environment, besides it had disappointed the administration who remarked the expansion in vines rather than the intended cereals. By 1780 both Roussillon and Southern Catalonia were still deficient in grain, which in the case of Roussillon had to be imported at a large expense from Languedoc, and at the limit from North Africa and Italy via the port of Marseille.

Due to a combination of 'défrichement' and over use of the forest, in the late eighteenth century the forges of the Aspre and Vallespir were also obliged to import the necessary wood or charcoal by sea from Languedoc. When the forests had not recovered by the mid nineteenth century, the Conseil Général in 1847, to the dismay of the local forge owners, granted special permission allowing the export of untreated iron ore across the Pyrenees to Spanish forges, endowed with a better supply of charcoal. This in itself is a powerful symbol of the ecological state of the Vallespir in the nineteenth century. Similarly, the description of some of the communes of the Aspre in the 'cahier de doléances', prepared for the reconvened Third Estate in 1789 leave no doubt as to their denuded state; - Boule d'Amont, *"where there is only rock"*; Caixas, Montauriol, Oms, Prunet et Belpuig, St. Marsal., Taillet, Taulis - *"whose terrain is situated on elevated hills and mountains, that the storms and floods have destroyed, and are now in a state without trees"* (cited in Frenay 1979).

Over the centuries the Seigneurs, Private Property owners and the State tried to establish property rights over the commons, consisting essentially of the forest and high pastures; all such attempts were fiercely contested by the local community. Emanating from the time of the 'Customs of Barcelona', the forest was perceived by the local population as providing them with unlimited usage rights for pasturage, domestic fuel, wood for construction and the collection of forest fruits and acorns. Besides, the commons were an integral part of the daily survival mechanisms of the majority of the landless and small property owners. The part legitimate, part mythical usage rights became synonymous with communal rights, with the Seigniorial or State's undisputed custodian rights over the commons being seen as an insignificant symbolic detail. In

effect they were seen as nominal custodians of what under 'la loi Strate' was squarely for the benefit of the locals.

The French Revolution marked a return to Roman legislation, with emphasis on individual property ownership and gave increased impetus to the demands of the Bourgeois. However, Cadastral records of land ownership never carried as much weight under Catalan as French law (cf. Assier-Andrieu 1987). The ordinary inhabitants of the Aspre were having none of this individualism in the guise of high sounding liberalism and environmental conservation, but behind which lurked a drive towards modernization and State commercial interest in exploiting the forest for their own profit. The plight of the forest in the early nineteenth century, for which Brunet (1990) provides us with specific archival examples, brought the politics of ecology to the forefront. The 'Notable's' widespread concern for nature was typified by the 'Sous-Préfet' of Céret when, in year 1799 he declared that: "*Les défrichements sont à comble, les montagnes se pèlent, les forêts se détruisent, les rivières se comblent et ravage la plaine dans leur débordements*" (cited in Brunet 1990).

The attachment of the local population to their communal rights was equally self-righteous. The conflict between the forest and the powers of the day reached their maximum when the post revolutionary administration tried to enforce the 1827 'Code Forestier', which was designed to restrict access (excluding all goats) to the forest and regulate its use ostensibly for ecological reasons. However, with many places including the Aspre reaching their demographic watershed around the same time, such a luxury was perceived as out of the question and all attempts to regulate forest use, including restricting access to their loyal friend the goat was resented and ignored in practice. Sentiments ran so high that the new forest code provoked a rebellion similar to the 'Guerre des Demoiselles' in the bordering Canton of Haute-Ariège, and for the same reasons. Besides, it was perceived as a move towards the privatization of what was held to be a communal resource.

However, the administration had it far from all their own way, the so called

'delinquents' found strength in numbers. As noted by the Sous-Préfet of Prades in his report to the Conseil Général in year 1799, the illegal actions of the local population were so common and abundant that it was impossible to implement the 'code forestier': *"La cause en est dans le grand nombre de contrevenants, l'expérience apprend que la où les délinquants sont nombreux, le délit reste souvent impuni parce qu'il y aurait trop de coupable à frapper"* (cited in Brunet 1990). The only law recognised in the forest of the Aspre and Vallespir (as elsewhere in the Department) continued for a long time to be that of the axe and shotgun; or as the old adage put it, 'Le charbonnier est maître chez soi'. Besides the 'charbonnier' knew that he could make a lot more from his charcoal 'enterprise', for which there was a ready market, than as a servile day labourer.

It was not just the forge owners and charcoal makers that attacked the forest, but especially the poor and landless peasants which we find in abundance in the Vallespir and Albères. Having no part of the 'Agar' (arable land), they tried to temporarily valorise the high 'Saltus', with slash and burn tactics (known as 'Tallat i sembrat'), reminiscent of the Tropics, in an effort to gain their daily bread under rising demographic pressure. According to Bécat (1973), there is evidence that prior to 1850 in the Aspre and Albères, cultivation was being undertaken at 1,800m, on long terraced slopes of 75% gradient. The 'tallat i sembrat' at best yielded a crop for two to three years before the cultivator had to move onto the next patch. This practice highlights the socio-ecological impoverishment of the region, which we note was not just a function of demographic pressure, but also the prevailing agrarian structure, the unequal distribution of land, and the industrial interests of absentee landed forge owners. The general land hunger becomes clearer when on examination of Table 2, we note that on the eve of the revolution the 'Privileged' category, made up of nobles, urban bourgeois and clergy, were concentrated in the rich arable and wooded terrain of Roussillon-Vallespir, where they constituted 19% of private land owners, but owned 58% of the private territory. In contrast the so called 'non exempts' or landed peasant farmers, even though they constituted 81% of private land owners, owned only 41% of the territory; the average size of their holdings being under 1 ha as opposed to 11 ha among

the privileged category (19 ha among the Nobles). A similar situation prevailed in Conflent - Capcir, only in the mountainous terrain of Cerdagne were the peasant farmers dominant, owning 83% of the private territory. The mountains were the refuge of the peasants, except in the Vallespir, which was characterised by very large property owners, frequently consisting of forest owned by forge owners.

Category	Nobles			Clergy			Exempt			Non Exempt		
	RV	CC	C	RV	CC	C	RV	CC	C	RV	CC	C
Land Owners (%)	6	2	2	4	2	0	9	4	1	81	92	97
Private Territory (%)	33	20	12	6	25	1	19	7	4	41	48	83
Aver. Size of Property (Ha)	19	17	22	6	24	9	7	3	15	1	1	3
Regional Concentration of Category Types (%)	78	18	4	74	24	1	75	24	1	51	38	10

Legend: RV = Roussillon - Vallespir, CC = Conflent - Capcir, C = Cerdagne.
The Exempt Category Consists of Bourgeois, and Urban Intellectuals.
The Non-Exempt Consists of Landed Peasant Farmers

Table 2: Land Ownership in Roussillon in 1775. (Source: Gavignaud 1983).

In summary, Table 2 confirms the 'latifundiaire' agrarian structure in operation in Roussillon-Vallespir in the late eighteenth century, which is in keeping with what we find in the Aspre commune of Saint Marsal in the following section. The uneven distribution of the land reinforced the importance of the commons. Under such conditions, little wonder the 'tallat i sembrat' practices were so common that we find some forest officials in the Vallespir quietly sanctioning that which they could not prevent, by coming to an agreement with the 'delinquents' from whom they bought part of the harvest, provided they prepared the ground after them for the setting of ash and

chestnut saplings⁵.

The political ecology of the forest was firmly entwined in Bourgeois - Peasant antagonism and conflicting interests. Associated with the poor and landless was the 'satanic' animal, the goat, who was projected by the authorities as the prime enemy of the forest and banned from access under the 'code forestier'. Not only was this animal vital to the survival of the poor, but its symbolism hid the ancestral rivalry between the landed and landless. The goat came to be seen not just as a thorn in the side of the forest, but also of the bourgeois. Besides the poor had little to gain by complying with forest conservation measures, it would be the 'notable' and forge owners, who stood to profit in the medium and long term, whereas the poor had their sights firmly fixed on more immediate day to day survival.

Population pressure which was on the rise throughout the Mediterranean in the late XVIII th century continued to place pressure on natural resources. Between 1790 - 1846 the population density of the Haute Aspre rose from 20 to a peak of 32 people per km² (Broc 1955). The human ecological impoverishment highlighted in the above saga of the forest, brings out the fallacy in the commonly held assumption, that what is ecologically adaptive or economically rational must therefore be inevitable. This was not so in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the Aspre, and neither was the twentieth centuries attempt at economic rationality reflected in the planting of fast growing conifers in the Aspre successful.

One suspects that had the forest been left in the hands of the local community, 'the delinquents', they would have arrived at a more equitable management system, based around their long standing agro-sylvo-pastoral economy. There is a striking contrast between the use and abuse of the commons of the Aspre and the harmonious,

⁵Not all the political officials were this understanding. The 'Sous-Préfet' of Céret had this to say about the 'tallat i sembrat' delinquents: "Les défrichements continuent avec la même fureur ces terres sont exploitées par des hommes qui n'ont aucune propriété et qui tuent les bestiaux des propriétaires qui usant de leur droit, les font pacager sur ce terrain; ils détruisent la plaine qu'ils ensablent, ils empêchent l'éducation des troupeaux, ils bravent nos lois ils méprisent les moyens de conservation et de défenses, ils font en un mot tout le mal qu'ils peuvent" (cited in Brunet 1990).

meticulously regulated picture painted by Netting (1971;1981), in a not too dissimilar upland area of the Swiss Alps, whose commons belonged to and were solely managed by the village community. In the Aspre it would appear that the conflicting agenda of the various interested parties, and the legal and political system they mustered to their defense complicated matters, and resulted in a twined social and ecological impoverishment on the ground.

It is interesting to note that after centuries of battling over the commons, only three villages (la Llagonne in Capcir and Aiguetebia & Sauto in Conflent) in the entire Department of the Pyrénées Orientales managed to retain their communal usage rights over their local forests into the twentieth century. Most of the rest of the mountain communes have been sold to international speculators for what is locally described as "une bouchée de pain". The saga of the forest, along with contraband activities, reinforce the local disrespect for law and order. These cultural 'traits' may not be carved in stone but they are no less surely etched on the morals and values of its people and the local administration. The blending of the past and present resurfaces in chapter 7, where we find traces of the above mentality still alive and well among the indigenous inhabitants of the Aspre today.

4.6 Mutation in the Mountain-Plain Relationship.

The fate of the forest of the Aspre-Vallespir and other upland areas of Roussillon cannot be studied in isolation of what was happening on the plain. Essentially pastoralists and cultivators opposed each other at the end of the 'Ancien Régime'. The cultivators, concentrated on the plain, resented an agricultural system they had inherited from another age, founded on several collective obligations and communal usage and grazing rights; which forced them to sit back and watch their arable stubble and vineyards overrun by the greedy herds of sheep down from the mountains for their winter 'holidays'. The administration following its concern for grain security, promoted cultivation over pastoralism without fully realising that cultivation would not work without manure from pastoralism. Pastoralism continued to be dependent on a traditional system based on solidarity between mountains and plain, which was well adapted to the natural

environmental constraints of the region. Roussillon's deficit in grain, which continued into the mid nineteenth century held this somewhat precarious symbiotic mountain - plain relationship in tact⁶.

Inevitably over time it gave way, and two principal factors can be held responsible for finally eroding the hitherto precarious balance. First there were the innovations of the so called 'second agricultural revolution'. As outlined in chapter 3, the introduction of the plough to Catalonia around 1775, and the well adapted potato and maize crops from the Americas in the late eighteenth century, allowed for a new crop rotation resulting in the reduction of the fallow period and the overall intensification of agriculture. This meant that agricultural production could be doubled or made to yield half as much again, and although there were more people they could be better fed than in the past. Bloch (1966) argued that without this quiet revolution there could have been no large scale industrial development, based on high urban populations divorced from direct contact with the land.

The success of the technical revolution where by the fallow system ceased to be necessary, gave increased impetus to those who for a long time were lobbying to do away with the so called 'vestiges of ancient barbarism', i.e the communal obligations which prevented them making maximum use of their private properties. Since France was never really unified under the 'Ancien Régime', between 1769 and 1781 a series of edicts were issued in various parts of the country including Roussillon in 1769, abolishing communal grazing rights, - 'le droit de parcours et de vaine pâture'. Similarly a series of edicts from 1767 to 1777 granted freedom to enclose land in a number of places, which was again sanctioned by the 'Conseil Souverain' of Roussillon in 1776. In the century of the Enlightenment the rights of the individual were considered paramount; and as previously noted the trend towards individual property ownership gained increased impetus after the French Revolution. Theoretically the

⁶The shortage was reflected in the higher than average price for Roussillon grain, whose average price between 1800 and 1860 was 23 F per hectolitre, as opposed to 17 F/Hl in Vienna (Gavignaud 1983).

assault on the commons and the erection of fences had serious repercussions for small hill farmers and labourers of places like the Aspre, whose only means of feeding their animals was frequently the commons in combination with their neighbours after grass and stubble. Similarly, winter grazing on the lowlands was an integral part of the agro-silvo-pastoral system of the uplands. As in the case of the forest it took a long time for laws on paper to materialise on the ground in Roussillon, and we can still find reference to the practice of 'vaine pâture' in the high pyrenees today (cf. Balent 1993). The 1769 Royal edict may have abolished collective grazing rights, but if the viticulteurs of Roussillon complained about the flocks of sheep among their vines, they could expect to find their vineyards uprooted during the night. The frequent reference to 'Field Guards' ('Gardes Champêtres') in the literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, whose job was to guard the crops in the field at night is testimony to the fact that private ownership was not respected, rather it was another playing field where vengeance was sought, and where the poor could exercise their rights over the rich. However the above legal trends are telling about 'the sign of the times' and the brewing conflict between the mountains and plains of the Mediterranean.

The second factor driving a wedge in the mountain - plain relationship was the arrival of artificial fertilizers on the market around 1850. This innovation along with improved communications, mechanization and closer market integration of the nineteenth century meant that the production of grain on the plain ceased to be indispensable, since it could now be effectively imported from places like the Ukraine (see chapter 5). Only then did the wine arrive as abundant as the wheat in the 'Canal du Midi', and the sheep of the Aspre were no longer welcome on the plain. Besides, as we shall see in the following chapter by the late nineteenth century both the sheep and human population of the Haute Aspre were on the decline. The opposition between the mountains and plain was also manifest in the agrarian structure of the Department, with individual property ownership being favoured by the plain as a prerequisite to 'progress', whereas we have seen in chapter 3, that the environmental constraints of the uplands favoured agro-silvo-pastoral activities, collective rights and communal ownership. The old agrarian mountain-plain regime worked as an interlocking system, and as Bloch (1966)

rightly noted, it is difficult to take an axe to one part without destroying the whole. Before going on to describe this 'crumbling' effect and its consequences for the Aspre and its forest, I want to take a closer look at the physical and social morphology of the commune of Saint Marsal during its moment of peak land hunger and demographic pressure in the mid-nineteenth century. The following work on Saint Marsal is indebted to the assistance of a local historian, Dr. Jean Reynal.

4.7 The Commune of Saint Marsal in the Mid-Nineteenth Century.

The first Napoleon Cadastre drawn up for the Commune of Saint Marsal in 1841, combined with its 'Recensement de Population' and complementary historical data for this period allows us to build up a picture of the agrarian and social morphology of what is commonly known as the most typical village of the Haute Aspre in the mid-nineteenth century, which we note from Figure 5 corresponds with its maximum population level.

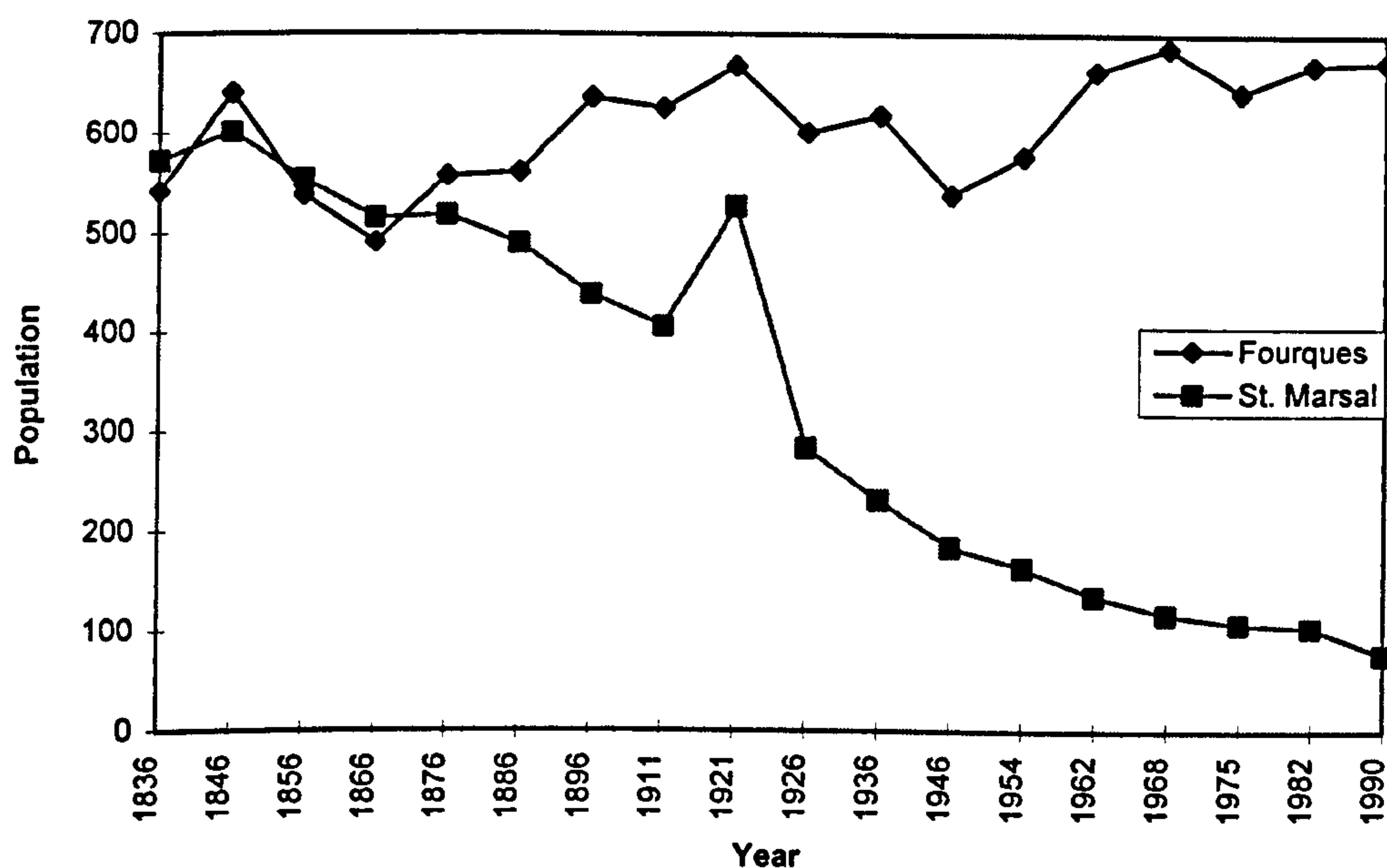


Figure 5: Demographic Evolution of Saint Marsal contrasted with that of Fourques, a Commune of the Basse Aspre (1836-1990).

(Data Source: *Recensement de Population*).

This specific example allows us to ground some of the more general statements arising from the previous section. It also provides us with vital information on the human ecology and composition of the community on the eve of a general decline, thus exposing the vulnerable elements which eventually led to its demise. This in turn sets the stage for present day field work. Since it was without a doubt an agrarian society our research shall centre around the land - who owned it; who worked it; what was it used for, and who transformed its produce?

First let us look at land use in Saint Marsal in 1841, as seen from the Matrice Cadastral (Archives Départementales des Pyrénées Orientales (ADPO) Code 1016, W.418). The 603 inhabitants of Saint Marsal lived in one way or another connected to its territory of 1,490 ha, which was used in the following way;

372 ha Forest (Beech, Birch, Oak, Hazelnut)
17 ha Chestnut Trees
317 ha Non Irrigated Arable Land (Rye, Buckwheat, Potatoes)
725 ha Pasture Land (Prairie Naturel)
18 ha Fodder ('Prairie Artificiel';- Luzern, Clover, Sainfoin)
32 ha Vines.
4 Ha Irrigated Household Gardens
3 ha Non-Irrigated Gardens
2 ha Buildings and Canals
<hr/>
Total 1,490 ha.

The large expanse of pasture-land, about 50% of the total surface area, is indicative of the importance of animal husbandry, which in 1841 consisted of a herd of 2,937 sheep and 91 goats, in total 3,028 ovines. Table 3 puts the number of ovines in perspective with earlier and later herd sizes. Table 4 does the same for the important arable land indicator, which in 1841 reached a staggering 21% of the surface area, a sure sign of population pressure in a mountain commune.

Year	1725	1841	1956	1970	1988
Number of Sheep	3,230	2,937	745	274	396
Number of Goats	465	91	40	51	146
Total Ovines	3,695	3,025	785	325	542

Table 3: Evolution in the Number of Ovines in Saint Marsal (1725-1988).

Year	1725	1841	1956	1970	1988
Quantity in Hectares	315	317	81	12	1
% of Surface Area	21	21	5	0.8	0.06

Table 4: Evolution in Quantity of Arable Land in Saint Marsal (1725-1988).

(Source: Recensement Agricole 1725, A.D.P.O c1081, Matrice Cadastral St.Marsal 1841, A.D.P.O. 1016, W. 418, for Arable Land, A.D.P.O. MNC 307 for Ovine numbers in 1841. Recensement Agricole, DDA Perpignan, 1956, 1970, 1988).

4.7.1 Land Ownership.

The information contained in the 'Contenance et des revenue de la Matrice Cadastral (code Cadastral 1016, W418), provides us with detailed insight into the land ownership structure, which is a vitally important indicator in this essentially agrarian society. A study of the 145 folios of land ownership and property tax, leave little doubt as to the 'latifundiaire' system in operation in the commune in the mid-nineteenth century. In other words the majority of the land was in the hands of the few. We can differentiate three classes of owners; (a) 11 very large property owners possessing between 50 - 120 ha, on which they paid an annual land tax of over 200 F. Between them this group owned 54% of the surface area of the commune; (b) 9 medium sized property owners of between 10 - 50 ha, with a land tax of over 100 F, and among them they owned 14% of the communes surface area; (c) the remaining 124 people owning less than 10 ha (frequently less than 1 ha), who among them lived off 179 ha or 12% of the surface

area. In addition to the above categories we have the communal land, consisting of 304 ha of forest and mountain pasture which constituted 20% of the surface area. All members of the community had access to this land, on which was paid an annual land tax of 630 F.

In summary, excluding the communal land we find 14% of the population controlling 88% of its surface area (in fact 7.6 % of the population controlled 68% of the land), the remaining 86% of the population owned only 12% of the land, in combination with access to the commons. The total cadastral revenue from the commune amounted to 7,633 Ancien Francs, 50% of which was paid by the eleven large property owners. Such an unequitable distribution of land and power highlight the latifundium agrarian structure, common throughout the Mediterranean and Gavignaud's (1983) work cited in the previous section, confirms that it was the norm in the Vallespir in the late eighteenth century. This example also highlights the importance of the commons and communal grazing and access rights for the majority of the local population. The 19 mas that we find in Saint Marsal during this period came from the large and medium property owners. We should also note that many of the large land owners did not live in the area, being part of the urban bourgeoisie, who rented their mas 'en metyage'. In order to discover how the mass of practically landless peasants lived, we turn to an examination of the 146 professions of the 'Chef de Famille', as seen from the 'Recensement de la Population' (A.D.P.O. MNC 2517, Nouvelle cote 6MP 140).

The Basis of the professions remained agricultural with;

19 Proprietaires
11 Cultivators
46 'Brassiers' (Agricultural Labourers, hired on a seasonal basis)
18 'Ouvriers Agricoles' (Agricultural Labourers hired on a yearly basis)
12 Shepherds (Employed by large Mas owners)
<hr/>
Total 106

Both the cultivators and proprietors owned their own land, the difference between the two groups was the quantity of land owned, with the proprietor always being the largest. The proprietaires constituted the group in the Maitrise Cadastral who paid an agrarian tax of over 100 F per year. The 'Brassier' as the name employs, earned his living by the force of his arm, and was employed on the large mas for seasonal work. During slack agricultural periods we find him working in the local mines or in the forest. The 'Brassier' frequently owned a small quantity of land, which was insufficient to live off. He may or may not be married depending on his ability to support a family. In contrast the 'ouvriers agricoles' and shepherds, employed on the large mas, were always celibate and owned no land.

The other professions found in the village were linked to the transformation of agro-pastoral products, which in itself is an important indicator of the existence of an exchange economy in this pre-industrial hinterland. In this category we find:

8 Millers ('Meuniers' - covers iron, textile and flour mills)
8 Weavers ('Tisserands')
5 Tailors
2 Cobblers ('Cordonniers', who worked on sheep leather)
3 Carpenters/Coopers ('Menuisiers' - makers of the chestnut wine casks)
1 Blacksmith (Maréchal Ferrant)

Total 27

The remaining professions consisted of;

4 Stone Masons
3 Salesmen ('Revendeurs')
1 Innkeeper ('Cabaretier')
1 Transporter ('Voiturier')
1 Health Official ('Officer de Santé')
1 Forest Guard ('Garde Forestier')
1 Artist - Painter ('Peintre')
1 Curate ('Le Curé')
<hr/>
Total 13

The presence of non agricultural workers in the village, such as the millers, weavers, tailors, coopers, salesmen etc., is testimony to the in situ transformation of local agricultural and forest produce. Due to their relatively large numbers and the presence of 3 brick a brace salesmen, we can conclude that their produce was for the external market, refuting any notion that this was an autarchic society. The fleeces from the marino sheep were first treated in the hydraulic textile mills, the resultant wool was woven into cloth by the weavers, which was then cut into adjustable pieces by the tailors and sold to an external market by the salesmen. These were also the people who found buyers in the Basse Aspre or on the Plain for the chestnut wine casks. The importance of the cottage textile industry in the village is a hangover from the flourishing textile industry of the XIV th century in the neighbouring towns of Arles sur Tech and Prats de Mollo, which drew from their surrounding Vallespir villages.

The status of the workers involved in the transformation of agro-pastoral produce was almost equivalent to that of the cultivators. They may or may not be married depending on their economic ability to support a family. Neither were the above professions mutually exclusive, for example one of the large property owners, the Mayor, Mr Barnedas, hired somebody to make chestnut barrels. Similarly, some of the textile workers may have owned a small patch of land on which, (with the help of the commons) they kept a few sheep, goats and the household pig. Every house had its

own vegetable garden, the all important 'potager' formed an integral part of the staple diet. The non agricultural workers also had to pay a Cadastral tax, which was levied on the house as well as the land. Depending on usage the community in general paid the tax on the commons.

Before leaving the professions found in Saint Marsal one should note the significance of the Innkeeper, which indicates that there must have been some form of passage in these hills, very likely his best customers were smugglers. No doubt the lucrative contraband trade also accounts for the presence of the large Customs Post with ten officers in the neighbouring commune of Boule d'Amont. In 1810 we find a reference to a customs officer, Lieutenant Azalet, who had his cap pierced by a bullet in Saint Marsal, fired by a trafflicant in Spanish cod (cf. Alart 1868). The presence of the Forest Guard among the inhabitants of Saint Marsal is testimony to the authorities difficulties in policing the forest. The reference to an artist in a rural village is quiet unusual for this period, he may have been working on the elaborate church alter or frescos⁷. Either way his presence marks a contact with the outside world, whose cultural movement successfully made its way to our mountain village; proof of which is the fact that one of its own sons, Gabriel, Emmanuel Farail became a famous sculptor, whose name was known far beyond the Pyrenees in the course of the nineteenth century. Finally no nineteenth century community was complete without its Curate. However, we find that Fr. Ballovéras, the Curate of Saint Marsal in 1841, often went about his pastoral duties armed with a pistol. He was troubled by the 'Reds' (communists) among his flock, who did not hesitate to disrupt his services and sabotage his vegetable garden (cf. Badin 1964).

The socio-economic structure of the other villages of the Haute Aspre during this period were not too dissimilar to Saint Marsal. For example, the 'Recensement de la Population' indicates that among the 575 inhabitants of Camélas in 1841 there were 55

⁷In neighbouring Serrabone during the same period we find a musician, whose usefulness at the various fêtes is less of a surprise (Cf. Reynal 1982).

'brassiérs', 5 proprietors, 24 cultivators, 6 shepherds, 3 blacksmiths, 3 carpenters /coopers, 1 mason, 2 shoe makers, 4 weavers, 2 tailors, 2 midwives, 1 health official, and 2 Priests. Similarly, in Boule d'Amont apart from the agricultural workers we find 10 Customs Officers, 1 Innkeeper, 3 forge workers, 4 weavers, 2 tailors, 1 carpenter, 3 salesmen, and 1 health official.

In summary we are looking at a pre-industrial society with an exchange economy, in situ transformation of local agro-pastoral produce for the external market and a sort of symbiotic relationship between the few large mas owners (living in dispersed habitation), who found their labour supply, tradesmen and commercants in the local village. It was far from an autarchic, closed, self-sufficient society, which will become clearer when we look at the demise of this economy in the following chapter. The 'latifundiaire' agrarian structure, whereby the majority of the land was to be found in the hands of the few, was no doubt one of the contributory factors behind the mass immigration which started in the late nineteenth century, corresponding with the opening up of new opportunities elsewhere.

4.7.2 Social Morphology.

The social control mechanisms which were in place to counterbalance the agrarian, economic and environmental constraints of the time are to be found within the household. The 603 inhabitants of Saint Marsal were distributed between 127 hearths, occupying 118 houses, giving an average of about five people per house. This figure is misleading, because from the 1841 'Recensement de la Population' (A.D.P.O. MNC 2517), we remark that the household of the large mas usually contained nearer to nine people, including domestics. In the 'Registar de Recensement' for Saint Marsal we note that its 603 inhabitants were categorised as follows;

176 Celibate Men	----	178 Celibate Women.
99 Married Men	—	102 Married Women.
19 Widowers	----	29 Widows.
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294 Men		309 Women

We remark that two thirds of the population was celibate, among which we must distinguish children, adult celibates and widows and widowers. The register does not distinguish between children and adult celibates, which in itself is interesting because it shows that celibates, i.e. those who were never destined to becoming 'chef de famille', were considered as minors and dependants, regardless of their age. The low social status of celibacy, which albeit a large proportion of the adults submitted to, is linked with inheritance rules, socio-economics and the prevailing agrarian structure. The high mortality rate of 29.6 ‰ in the Pyrénées Orientales in the period 1821-1845, (as opposed to an average of 24.5‰ in France), was accompanied by high birth rate of 37‰, the French average being 29.6‰ (Callon 1932). Given the inequitable agrarian structure, restrictions on nuptiality were necessary to keep population increases in line with resources⁸.

Going through the composition of the individual households one is struck by the frequent presence of unmarried brothers and sisters, and neither was it unusual to find three generations under the same roof. The shortage of land, the inelasticity of the physical environment and as we shall soon see the inheritance system imposed celibacy on a large proportion of the Aspre's population. We find similar nuptiality control mechanisms in operation in the Alps (cf. Netting 1981; 1971, Viazzo 1989), and in the mountains of the Himalayas, where the monasteries of places like Tibet and the custom of polyandry performed the same function. Even though the medieval 'formariage' had disappeared (to be replaced by a dowry), village endogamy continued due at least in part to the rules governing access to communal land, which dictated that one had to be born and live in the village. Village endogamy is further reinforced by the scarcity of surnames; we remark that in 1841 only 73 surnames are to be found among its 127 hearths of Saint Marsal. The christian names were even less abundant, and were taken from a sample of 42 originals, with a strong preference for the names of the local patron saints, for example, there were 8 Martial, 9 Michels etc.

⁸Infant mortality was common, as were outbreaks of cholera, pointing to poor hygiene practices.

Inheritance System.

The land inheritance system is also vital in this saga. The Catalan 'droit d'aïnesse', where by the eldest son ('l'areu'), inherited all the property was the norm. The eldest son and daughter are frequently indicated in the census register, as the only members of the family who married, the younger children being condemned to a life of celibacy and working initially for their father and when he died for their eldest brother, thus constituting a valuable labour supply. The Catalan law of succession with its bias for the first born son continued to operate in the Aspre and Roussillon long after the implementation of the French Code Civil, which stipulated the division of the patrimony in equal shares among all the children. The Catalan inheritance laws were designed to maintain the integrity of the land and to ensure the successful transmission of the farm from one generation to the next. The in-marrying wife (usually the eldest female child), brought with her a dowry, which was given to the grooms father; and provided the rest of the children remained celibate the dowry would eventually be ploughed back into the land. One can easily see that if the small holdings or even the large mas were subdivided in each generation the former would be totally non viable and the latter would jeopardise its socio-economic status, and the requirement of large tracks of mountain land for a viable agro-pastoral system upon which the mas was based. Thus, with good reason the traditional inheritance system favoured the land over its people.

The inheriting son assumed succession to the family patrimony only on the death of his father (cf. Bulger 1990; Chevalier 1956). The father thus maintained a large degree of control over the family and farm, by withholding control over ownership. This strong patriarchal social structure is characteristic of the Mediterranean model (cf. Peristiany 1965; Davis 1977). As Solinas (1986) argued, it was the totality of the family and its patrimony that counted, there was no place for individualism. It was a patriarchal society based on dependence, obedience, respect and submission. The trappings of a legacy of conservatism and continuity is conjured up by the commonly used term one still hears in every day usage in the Aspre; - 'un Bon Père de Famille'. It took a 'bon père de famille' to maintain the rigid social structure we find in operation in the hills of the Aspre in the nineteenth century. As we shall see in chapter 7, the inherited

social and agrarian structures have left their mark on the present day mentality and world vision of its children. The patriarchal grip weakened only when opportunities for an independent existence opened up elsewhere, only then do we remark the great swarming of the over full 'beehive'. Before going on to discuss the demise of the Aspre economy, let us sketch an outline of Saint Marsal's portrait on the eve of the twenty first century.

The refuge of a thousand years is now in a state of desertion, (except for the retired and seasonal tourists), the mas are abandoned, the land is on 'friche'. Land use in Saint Marsal, provided by the most recent 'Recensement Agricole', indicate that in 1988 only 43% of the surface area of the commune was in use. It was divided between;

599 ha Natural Prairie
32 ha Artificial Prairie
1 ha Cereals
1 ha Abandoned Vineyards
<hr/>
Total 635 ha

Essentially, these 635 ha are used to support a heavily subsidised herd of 540 sheep and 60 cows. The remaining 855 ha (57% of surface area) is either 'en friche' - maqui (21%), or in naturally regenerating forest (36%).

The 'Inventaire Communal' held in the village Mairie indicate that only twelve people out of its 77 inhabitants are gainfully employed, the rest being either dependents or part of the large retired population the majority of whom are outsiders. The 11 professions of 1988 consist of;

4 farmers (3 of whom are outsiders)
1 General Store
1 Post Office Worker
1 Auberge Restaurant (owned and run by a Belgian couple)
1 Café-Restaurant (owned by the commune)
1 Part-time Mairie Secretary
1 Teacher (for 12 children from the surrounding villages)
1 Beekeeper and Artist (outsider)

Total 11

Reynal (1982) captures the essence of its present condition better than any dry statistics when he declared; *"Il ne reste plus aux terres schisteuses de l'Aspre que leur grave beauté et, après l'été, le goût amer de la solitude sous le soleil d'automne"*.

Today we note that the territory of Saint Marsal supports 4 farmers and a flock of 540, EU subsidised sheep and 63 cows (which we shall see in chapter 7 is owned by a newly arrived 'chasseur de prime'), as opposed to over a hundred agricultural workers and over 3,000 ovines and 80 cows in 1841, a mere century and a half previously. The reduction in the number of people living off the land does not necessarily imply that the cause lies with land degradation; rather the land of Saint Marsal was abandoned due, as we shall see in the following chapter, to its inability to meet new socio-economic expectations. Research in the Midi-Pyrenees by Balent (1987, 1993) suggests that the removal of farming systems, in this case animal husbandry, has had a direct impact on biodiversity and the fertility of the soil (eg. reduction in organic manure). This in turn implies that even without artificial inputs, 'carrying capacity' is far from an absolute or static ecological indicator of land degradation.

We now turn to the economic demise of the Aspre in the late nineteenth century.

CHAPTER 5: DEMISE OF THE ASPRE ECONOMY.

5.1 Introduction.

The preceding chapter surveyed the significant events in the socio-biophysical system of the Aspre up to the mid nineteenth century. This chapter picks up the story at that point and charts its course up to the present day, prior to commencing field work. This period of its history co-insides with the socio-economic demise of the majority of the Aspre's communes, and thus the chapter title.

In the second half of the eighteenth century the drainage and irrigation network on the plain of Roussillon was greatly extended, and thus it acquired an advantage over the Aspre that continues to this day (cf. Broc 1992). The return of political stability to the region, its extensive irrigation system, improved communications and agricultural techniques, and the introduction of artificial fertilisers in the 1850s, allowed the plain to further distance itself from the hills of the Aspre. Towards the end of the nineteenth century the discovery of quinine reduced lowland mortality from malaria, making coastal areas habitable all year round. After the Revolution wine taxes between Provinces were abolished, and from the 1850s on the plain oriented itself more towards viticulture. The 1852 Departmental census indicates 46,900 ha of vines as opposed to 44,500 ha of cereals (McPhee 1977).

Between 1860 and 1880 there was another rapid increase in the area under vines on the plain. The reason behind this explosion was first the opening of the railway line between Narbonne and Perpignan in 1858, allowing easy and cheap access to the markets of the North where wine (not cereals) was considered a luxury product¹. The other reason was paradoxically the phylloxera invasion, a wine destroying insect accidentally imported from America, which devastated the vineyards of Languedoc, but due to its late arrival in Roussillon in 1879, it had a less devastating impact, (except in

¹The Canal tariff for wine transport was 1 F to 1.25 F per hectolitre, as opposed to 0.14 F per tonne per kilometre by rail (Gavignaud 1983).

the Aspre), as the remedy of using American rootstock and winter submersion was already known (cf. Arbos 1910).

The vineyards on the plain were more resistant and far less affected than those of the Aspre. The result of the 'Enquete Agricole' of 1882, indicate that Llauro was completely 'phylloxérée', Oms lost 600 ha, Boule d'Amont had 80 ha destroyed. The little communes of the Aspre did not have the means to reconstitute their vineyards, except for the most favourable bordering the plain, such as Terrats, Fourques, Saint Colombe, Passa, Vivès. Neither could the vineyards of the Aspre, which theoretically could produce better quality wine, compete with the yields of the plain. At the turn of the century vines from the Haute Aspre produced in the region of 15 - 25 hectolitres/ha, as opposed to 60 hl/ha on the plain (Broc 1955). In effect the Aspre lost one of its principle commercial resources. The surface area under vines in the Haute Aspre fell from 12% of the total area in 1882, to 2% in 1913 (see Figure 7, p148). Where as the phylloxera invasion allowed the plain to exploit a lucrative niche in the market, and with the question of grain provisions settled it turned towards the monoculture of vines from 1880 on. Its extensive irrigation network and improved communications also allowed the plain to expand its interests in market gardening and arboriculture. While the plain was thriving the Aspre struggled for a replacement for its vine cash crop. The highest zones looked towards the dairy economy of the Canigou and Cerdagne, and the lower communes fashioned themselves on the viticole economy of the plain, the major problem lay in the intermediate zone, between 200-400 meters. The division between the semi-mountainous communes of the Haute Aspre and the more Mediterranean influence of the viticole Basse Aspre became more pronounced.

In summary, the initial decline of the Aspre was due to the fact that between the seventeenth and eighteenth century it lost little by little the advantages it had enjoyed over the plain and lowlands. With the onset of political stability its refuge role diminished, the drainage of the plain and its extensive irrigation system made it ideally suited to market gardening and fruit growing, and the plough rendered its heavier soil more workable. Following its integration within a larger economic network, the former

wheat fields turned to the more profitable viticulture in the late nineteenth century, thus competing with one of the most important commercial products of the Aspre. Similarly the control of malaria in the late nineteenth century rendered the plain more attractive to habitation. The abolition of communal grazing rights, the rights of enclosure and the introduction of artificial fertilizers meant that the inverse transhumance sheep of the Aspre and other uplands were no longer welcome in their former winter grazing grounds. As we shall see in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth century the secondary resources of the Aspre's polyculture system also came under attack. Before discussing the demise of the secondary resources of the Aspre it is important to note that the lowlands integration within a competitive and closely knit market economy was not trouble free.

5.2 Closer Market Integration:

"In the place of old wants, satisfied by production of the country we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In the place of the old local and national seclusions and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations".

Marx & Engles, The Communist Manifesto.

Improved communication from the mid nineteenth century on meant that American and Russian wheat could compete with that of the Mediterranean plains. The opening of the Odessa helped bring grain from Russia and the Ukrainian steppe into such ports as Marseille. Cheap and abundant grain may have been good news for the growing urban population, but it undermined the wheat 'latifundia' of the mediterranean, affecting not only the big land owners but also the migrant seasonal labourer. Initially this led to sever economic difficulties and a politically explosive situation in what became know as the 'mévente' lasting from 1848 to 1851. A hectolitre of wheat fell from an average of 23 F in 1848 to 17-18 F prior to a recovery in 1851. The impact of the 'mévente' was already apparent in May 1848 when Fr. Torreilles, the Curé of Clair, in the Conflent wrote in his diary; *"Tout est mort, le blé, le vin, les fourrages ne se vendent pas; les merchands sont aux abois; les ouvriers meurent de faim. Si Dieu n'y met pas*

sa main, où irons-nous" (cited in McPhee 1977)

By the autumn of 1848 the situation was also critical in the wine growing areas. The Rivesalts, Justice of Peace reported that:

"Nous avons vendu très mal le vin l'année dernière. Il existe à vendre les 3/4 de la récolte. Aussi l'hiver dernière la misère s'est fait fâcheusement sentir. Pour que tout le monde puisse vivre tranquillement nous devons vendre le vin de 10 à 12 F au moins l'hectolitre. Le prix actuel est de 7 F l'hectolitre. On ne trouve pas encore à le vendre. A ce prix le propriétaire ne gagne rien". (cited in McPhee 1977).

The 'mévent' hit hard because the lack of cash in circulation created a shortage of work, and the 'Journalier' (landless day labourer), was in no position to weather the economic crisis. The bulging labour force of the Aspre was forced to stay put. On top of all this Louis-Napoleon, on the 20 December 1849 added to the wine growers problem by placing a tax on drink. The drop in wine sales not only had a direct effect on the growers and hired labourers, but also on the economy of places like the Haute Aspre and Vallespir, though not large wine producers, they were indirectly affected by the situation as they had problems selling their chestnut wine casks. In December 1850 the Mayor of St. Laurent de Cerdagne in the Vallespir reported that 150 coopers ('tonneliers') were in desperate straits because of poor wine sales elsewhere in the Department. The economic upturn after 1850 and the signing of a wine treaty with Sardinia helped ease matters. However the 'mévent', drink tax and phylloxera invasion, indicate a very rough passage to tighter market economics. Historians have argued that the severe economic difficulties under the Second Republic (1845-1852) provided the raw material for radicalization and the mass movement to the left. With the economic upturn of the mid nineteenth century the plain was in a strong position to exploit the advantages of a wider market for its wine, fruit and vegetables. Its dependence on cash cropping and the increasing connectedness of the market made it

highly susceptible to outside market fluctuations from then on². In the mid nineteenth century the Department was moving through a gradual but profoundly unsettling period of change in its demographic and socio-economic structure.

5.3 Demise of the Aspre's Secondary Resources.

The industrial revolution changed economic life in all corners of the globe. The world of steamships, rail roads and integrated markets so characteristic of the industrialised nations of the nineteenth century, strongly affected life and commerce beyond their frontiers. The decline in cottage and household industries in Northern Europe, as a direct result of more efficient machines, eventually came to affect the mountains of the Mediterranean, provoking a disequilibrium in the polyculture and auxiliary activities of places like the Aspre. Every locality had its own chronology, but on the whole the decline of upland life proceeding from economic and political causes was a common affair of the nineteenth century (cf. McNeill 1992).

The free importation of wool from Australia under the Third Republic, prompted a drop in wool prices in Roussillon from 200 F per quintal (100 kg) in 1860 to 76 F in 1880. The repercussions for the wool producing marino sheep, and cottage textile industry of the Aspre and Vallespir were great. By this time the plain had abandoned sheep rearing for good and turned to its more profitable pursuits, but place like the Aspre, due to a combination of environmental constraints and poor infrastructure did not have the luxury of such an option. The sheep farmers of the Aspre had to make the difficult transition from wool production to meat, with some of the smaller farmers either giving up and looking for work on the plain or complementing their sheep rearing with a few days work per week in the mines or on road construction. Initially the sheep farmers turned to raising 'boutards' of 15-30 months, but they failed to compete with the more productive regions of Central France (Etude DIAME 1981). After 1930 they turned towards the production of the famous 'agneau de lait', that is milk feed lambs of 3-4

²The failure of the 1907 wine growers revolt in Languedoc-Roussillon was to demonstrate just how vulnerable they were to external politics and economics.

months weighing about 25-30 kg. They were trying to exploit a niche in the market, based on the principle that the further south one moves the smaller they like their lambs. As we shall see in chapter 6, this remains the idea behind the marketing drive of today's 'Agneau Catalan'.

At the same time that one of the principal commercial resources of the Haute Aspre, i.e wine was under attack, so too its wool, textile and metallurgic auxiliary activities were struggling. The long term problem of the twelve Vallespir and eight Conflent forges was to do with the scarcity of fuelwood and the difficulty of transportation; but it was not until 1840 that competition from Northern Europe and Spain really threatened the industry. By the end of the nineteenth century ore from the Canigou was no longer treated in the local Catalan forges, or across the Spanish border, but was exported by train from Amélie les Bains to Decazeville in the middle of France. Work in the mines was an important source of secondary income for many of the men from the Haute Aspre, who worked in the iron ore mines of La Bastide, Taulis and neighbouring Valmany. All the mines of the Aspre had closed by 1930 as their ore ceased to be economical, it was also considered more difficult to extract and treat than ore from other regions, on top of which it had the burden of high transport costs. The closure of the forges and competition from British coal brought to an end the centuries old fabrication of charcoal from the green oak of the Aspre and Vallespir forest. The disappearance of the 'Charbonniers', between 1914 - 1930, was however good news for the forest, that once more began to spread.

The demand for tannin, extracted from the bark of the green oak and chestnut tree dried up by the end of the nineteenth century, similarly the sale of fire wood on the plain also diminished. The price of wood had doubled between 1810 and 1860, but was soon in competition from British coal as a source of domestic and industrial fuel. Thus the produce of the forest which for centuries were an important 'source d'appoint' were no longer in demand. Similar problems of foreign competition were affecting the textile industry, which before 1850 employed 400 people in Prats de Mollo in the Vallespir, and several workers dispersed in the surrounding villages, including eight weavers and

five tailors in the little village of Saint Marsal. The link between the increasing involvement of many sub-regions in an external market economy in the course of the nineteenth century was a complex and vital one. In time it became apparent just how dependent the so called 'subsistence' agricultural economy of the Aspre was on its auxiliary non food producing resources, which were directed towards outside markets.

With the decline of vines, textile and metallurgic industries, the Haute Aspre made one desperate attempt at new adaptations at the end of the nineteenth century, which alas failed one after the other. The cork oaks planted below 500 m on the phylloxered schist terraces of Llauro, Oms, Calmeilles and Céret, were initially quite successful, but cork was never as profitable as vines. The Aspre along with the Albères was for a time one of the most prominent cork growing regions in the Midi-Mediterranean, and the first cork making workshop opened in Llauro in 1874, where it is claimed that the first champagne corks were produced. This initially thriving industry attracted foreign labour, mostly Spanish and Portuguese, as well as a local work force. Llauro was transformed into a prosperous village with 11 cafes, patronised by a workforce with ready cash in their pockets. Similarly, foreigners, essentially Spaniards were to be found in the mines of La Bastide, refuting the image of the Aspre as a closed endogamous society³. After World War One not only was the cork of the Aspre over exploited, the raw material having to be imported from Spain, but the little workshops of the Aspre (along whose narrow medieval streets it was difficult to turn the transport trucks) gradually succumbed to competition from Spain and Algeria and later plastics. One hectare of cork gave a return of 100 F in 1850, which had fallen to 40 F in 1900, proof of the more widespread use of plastic substitutes (cf. De Bonneval 1990). Similarly the experiments with hazelnuts, chestnuts and apples failed one after another. The cherries planted in the Llauro, Cerét area had a limited success in a restricted area.

³At the turn of the century Spanish Nationals constituted 13% of the population of the Aspre (Broc 1955).

The fate of the Aspre is reflected in its demography, shown in Figure 6 and Map 7.

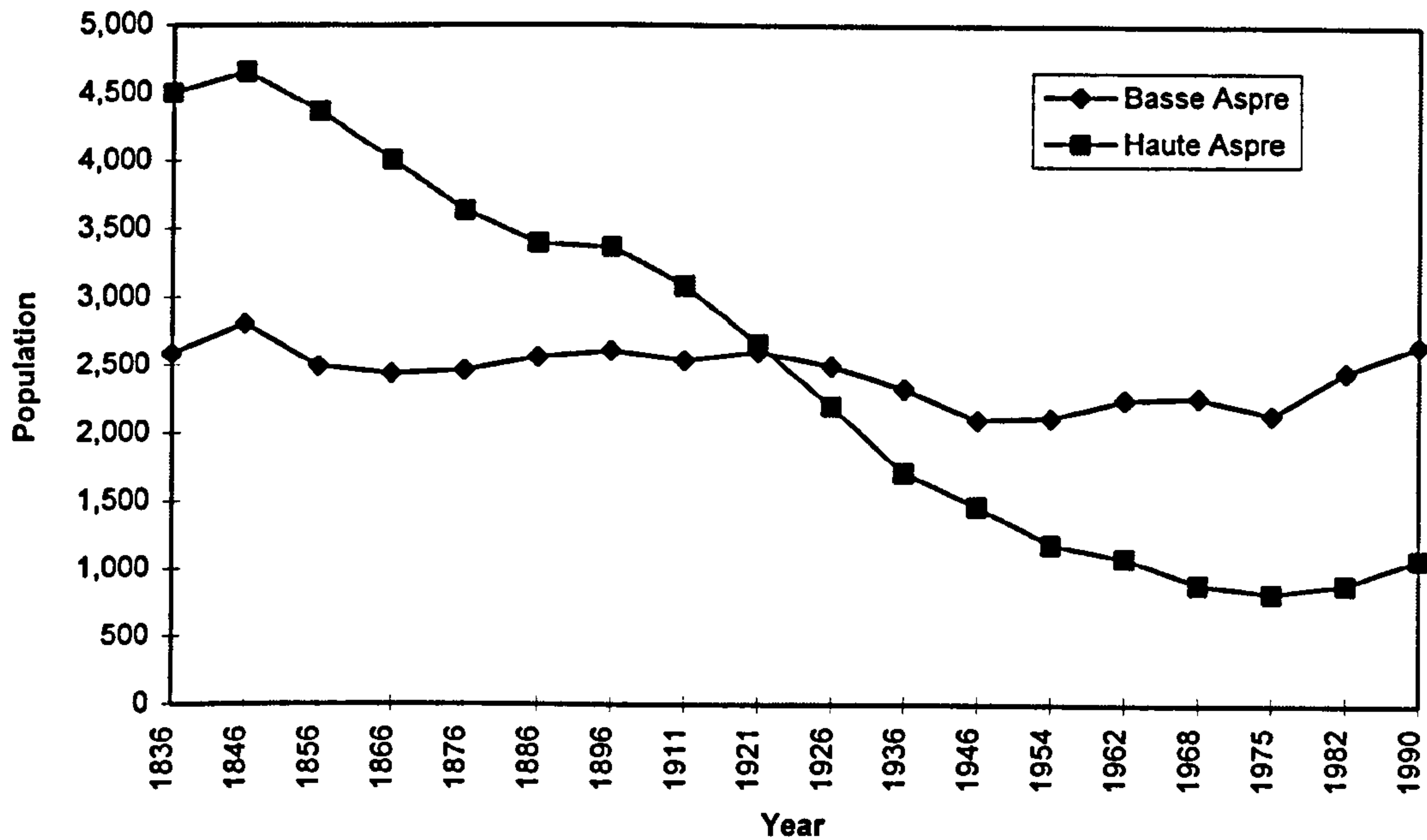
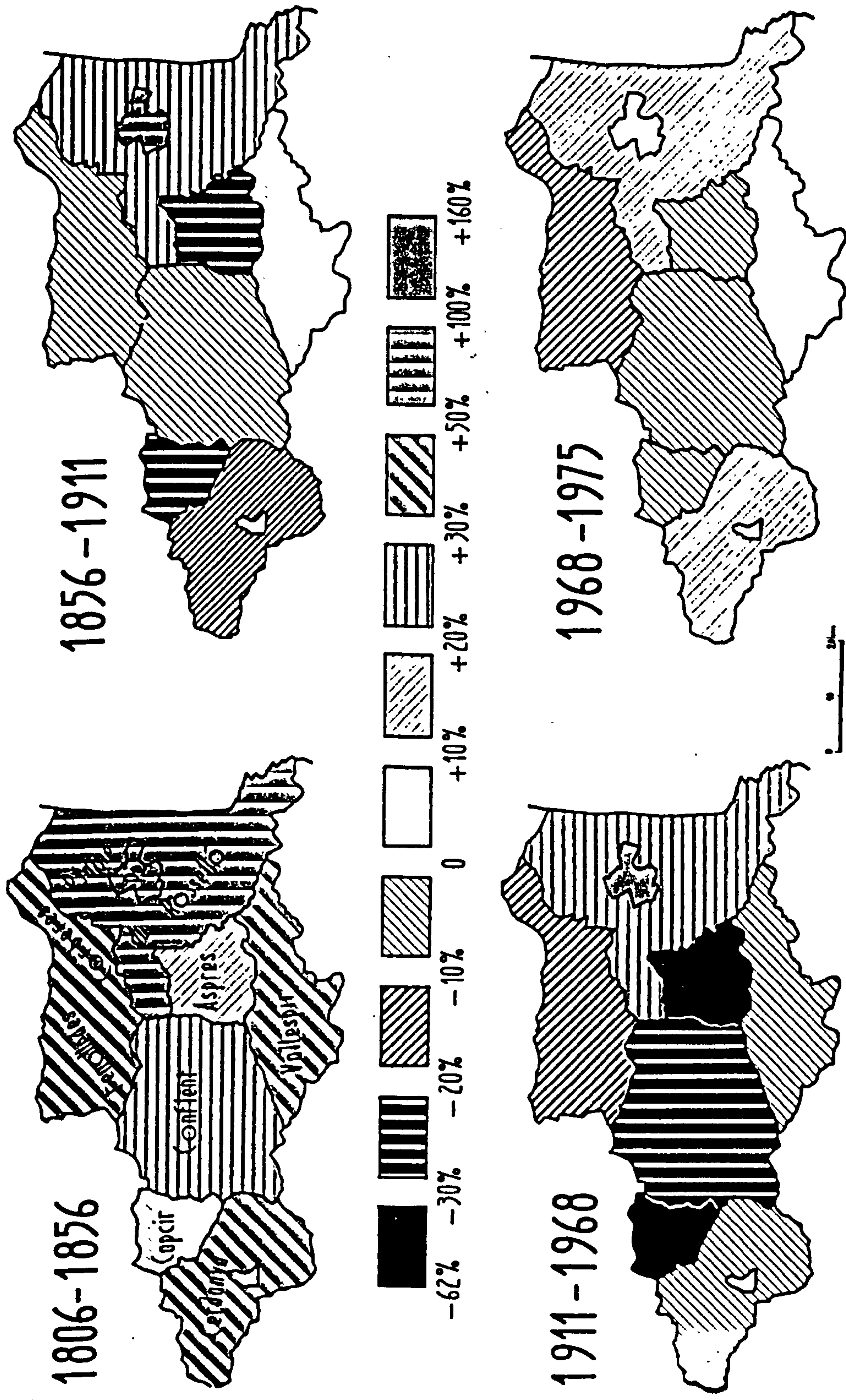


Figure 6: Demographic Evolution in the Aspre (1836-1990).

(Data Source: Recensement de Population).

Between 1790 - 1846 the population density of the Haute Aspre rose from 20 to 32 people per km²; between 1846 - 1896 the population density dropped back to its 1790 level of 20 people/km² (Broc 1955). Within half a century the Haute Aspre has lost over a quarter of its population, but this was not an isolated phenomenon, within the same period (1856-1901), Smotkine (1945) reminds us that the Cévennes, a comparable mountain region in neighbouring Languedoc, lost one third of its population. More severe depopulation awaited the Haute Aspre in the XX th century, by 1980 its population density had fallen to 4 people per km². In contrast, Figure 6 indicates that the population of the Basse Aspre was far more stable. Map 7, vividly illustrates the demographic transformation of the Aspre from its peak of +10-20% growth between 1806 and 1856, and its decline of -30-62% from the early to the mid twentieth century.



Map 7: Regional Demographic Evolution, 1806-1975. (Source: Bécot 1977).

Broc (1955) calculated that the net difference between birth and death rate ('solde naturel') for the Haute Aspre changed from + 6% in 1896 to its inverse of - 6% of deaths over birth, fifty years later in 1946. This demographic transformation is testimony to a dwindling youth and a progressively aging population. In short the Haute Aspre's response to the economic crisis which afflicted it was depopulation. Figure 7 indicates that the land use pattern in the Haute Aspre followed a similar curve to that of its population.

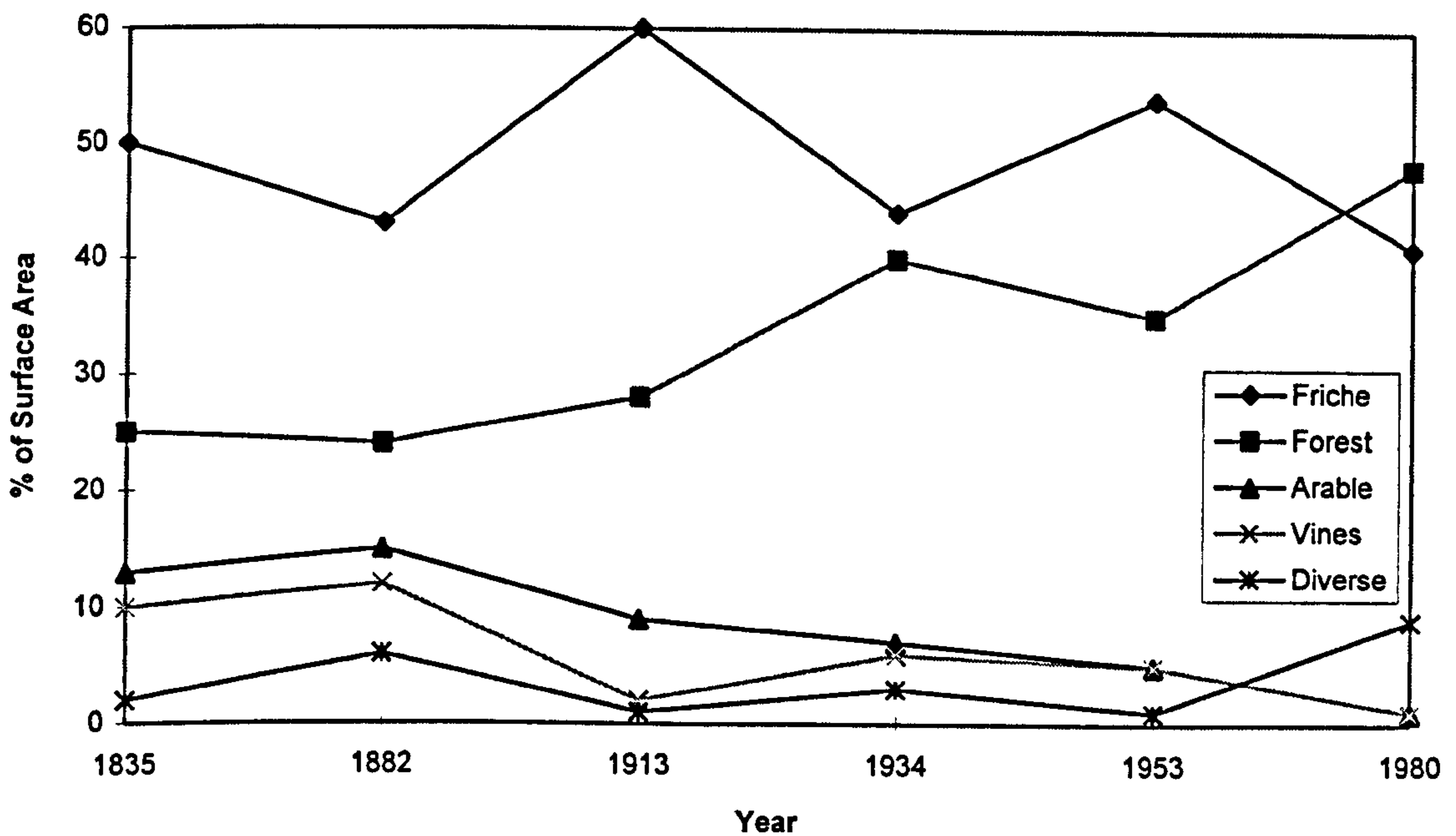


Figure 7: Land Use Evolution in the Haute Aspre (1835-1980).

(Data Source: Broc 1955 and Dutech 1985)

The most significant indicator in Figure 7 (which appears in table form in chapter 6), being the proportion of arable land which reached a staggering peak of 15 % in 1882, (corresponding with its maximum population level), it had fallen to 9% by 1913 and down to 1% by 1980. The surface area under 'land and friche' (garrigue and maqui) rose from 43% in 1882 to 60% in 1913, and by 1980 'friche' (scrub) and forest combined accounted for 89% of its land cover. In this difficult terrain population and

production were necessarily tightly coupled. Hill and mountain agriculture everywhere requires many hands and backs, as few labour saving devices apply here. The terraces, soil, irrigation ditches etc., required constant surveillance and maintenance. Over population and economic exploitation of the forest prompted excessive land clearance and soil erosion, but under population, at least initially, also had an adverse affect on the environment; terraces collapsed, rivers overflowed, eroded soil was no longer brought back up slope, field were abandoned to the 'friche' and the ensuing fire risk dramatically increased.

At the start of the twentieth century the Aspre, excluding its viticole fringe, found itself in a very precarious position, having lost its principal resources and having found no suitable alternative. At the same time that the plain was prospering the Haute Aspre began to fulfil Braudel's (1975) characterization of mountains in general as factories producing migrant labour for other people's usage ('fabriques d'homme à l'usage d'autrui'). The haemorrhaging of the highlands began with the great trek down to the plain. The long standing seasonal migrations towards the plain turned permanent with fewer and few returning after the 'vendage' (grape picking). Figure 6, (p146), clearly indicates that the depopulation of the villages of the Aspre was not equal throughout, the elevated semi-mountainous communes of the Haute Aspre were far more affected than the viticole Basse Aspre. Between its peak population in 1845 and its lowest ebb in 1975 the Haute Aspre lost 82% of its population, for the same time period the Basse Aspre lost only 23% of its population. Pushing the mass exodus of the uplands was the 1881 Jules Ferry education law which not only made primary education and the use of the French language at school obligatory, but also reinforced an urban ideology of progress and consumerism, inevitably devalorize the status of the peasant, confirming their sense of backwardness on the world stage.

The migrants moved towards the labour absorbing horticultural centres of Millas, Ille sur Têt, Elne, and Céret, or towards the vineyards of Perpignan⁴, Thuir and the Basse

⁴Perpignan itself held a big attraction, and was known as 'la ville de joie'.

Aspre. Not surprisingly population statistics indicate a general swelling in urban areas.

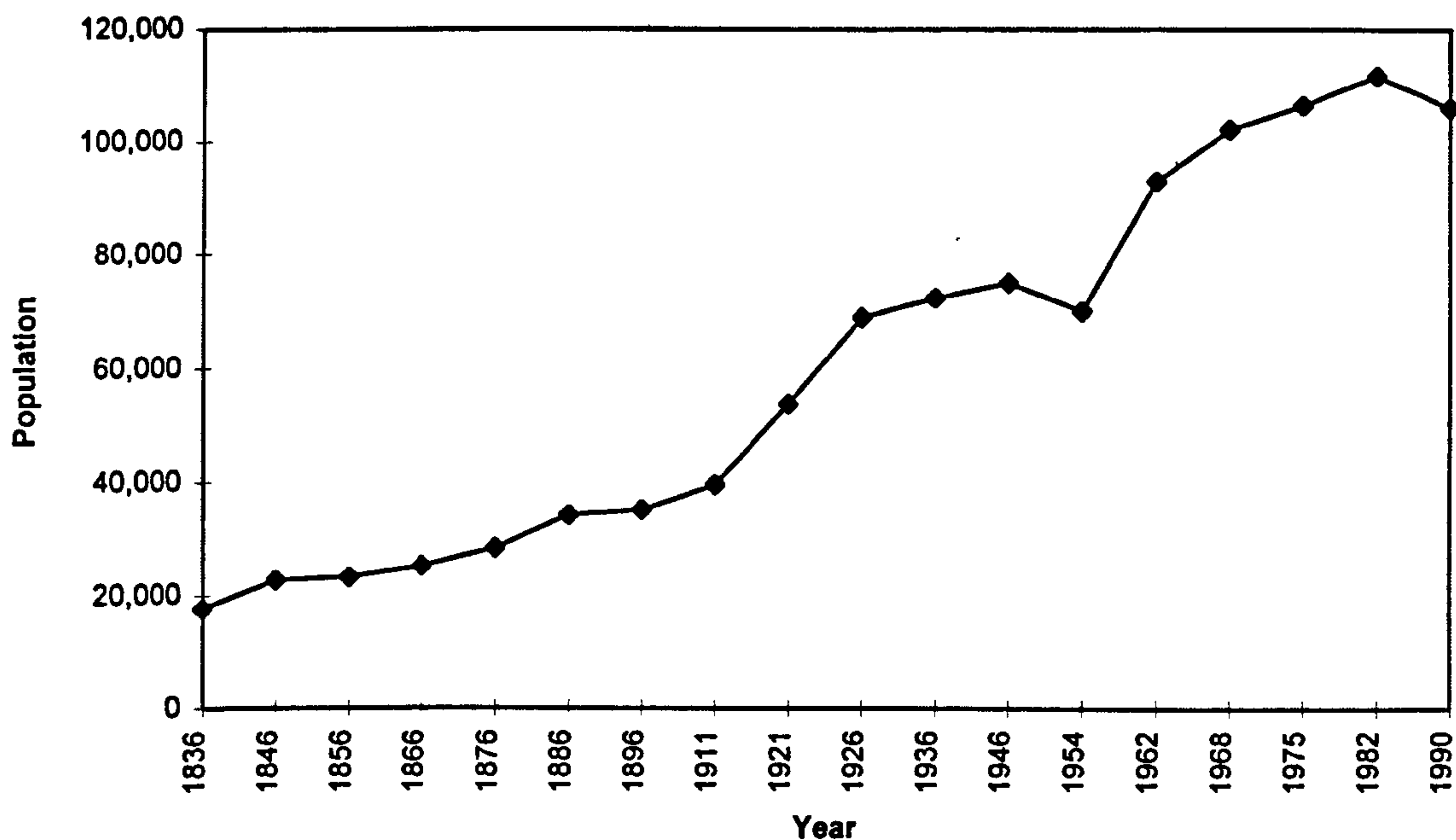


Figure 8(a): Demographic Evolution in Perpignan (1836-1990).

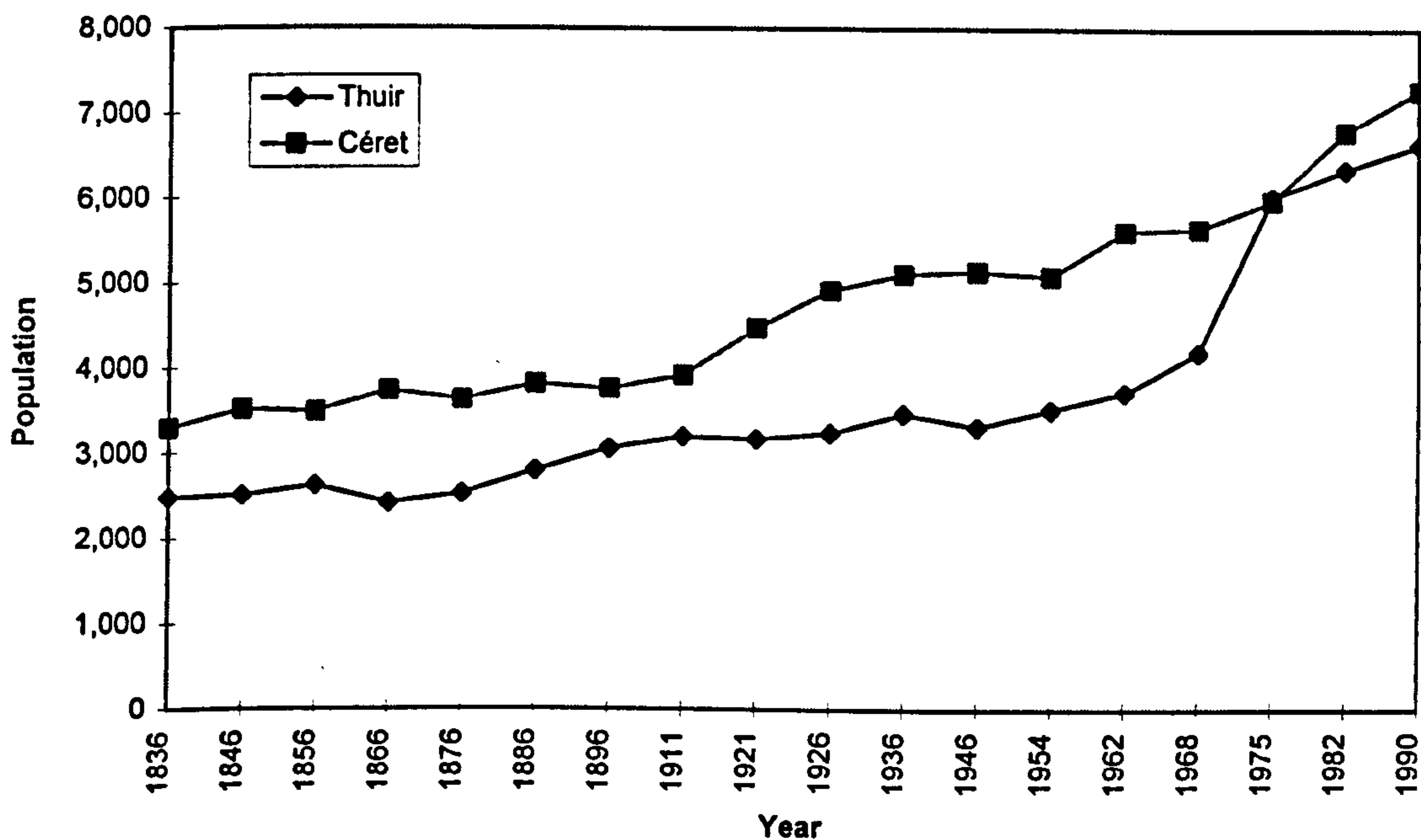


Figure 8(b): Demographic Evolution in Céret and Thuir (1836-1990)

(Data Source: Recensement de Population).

Between 1836 and 1990 the city of Perpignan grew by 500%, the towns of Thuir and Céret experienced a population growth of approximately 150%. Broc (1955) calculated that 83% of the Aspre's emigrants remained in the Department. Public administration held a strong attraction for the better educated. Posts in the Gendarmerie, Customs, Post Office, Railway etc, may not have offered immediate ease and riches, but a fixed salary, the security of the morrow and the hope of a comfortable retirement, was very attractive to a people fleeing instability and precarious socio-economic condition⁵.

The general exodus was accelerated by the hands lost and minds changed in the course of two world wars⁶. Without a cheap and abundant labour force the mas system of the Haute Aspre, which was already under severe economic pressure, was seriously jeopardised. Neither did the so called second agricultural revolution, with its emphasis on mechanization and specialization come to the aid of our mountain communes. In the 1960s the sight of a tractor in the Haute Aspre or even in the viticole Basse Aspre was rare. One of the few concessions the Aspre made to mechanization was the horse drawn thrasher which made its appearance in the 1930s, but the hills had effectively abandoned the cultivation of cereals by 1950. The final blow to the few remaining sheep farmers came with the closure of the abattoirs in Amélie and Céret in the summer of 1970, from then on they were at the mercy of the rare 'negotiants' who passed from mas to mas. Where as the key development 'catch phrases' of the time were mechanization, intensification and economic rationality, the Haute Aspre was progressively over run by the 'friche' syndrome.

Appropriately enough the final blow, the last straw so to speak, came from nature herself. The apocalyptic flood of 1940 devastated the valley, sweeping away agricultural land, roads, houses, schools and churches. A local eye witness account

⁵The emigrants from the Cévennes went almost exclusively towards industrial cities, such as Nimes, Marseille, and Arlés, the equivalent of which did not exist in Roussillon.

⁶Prior to world war one the opening of a bus route from Bouletérnere to Amélie les Bains & Céret, via the 'Col de Fourtau' in the Aspre, meant that many of the inhabitants of the Aspre could go to the market in Ille, Céret, Thuir etc, and return the same day. Time was expanding and distance shrinking.

painted the following picture; *"La route national était coupée au matin, au réveil il manquait l'église, le cimetière. Tout était rasé; on voyait des cercueils sortir de terre"* (cited in Pavageau 1985).

The deluge not only disturbed the physical and social space of the Aspre, but also its symbolic space. It announced the death knell of the country, 'le fin du monde', and fatalism was reinforced there after. The destroyed mills, terraces, roads, graveyards and damaged prairies were not reconstructed, the country lacked labour and besides it coincided with the start of the second World War. The old people were all that were left to survey the battle field, and continued to live among its ruins. The 1940 flood marked the symbolic end of an era. Those who remained experienced the drama of decline and exodus; the schools closed one after another, followed by the cafés, épiceries, the fairs, the fêtes, the dances. Not only were they now dependent on the passing 'negotiants' to buy their sheep, but their grocery and other provisions were to be met by a travelling 'camionnette', coming from the little épicerie in Llauro, who still has some loyal and needy customers in these hills today. The natural meadows were no longer used, the green oak and chestnut woods were invaded by 'la brousse'. The 'parcours', upland grazing grounds were over run by 'friche', and the communal lands and its access paths disappeared under the maqui. The landscape like the society donned it's 'arrière pays' face. The fire of 1976 which burnt nearly 7,000 ha along its Eastern slopes, confirmed mans defeat, nature was once more triumphant.

The 'soul' seemed to have gone out of the country, the unity of the Aspre, divided among four Cantons and three Arrondissements was in fragments. Badin (1964), perfectly captures the ambience in his book on Saint Marsal, - 'Le village sans cloches', - when he wrote;

"Plus que le glébe impénétrable, plus que la sécheresse meurtrière, plus que la dureté du terroir, les Homais de Canton et les demi-intellectuels révolutionnaire ont été les pourvoyeurs de la désertion...le mécontentement, cet acid cruel a rongé la fraternité dans le village qui n'a plus de cloches, dans le village qui n'a plus d'ame".

Nevertheless, it could not remain neutral, a unity emerged, a mixture of the old and new, still defined by arid summers, dry torrents, thin acid soil, harsh maqui, the smell of the garrigue, and new signs of abandoned cultivation. It stood out in contrast to the surrounding country, the orchards of the Vallespir and Conflent, the manicured vineyards of the plain and Basse Aspre; the Haute Aspre being the place that could not find a socio-natural equilibrium, the place where human effort came into question. Of course it was not alone in its haughty 'inadaptée' condition; the landscape and people of places like Haute Provence, Hautes Alpes, Cévennes, Corsica, all tell the same tale even though the ingredients may differ somewhat, the end result is the same. In effect it was an economic coupled with a socio-psychological crisis that depopulated the Aspre. In the following chapter on agriculture in the Aspre today, we shall hear the echo of the same grievances. The entry of France into the EEC in 1957 did not bring any solace to the Aspre, rather in time it came to symbolise the 'big bad external world', offering them no security or protection for their produce. However, the EEC inevitably played a profound role in shaping its twentieth century landscape. Through various policies and subsidies disadvantaged upland areas like the Aspre were transformed into zones of maximum assistance, with strong emphasis on landscape conservation and tourism.

5.4 Land Speculation and the Leisure Industry.

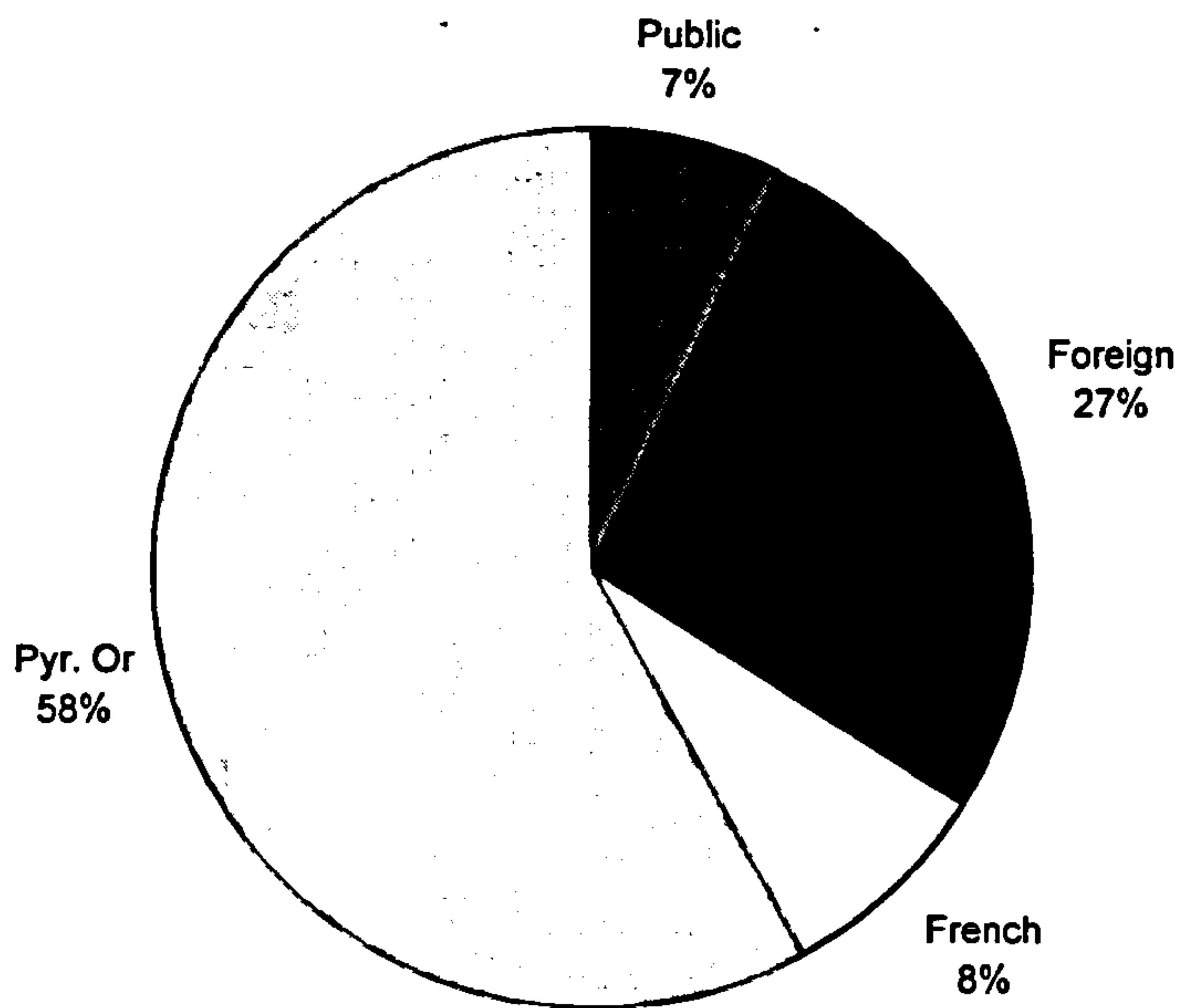
The Aspre never actually stood still, the Basse Aspre oriented itself towards the monoculture of vines, with the decline of traditional agriculture and auxiliary activities in the Haute Aspre new playing fields opened up. Towards the end of the fifties new actors started to arrive on its stage, who in time also left their imprint on its 'sands'. Neither did agriculture grind to a complete halt in 1940, some farmers for one reason or another continued to struggle on and a few are still doing so today⁷. However it is undeniable that large tracks of land and even villages became available, which attracted the attention of foreign speculators and investors, driven by notions of 'leisure' and

⁷It is said that those who stayed behind were either too attracted to the place or lacking in imagination.

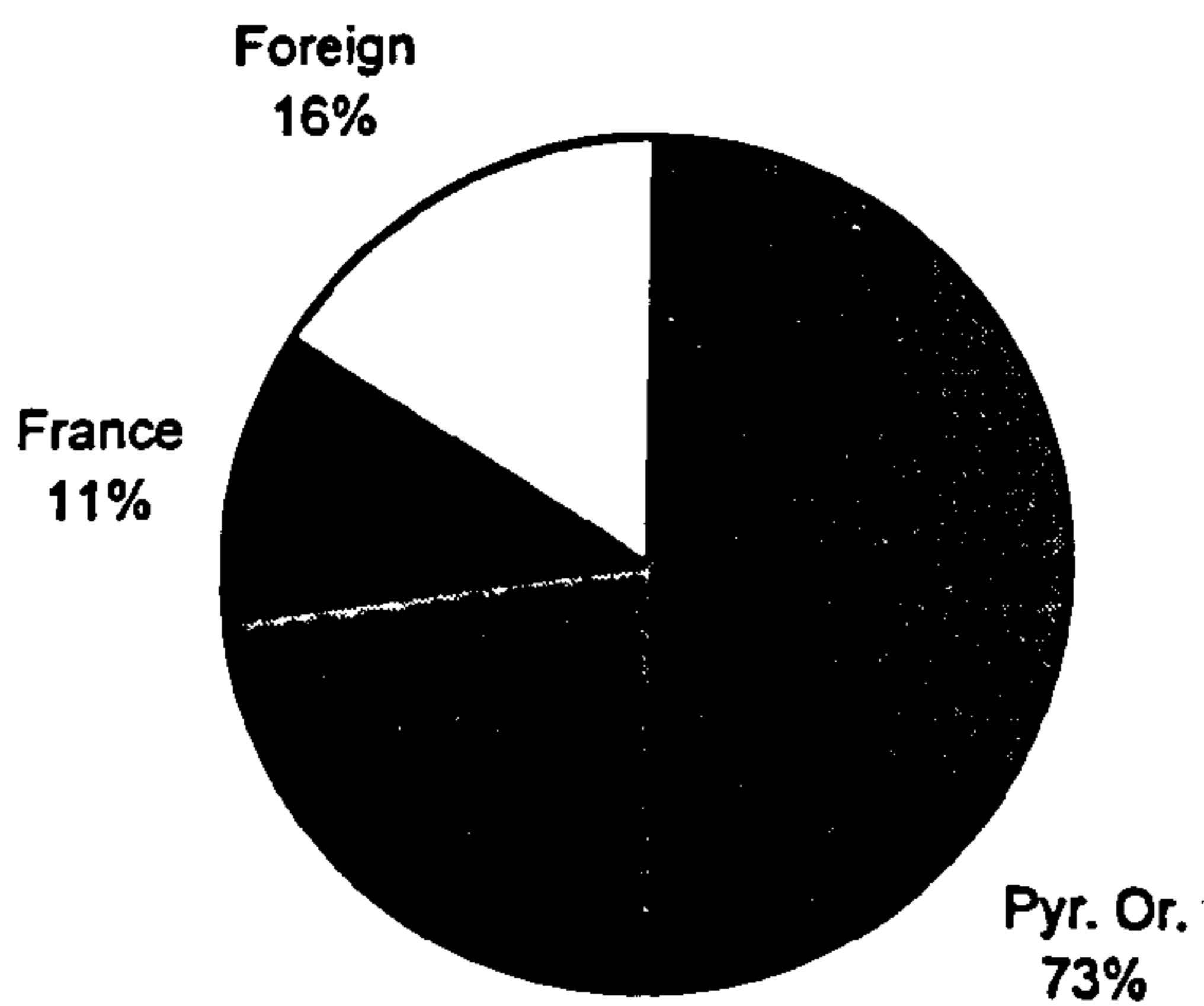
'consommation de l'espace', resurrecting the always latent 'myth of rurality', now to be replaced with the myth of the 'arrière pays'.

The 1960s marked the start of large tourist developments along the coast, and we also find ourselves in the period of decolonization of the Belgian Congo. The 'arrière pays' of the Aspre started to attract considerable colonial capital, whose owners were looking for a safe investment or simply a quiet place to retire to, preferably with a view over the plain reminiscent of Africa. A whole body of middle men, Perpignan Estate Agents and entrepreneurs also recognised potential rich pickings. Societies such as 'Midi-Roussillon', 'Les Amis du Roussillon', 'Balcon de la Méditerranée' mushroomed overnight. Through advertising in their review journals, 'Canigou', (est 1968), which was circulated in Brussels, Paris and London the abandoned agricultural land of the Aspre was transformed into 'des hectares du Soleil', and 'des nouvelles espace de liberté', or at minimum a sure and solid financial placement. Advertising captions such as, "Le Roussillon vous invite... ses plaines, ses montagnes, sa mer, et son soleil" par Verboven appeared (cited in DDA Report 1978); even some promotional films were produced, - 'Roussillon des Quatre Saisons', and 'Roussillon de Sang d'Or' par Michel Delmelle. The left behind old people did not put up much resistance to selling the land they perceived as no longer serving a 'purpose', in return for what they perceived as vast sums of money, their guarantee of a comfortable retirement. Thus the Department of the Pyrénées Orientales became the most affected in France by land speculation (cf. Pech 1992; DDA Report 1978).

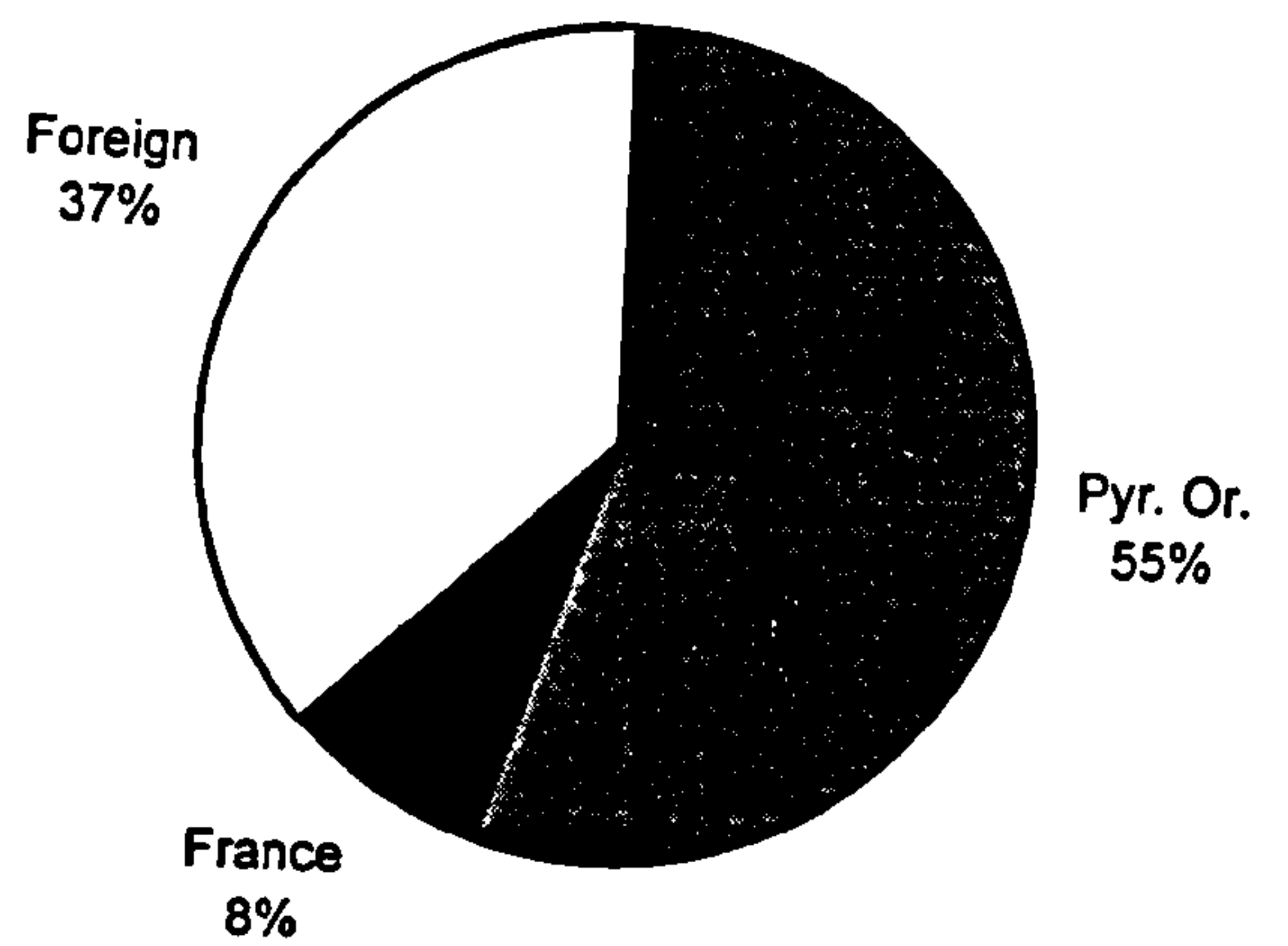
Between 1964 and 1979 over 17,000 ha of the Vallespir was bought by outsiders not from the Department, 90% of whom were Belgian (DDA report 1978). Research by Pech (1992), indicates that 35% of the Aspre Massif is today owned by people not originating from the Department, this figure comprises 27% of the surface area of the Basse Aspre and 45% of the Haute Aspre (see Figure 9). Some communes of the Haute Aspre, such as Boule d'Amont having the greater part of their surface area owned by foreigners.



Aspre



Basse Aspre



Haute Aspre

Figure 9: Land Ownership in the Aspre in 1992. (Source: Pech 1992).

The net affect of the property boom was rising land prices, (Fig. 10), even those who wished to remain in agriculture and expand their farms found it beyond their means.

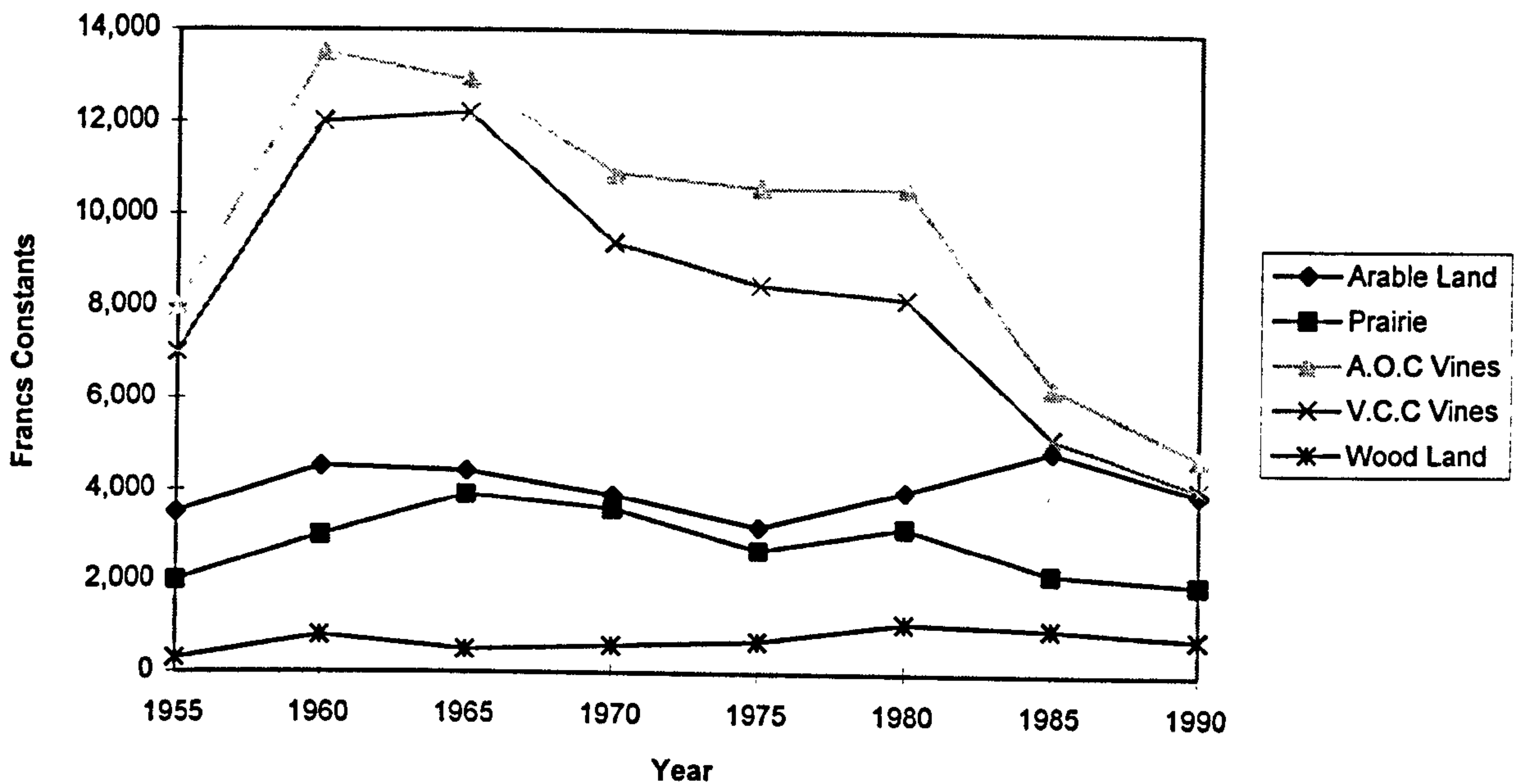


Figure 10: Evolution in Land Prices in the Pyrénées Orientales (1955-1990), Adjusted to 1955 base level. (Data Source: SCEES 1953-1976; SCEES 1980-1990).

Due to the intensity of land speculation it was, and still is, also next to impossible to get a written lease on any land, the owners being in a perpetual state of readiness to sell for a 'bon prix'. An example of a 'bon affair' was the sale in 1965 of 'Mas de la Prade' in Saint Marsal, whose 35 ha was bought by a real estate agency for 30,000 F; it was resold immediately afterwards in three parcels of 7 ha at 30,000 F each, and the remaining 14 ha was sold for 150,000 F. (Etude DIAME 1981). Not all transactions were as profitable as this, and many of the buyers with intensions of constructing holiday villages and retirement homes did not, in contrast to what they were led to believe, get planning permission, with problems of access and water being frequently cited as stumbling blocks. Nevertheless, the 'arrière pays' was progressively sliding towards 'la vocation touristique'. Not surprisingly the Departments construction

industry followed fast in the foot steps of the 'Traveau Publique' as the main industrial employer (Economic Panorama 1990). But not all the land was bought for tourist purposes, others such as 'l'Emir', a Frenchman who had made his fortune in the Persian gulf, bought 2,000 ha of the Haute Aspre with a view to creating a large modern dairy industry. But alas like the holiday villages it did not materialise, many entrepreneurial passions were dampened by a combination of the austere reality of the Aspre and the Catalan administration. In 1973 the Government organization SAFER (Société d'Aménagement Foncier et d'Etablissement Rural), started to operate in the Pyrénées Orientales. Theoretically all land sales had to go through the SAFER, whose purpose was to give first preference to farmers. However, the SAFER ran into trouble when it could not sell the land on its books, due to the lack of demand from the agricultural sector. Today the SAFER is commonly perceived as having turned into yet another 'banc de speculation', in search of profits. Figure 11, indicates that most land in the Department continued to be sold to non farmers. There was another boom in land prices and sales in the 1980s, corresponding with the inflated British property market, which prompted an influx of British property speculators to the Aspre.

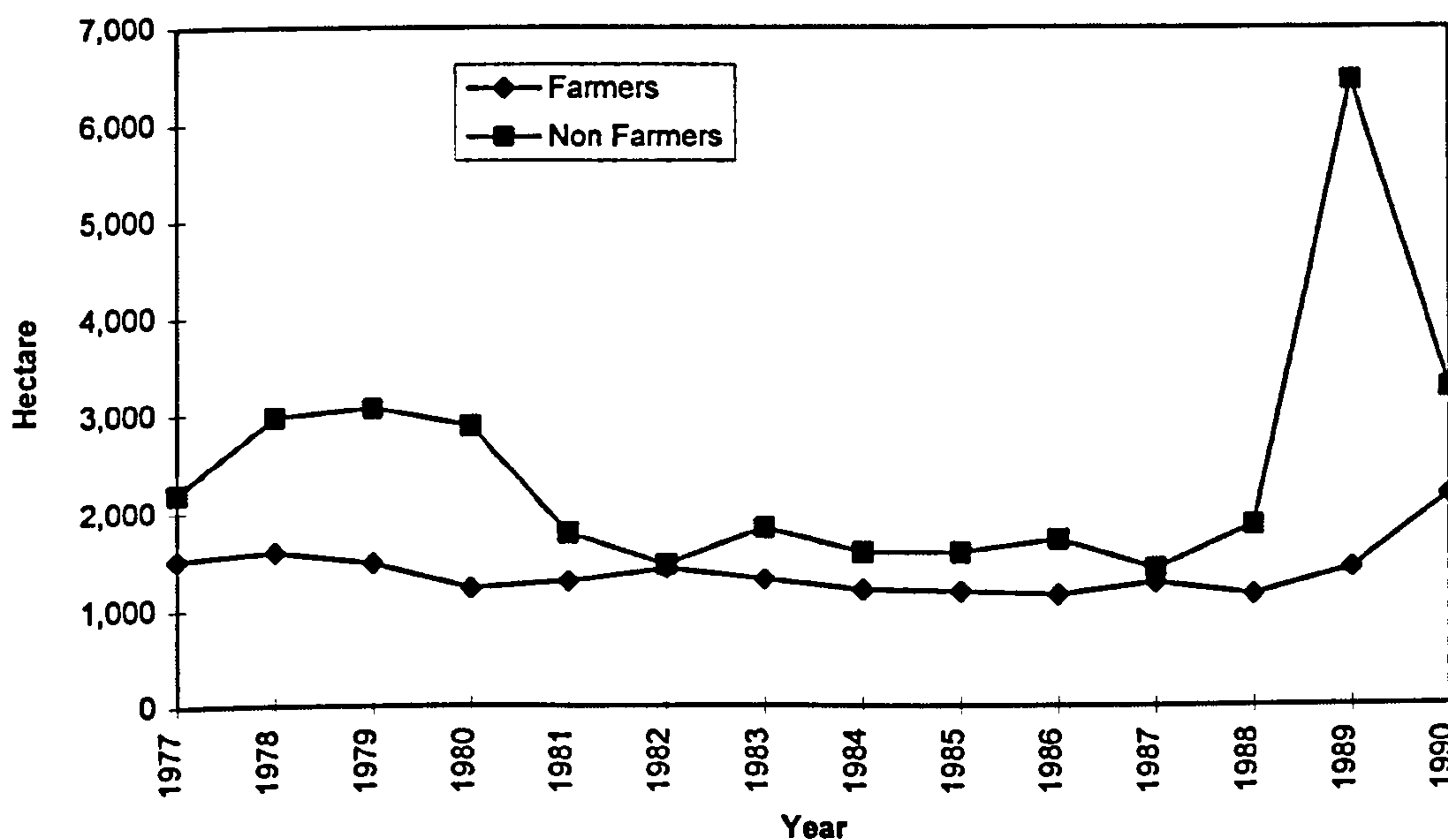


Figure 11: Departmental Land Purchased by Farmers and Non Farmers (1977-1990).
(Data Source: SAFER Statistics).

After 1968 the first wave of hippies, referred to locally as 'neo-ruraux', with their back to nature ideology, were also drawn to the Aspre by its appeal of 'l'espace de liberté' - a refuge from urban consumerism. Their illusions of wide open abandoned spaces there for the taking were also shattered. Available land was rare, the 'champ libre' was a myth in an agrarian society where every square inch was already coded and appropriated, and was never so valuable. Some neo-ruraux succeeded in getting a verbal lease, but the vast majority were disappointed in their 'espace de liberté' and soon moved on. Nevertheless the combined influx of neo-ruraux, retired outsiders and commuters helped stabilise the population of the Aspre. Figure 6 (p146), indicates a slight increase in the population of the Aspre since 1982; and Figure 8 (p150), registers the first signs of a decline in the urban population of Perpignan in its 1990 census. These trends are in keeping with demographic statistics for the 'arrière pays' of the Mediterranean in general, which show an overall growth in its rural population since the 1982 population census (cf. Catanzano 1985). The urban appeal would appear to be dwindling and the attraction of the countryside on the increase. One cannot make general statements from two demographic census in under ten years, besides trend is not destiny. However, we can legitimately note that it is the first time this 'trend' has occurred in over a hundred years of demographic history.

5.5 Discussion: The Aspre as a Socio-Biophysical System.

From the preceding broad sweep of the socio-natural history of the Roussillon and the Aspre in particular, we must now ask ourselves; (a) what if any are the recurrent discernable patterns and bi-furcations points, when the system underwent a significant transformation or change in direction? And (b) what does the dynamics of 'la longue durée' tell us about the nature of socio-natural interaction in the Aspre?

5.5.1 Patterns and Bifurcations.

In response to the first question, one of the most striking recurrent pattern in the temporality of the Aspre and Roussillon in general is the impact of its geographical position, which has throughout history rendered it a zone of passage, a crossroads. It was essentially due to the invaders and mosquitoes that for the greater part of

Roussillon's history, the Aspre held advantage over the more fertile plain. The vocation of the Aspre and Roussillon as a 'zone de passage' continues today, with the new wave of so called 'invaders' in the guise of the tourists, forming a sort of North - South human migration, moving in and out of the place depending on the season, with some (the retired) setting up a semi-permanent residence there. "The masters come and go", wrote Bauer of Sicily (1941), "the others remain and it is a romance without end". This constant traffic in people, goods and ideas has, as we shall see in the following chapters, resulted in a certain local resilience, or rather an apparent resistance to all 'outsiders' and outside influences, an ability to absorb change rather than constantly change with the tide. After centuries of trafficking with strangers their own identity and personality remained close to home. In terms of political and cultural identity, the French Revolution and the integrating influence of the Third Republic marked a turning point, making it more difficult for the people of Roussillon to play on the bi-nationality and the ambiguity of their identity, leading to today's concession to Paris, whereby they describing themselves as 'French Catalans'.

Linked with the geographical position of Roussillon and its history of passage is the influence of; (a) the mediterranean sea, one of the major highways of the world prior to the industrial revolution, and (b) the 'barrier' of the pyrenees, adding to this zone of passage that of frontier status, between Christianity and Muslims, Gauls and Iberians, France and Spain, Northern Catalonia and Southern Catalonia. Its borderland status brings into play recurrent concepts of core and periphery. Its greatest prosperity was known during the short period of home rule under the 'Roi de Majorque', when Perpignan was its Capital. The further the seats of power were removed, be it Narbonne, Barcelona, Madrid, Paris, Brussels, the less it prospered in economic terms and the more it had to mask and play with identity in order to optimise the situation in hand. The European 'open frontier' policy in operation since 1993, may appear to have eliminated its frontier on paper, but in reality it is more central than ever, because, as we shall see in the following chapter, the lack of the frontier is perceived as exposing Roussillon to unfair competition from cheaper imports from across the border. Ironically it would appear that in the past when the frontier was theoretically closed,

the people of Roussillon and especially the borderlands of the Aspre and Vallespir, were in a stronger position to turn it to their advantage, by means of a thriving contraband trade.

Thus the historical 'marginal' frontier status of the Province was not necessarily a disadvantage, rather this so called handicap was one of its trump cards. By a series of both threats and cajoling it managed for a long time to keep the influence of central power weak, and organise its own affairs. The Department is still playing with its marginal status, which in today's language is referred to as 'disadvantaged'. Its administration is heavily subsidised by the French Government, and the Languedoc-Roussillon Region receives one of the largest slices of French, European community assistance (cf. Buzelay 1993). Their play with political, economic and cultural identity has in turn left its mark on the economy and mentality of the Department, something that will become clearer in the following chapters relating to present day field work.

A subset of the core-periphery relationship is the recurrent rural-urban and mountain-plain theme. The seats of power, commerce and riches were contained in the urban areas, but prior to the industrial revolution 80% of Europe's population was rural. The cities were largely dependent on their rural hinterlands for food supplies, reflected in the Royal incentives to produce cereals. However the cottage industries (along with excess livestock) of places like the Aspre were in turn closely linked to urban markets. In fact through out the history of the Aspre we remark that all major changes came from outside its borders, generally from urban seats of power. With improved communication networks, especially the arrival of the train, and closer market integration following the industrial revolution, the urban centres were far less dependent on their immediate country side for nourishment. It became possible and cheaper to import from as far afield as Russia, Australia and Argentina. This in turn had major agrarian structural repercussions, exemplified in the move from polyculture to monoculture, the abolition of communal rights and customs, and a split in the former symbiotic mountain - plain relationship. From then on agricultural and industrial advantages firmly lay with the plain, something reinforced by EEC policies in the

sixties. The geography of the Haute Aspre was not suited to monoculture and in time its agriculture was rendered obsolete. What was once a barrier to the invaders now became a barrier to 'progress' and mechanization. Similarly the cottage industries could not compete with assembly line factory produce. We would argue that the industrial revolution is one of the major bi-furcation points in the socio-natural history of the Aspre, and is at the root of its present day condition⁸. The industrial and its allied agricultural revolution lie at the source of the major demographic shifts between 1850-1970, whereby the Haute Aspre lost over 80% of its human population, and the demography of Europe shifted from being 80% rural to 80% urban. The rural-urban demographic transition is in turn at the root of the leisure and tourist opportunities in the Aspre today. Not all abandoned upland areas became attractive leisure and real estate ventures. Was it not a combination of chance, timing, the 'Canigou' journal, and once more the peri-urban, peri-Mediterranean geographical position of the Aspre which meant that the vacuum created by the abandonment of agriculture, attracted ex-colonial Belgians, retired Northerners, holiday home owners, tourists, commuters and the neo-ruraux. The transition from a 'worked environment' to a 'leisure environment' lay in the industrial revolution.

Within the socio-natural history of the Aspre, a strong correlation between demography and land use is apparent, typified by the position of the forest. The depopulation of the Aspre in the late nineteenth century was directly linked with the transformation of its environment. True to the usual pattern when the people retreated the forest advanced, swallowing up the terraces, meadows and prairies, and the economic vitality of the country declined. However the digestion process was to prove different this time, as we shall see more clearly from chapters 7 and 8, the forest, the traditional symbol of a 'site of no survivors' is being optically transformed into something exotic, desirable

⁸There are several other bi-furcations in the temporality of the Aspre, including the retreat of the glaciers, the sedentarization of agriculture, the appearance and disappearance of Feudalism, the rise and fall of influential urban centres and trade routes etc, etc. We do not deny their significance, however our data base concentrates in the post eighteenth century period for which we argue that the industrial revolution is the major transforming force, whose 'ripples' are still behind the present day reorganization of the space and society of the Aspre.

and upmarket. This perceptual transformation of the physical environment marks another significant bi-furcation, once more a consequence of the demographic and life style changes resulting from industrialization and urbanization.

What Blaikie (1987) referred to as 'political ecology', or simply the politics of nature forms yet another dominant and recurring pattern in the socio-natural history of the Aspre. This theme is clearly exemplified by the plight of the commons and the attempts under feudalism and later by the State and the private property owners to gain control over such lands and eliminate the customs governing collective rights. Vengeance and 'la Loi Strate' were the major armour of the peasants. The importance of the commons is linked with the land tenure system, exemplified by the Saint Marsal example in the mid nineteenth century, where by the majority of the land lay in the hands of the few. The politics of the forest was further complicated by the land use conflict between the forge owners and the landless peasant farmers, under the weight of demographic pressure. Brunet's (1990) archival evidence relating to the forest at the turn of the nineteenth century is proof that 'ecological' concerns and the 'sustainability' debate was rife in the Aspre long before those words became fashionable in the twentieth century. The control of water and access to the irrigation network was always highly political, with some of the oldest legislation in Roussillon relating to the use of canal water. Today the politics of ecology continues, with the election of the village Mayor and his advisors having a direct bearing on the drawing up of land use maps in every little commune, including the designation of the all important housing zones and the granting of planning permission for holiday homes.

Above all else we can conclude that the socio-natural temporality of the Aspre confirms that;

(a) Change, in both the natural and social realm, is the norm. Over time stability is the exception, and could be described as 'abnormal'.

(b) 'Degradation', due to a combination of natural and human forces was normal throughout the history of the Aspre, with its bare rocks and denuded slopes periodically tearing through the vegetation canopy, and its topsoil and rain water frequently graded

the plain of Roussillon.

(c) The close coupling and interconnectedness of social and natural processes is beyond doubt. It is their co-evolution that has shaped and reshaped the face of the Aspre. The political, demographic, socio-economic and biophysical history of the place is indeed one and the same story. The impact of a series of small internal or external happenings become greatly magnified when they feed into such a highly connected system.

(d) For the historical period studied most closely, that is post eighteenth century, we observe that the Industrial Revolution represents the major bi-furcation or change in direction, the impact of which is still being played out there today.

(e) In the post industrial late twentieth century we note that it is not so much the changes in the biophysical environment, but rather those in the perceptual environment that mark the most significant transformations. Once more the marginal, pre-industrial status of this Mediterranean North - South crossroads, risks being its trump card well into the twenty first century.

(f) The geographical position of Roussillon has played a vital role in its socio-natural history and in the formation of its personality.

Our glimpse of the prehistory of Roussillon if nothing else demonstrates the difference in natural and anthropogenic rhythms. This leads us into question (b) concerning the contribution of 'la longue durée' to our conception of human-environmental interaction over time in the Aspre.

5.5.2 Socio-Natural Interaction within 'La Longue Durée'.

The historical socio-biophysical chronology calls into question the commonly held image of closed, economically self-sufficient upland communities dominated by autarchy, which gave way following the twentieth centuries opening up to the outside world. This idea has long dominated anthropology, history and geography (cf. Bailey 1971, 1973; Rappaport 1968; Netting 1981), and has been used to reinforce the ecosystems model, which for analytical purposes must be closed. However the interconnected socio-biophysical dynamics of the Aspre leaves little doubt but that its boundaries were highly permeable, suggesting that the relationship between its people and resources was far

more complex than that accounted for by negative feedback loops of the so called cybernetic 'socio servomechanisms'. It is reasonable to argue that until recently the economy of the Aspre was closely tied to agriculture, but it would be wrong to depict it as a closed autarchic agricultural society, such an illusion fetters our interpretation of change. As Netting (1990) rightly points out, 'equilibrium annihilates history'. The early reference, as far back as Roman times, to the ore from the Canigou finding its way via the Aspre to the plain, followed by a history of mining, forges, textiles, charcoal industry, tannin, contraband, transhumance, cork making, vine cash crops and chestnut barrels etc, is ample proof of the permeability of its frontiers and its non agricultural activities.

The non food producing auxiliary activities of the Aspre proved to be decisive in moulding the structure of the community and its relationship with the physical environment. The so called Grenoble School of Geographers, stressed the point that mountain economies are characterized by extreme seasonal contrast, and proposed that their supplementary economic activities were not so much indispensable to survival, but rather as suitable responses to 'seasonal unemployment', imposed by the rigours of climate and environment. Thus they view the cottage industries as perfectly compatible with an autarchic economy, provided they were intended for the satisfaction of local needs. Blanchard (1939-1956) was at great pains to demonstrate that not only did the textile industry, but also mining in the Alps fall in most cases within the limits of autarchy. I find it hard to believe that the eight weavers and five tailors we find in Saint Marsal in the mid nineteenth century were simply meeting the 'haute couture' needs of the village; especially since Brunet (1990) provides archival evidence that the smuggling of traditional Catalan dress from Southern Catalonia was commonly found among the contraband items. It is also difficult to account for an innkeeper in such a small village, whose very presence points towards some sort of 'passage', reinforced by the 10 Custom Officers we find down the road in Bould d'Amont.. Similarly it would be hard to explain in a closed autarchic community the archival reference to the Customs Lieutenant, who in 1810 was shot at in Saint Marsal by a smuggler with a sack of cod on his back (Alart 1868). Not meaning to down play the implications for law

and order, but what was cod doing in a mountain village over 40 km from the sea? It would appear that neither the sea or the Pyrenees was a barrier to communication with the outside world, rather they signify an opening, which since time immemorial at least some of the inhabitants of the Aspre and their produce slipped through. There can be little doubt but that the secondary produce of the Aspre were market oriented, and it was that market system that caused ripples and eventually waves throughout this tightly knit and interdependent system.

The saga of the forest and its related industries, is also testimony to the use and abuse of its resources until such time as they ceased to be either profitable or necessary, refuting notion of negative feedbacks maintaining a static equilibrium between population and natural resources. Rather the disequilibrium of positive feedbacks, in the form of economic gain for the forge owners, and immediate population pressure from the masses were at times far more powerful driving forces in the system. The competition for the natural resources of the Aspre and Department in general, also highlights the significance role played by politics and agrarian structures in determining resource use. One should also note that legislation on paper took a long time to materialise on the ground; and even when it did filter through it was open to 'interpretation', showing how the individual at the micro level is more than just a pawn in macro political games. The general disrespect for outside law and order was and still is an integral part of the Aspres human ecology.

For all its intricate balancing between human needs and environmental potential the Aspre was never, to borrow a phrase from Netting (1981), an 'encapsulated island in the sky'; it was always part of the world system and it was precisely its links with the plain and outside world that signalled its demise. The cargoes of wheat from America and Russia, the wool from Australia and more recently from Argentina, were strongly felt in this backwater. As we shall see in chapter 6, world economic policies in the disguise of the EEC is still the talk of the day here. With increased market integration after the nineteenth century, outside economic forces played even a larger role in its 'destiny' and everyday life. The Aspre was and is sustained by a complex system of

interdependencies; social and economic isolation was never the rule here. Trickle and at times flows of goods and people linked it to the larger world system. Not only did it need outside markets to sell to, but it also brought in some of the produce from the outside world, for example, salt was a vital daily commodity. Similarly, the introduction of the potato, new livestock breeds, agricultural equipment such as axes, hoe, plough, and eventually tractors and artificial fertilizers, chemicals, machinery and techniques used in vivification and cork making, not to mention contraband items and the luxury of coffee and sugar, came to play a significant role in the daily life of the Aspre.

Elements of the 'externalist' model proposed by Cole & Wolf (1974), in which the local community is conceived as an open system dominated by outside socio-economic forces are recognisable in the Aspre. However, its internal dynamics, enabling or constraining physical environment, the local preferences and choices made must equally be taken into account. The conceptual tools of non-equilibrium systems theory, in which overall evolution is determined by nonlinear interactions, involving negative and especially positive feedbacks, provide a useful theoretical platform from which to view the intricacies at work in the Aspre. From the socio-biophysical model it is apparent how what started out as minor changes, such as the introduction of a new crop, alterations to the fallow system, field enclosure, elimination of communal obligations, the chance occurrence of the phylloxera invasion, and the more significant omens contained in the importation of wheat and sheep or the arrival of the train, may in isolation seem like minor changes to the system, but in combination these isolated and at times simply chance occurrences ended up having major repercussions in a highly connected system. It is thus we must explain the 'mutation' in the significant mountain - plain relationship, having reached a bifurcation point, or fork in the road, flipped from one attraction domain to another. In summary the long term socio-natural history of the Aspre indicate that it must not be viewed as a closed system nor a homeostatic machine. Or as Netting (1990) in his more recent work phrased it: "The concept of a human ecosystem, like the idea of a niche does not help us to create an airtight case but to model a useful, well-wrought urn of the imagination".

The openness of the Aspre socio-natural system has important implications for those who subscribe to the Braudelian notion that the tempo and history of the uplands is regulated by immutable environmental constraints. Undoubtedly the physical environment and climate of the Aspre imposed constraints on human occupation throughout its history. But those 'constraints' were far from absolute, what was perceived as a refuge and haven from the unhygienic and barbaric plain for the greater part of its history, had its fate reverted by the eighteenth century, when the advantages of yesterday became the disadvantages of today, and the uplands posed an obstacle to mechanized 'progress'. Human culture, perceived needs and the workings of economic systems meant that neither did the people of the Aspre just adapt to their given environment, rather they proved to be very active transformers of both its physical and perceptual milieu. The perpetual advance and retreat of the forest curtain, terracing, mining drainage and irrigation, is testimony to humans ability to modify the physical environment through social activities. Similarly the cognitive dimension proved to be an equally active transformer of both the symbolic and concrete space as we move from safe haven to valuable woodlands and semi-subsistence agriculture, to abandonment of the Haute Aspre, to an urban distress zone.

As rightly noted by Viazzo (1989), the frequent allusion to the poverty of the hills and mountains can easily lead the hasty and myopic reader astray. There were not only 'push' factors driving the people out, but there were also times when the Catalan proverb of 'always move down and never up' did not ring through. The 'pull' factors of a safe haven, the cork industry in Llauro and mines of La Bastide and Taulis, the Aubergiste in Saint Marsal, the ten Customs Officers in Boule d'Amont and the master Artists who adorned the little churches of the Aspre, are all proof that there was also in-migration to the region. Today the pull of its very environment and culture, has transformed the place into a highly cosmopolitan society. In the context of the Aspre disequilibrium should not be perceived as evolutionary maladaptation, because we have shown how over the long term 'adaptation' is very much a perceptual concept, the same human environmental conditions at any one moment in time may be perceived as 'adapted', and 'unadapted' in the next. Thus it becomes obvious that one is not dealing

with a linear predictable and 'factual' relationship. Rather like the question of land degradation the relationship between people and their environment is largely perceptual, driven by a constantly changing set of needs and wants, which are tightly coupled with the prevailing socio-economic, political, technological and cultural environment; once more pointing to the futility of studying people and environment apart. Clearly we are dealing with a reciprocal and mutually inclusive rather than exclusive relationship.

As for Ratzel's and Braudel's environmental 'iron rule' in the 'longue durée', one cannot ponder that issue without taking into account the question of spatio-temporal scales. In the long run the environment, in particular the climate would appear to render the individual rather puny, take for example the apparent 'omnipotence' of the Roussillon environment during the ice age. The solid specificity of terrain and climate may at first glance appear as a fundamental set of constraints on human activity, but when one enlarges both the scale of the study (which in ecological anthropology has tended to be a single village), and lengthen the time scale, as we have in a synoptic fashion done for the Aspre, a very different picture comes into focus. What Braudel and the other environmental determinists overlook is the reciprocal factor, and humans ability to alter the physical environment. On the smaller scale this phenomenon is most obvious, for example the impact of the denudation of the Aspre on its microclimate and flooding on the plain, when its 'lungs' so to speak were removed. A few more notches up the scale and we are faced with the denudation of the Amazon. The combination of several small and medium scale influences can have large scale impacts, for example the present day anthropogenic induced 'Greenhouse' affect and 'ozone hole'. Such global changes influence global climate, which determine when or if the next ice age or drought will arrive (cf. Lovelock 1988). The anthropogenic ability to alter the environment is not taken into account in the 'possibilist' argument either. Febvre (1925) rightly reminds us; "des nécessités, nul part, des possibilités partout", but when this argument is taken apart it simply means there are several ways humans can adjust to given environmental constraints - 'one mans desert can be another's oasis' - and thus we fall back into the adaptation trap. As argued in the first chapter and as demonstrated in the analysis of the long term dynamics of the Aspre, none of the above

'conceptual windows', captures both the physical and cognitive fluidity of the Aspre when viewed from a long term perspective. This does not take from the fact that its physical environment plays a large part in its twentieth century 'inadaptée' condition, but I hasten to add it is not just a question of the isolated natural environment, but the natural environment in combination with its contemporary society. Clearly 'la longue durée' indicates that what we are dealing with in the Aspre is a complex non-linear socio-natural system.

We now turn to the present, the contemporary society of the Aspre, its present use of space, social identities and environmental perceptions. Agriculture continues to play a vital role in its human ecology, and we start by examining its contemporary imprint on the ground.

CHAPTER 6. AGRICULTURE IN THE ASPRE TODAY.

6.1 Introduction.

Understanding the present use of space in the Aspre requires an examination of its recent agrarian history, which was both moulded by the landscape and in turn created it. Chapters 4 & 5 have shown how the people and the agrarian societies which followed them fashioned the very artificial landscape of the Aspre that we know today. The cultural practices of clearing forest, draining, grazing, fire, terracing, irrigation, coppicing etc, coevolved with changing social and environmental conditions. What evolved in the hills and valleys of the Aspre is aptly described by Siegfried's (1948) term 'artisan agriculture', where frequently the craftsman had to first carve out his terraced gardens, orchards, vineyards and fields where the hill side was not too steep. As outlined in chapter 3, the climatic and topographic restrictions combined with a natural ecological fragility of the Aspre, meant that nature here made no free gifts and allowed no relaxation. Or as Braudel (1975) put it; "life in the hills of the Mediterranean exist in so far as human ingenuity, work and effort continually recreated it". Throughout history the agrarian secret of the Aspre landscape lay in the optimization of its diversity. Steering the designing hand of the farmer has always been such considerations as demographic pressure, technical innovation, socio-cultural, political and economic systems. The present agricultural situation in the Aspre is thus the product of that history and cannot be understood apart from it.

Today the Aspre, reflecting a general trend throughout the Northern Mediterranean, displays the contrast of two types of space; on the one hand the intensely cultivated agricultural plain of Roussillon and Basse Aspre under vines, horticulture and fruit trees, and on the other the semi-abandoned hills and mountains of the Haute Aspre in the background. History reminds us that in the past those hills enjoyed the edge on production over the flooded and mosquito ridden plain, and later played an important refuge role by forming a natural barrier to advancing armies. Today they form a different type of refuge, their topography and ecology being a handicap to advancing mechanization which is a pre-requisite to modern agriculture. However, agriculture as

a social construction, still exerts a powerful influence on both the landscape and society of the Aspre. With this in mind, the purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the agricultural agenda in the Aspre today. That agenda is inseparable from National and European agricultural policies.

6.1.1 Agricultural Policy and the EU.

The policy for the modernization of French agriculture was first set out in the Orientation laws of 1960-1962 (also known as Débre Pisani laws). Their principle objective was to encourage farmers away from subsistence to commercialised forms of production, via the promotion of farm amalgamation, technical advances and the creation of cooperatives (Hervieu 1989). This route has been reinforced by various National and EU Directives, most notably the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which has been operated by the EU for over thirty years. The CAP is the means by which the EU provides financial support for its farmers. It was designed to meet the objectives of Article 39 of the Treaty of Rome, relating to increasing agricultural production and maintaining a fair standard of living for farmers (cf. CEU Supplement 5, 1991). The CAP was created at a time when Europe was deficient in most food products, and thus it induced farmers to farm more intensely by making it more profitable. However, in recent times it has been associated more with large budgetary support subsidies and 'mountains' or 'lakes' of surplus products, from cereals to milk, beef and alcohol. The security engendered by CAP price guarantees encouraged more and more farmers to climb on the 'technological treadmill', which in turn put pressure on farmers to become more specialised in order to achieve economies of scale in the use of highly technological systems (cf. Dexter 1975). At the same time smaller and more marginal producers found themselves disadvantaged by a system which rewarded output and the ability to expand output through capital investment. Thus, it is generally accepted that the CAP has intensified the tendency underlying the development of the market economy, enhancing the dual process of intensification and abandonment in the agricultural sector with important ecological and societal costs (cf. Swanwick 1985, Perez 1988, Roelants du Vivier 1988). Under this macro economic climate the agricultural potential of the Aspre is judged on a highly competitive world market scale.

Owing to its physical limitations and low yields, Mediterranean agriculture is very vulnerable to the dual risk of marginalization and environmental deterioration (cf. Ruiz 1988).

Clearly, the Aspre and Mediterranean in general is not in a position to compete with grain from Atlantic Europe or other temperate zones, with the difference in yields varying from 6,170 kg/ha as opposed to 2,700 kg/ha in the Mediterranean (Perez 1988). Similarly the livestock carrying capacity of Mediterranean pasturelands is estimated as a tenth to a half of that of Atlantic Europe, and the traditional Mediterranean transhumance option could not balance the equation (cf. Grigg 1974; Ruiz 1986). The sheep of the Aspre cannot compete either quantity or quality wise with lowland sheep from other parts of the community or cheap imports from Argentina and New Zealand. Similarly, vine yields from the schist and pliocene soils of the Basse Aspre are lower than the National average, 40 hectolitres /ha as opposed to 66 hl/ha (Atlas Agricole 1991), and cannot compete with yields of 100 to 200 hl/ha common in other parts of France, Italy and Spain (Fleck 1993). However, Mediterranean zones possessing fertile soil on flat ground and an adequate water supply, like the plain of Roussillon did intensify production and attain a high degree of technification, reaching production rates equivalent to those of Northern Europe. Such areas capitalized on climatic and locational advantages providing European markets with horticultural and out of season crops. Similarly the stony, sun drenched and wind swept soils of the Basse Aspre, are theoretically well suited to exploit the quality AOC (Les Appellations d'Origin Controlees), wine niche.

By the 1980s the world markets were saturated with the agricultural produce of both the Mediterranean and Northern Europe. By attempting to support the incomes of marginal producers through a single undifferential price support policy, the CAP over rewarded the more efficient producers who by expanding output and taking advantage of technological innovation created the food surpluses (cf. Potter 1991). The expansion of the EEC in 1986 to include Spain and Portugal, and more recently the Maastricht open frontier policy implemented in 1993, meant that places like Roussillon are in stiff

competition from neighbouring Mediterranean countries producing similar products, on a large scale as in Spain and often with cheaper overheads. In the 1980s the amendment to the CAP and the imposition of a quota system (first for milk in 1984), in an effort to reduce the massive build up of excess produce, culminated in the MacSherry 1992 amendment, and marked the end of the myth of a limitless increased production model. Limits were set and production ceilings came into view. What was even more revolutionary was that the price guarantee was shifted from agricultural products to an 'income support' subsidy. Farmers who had been told for years to modernize and intensify had the rug effectively pulled from under them.

Throughout Europe the general economic conditions of production are changing, and the differences between the two camps that have existed for a long time are becoming more pronounced. In effect what is on offer is a quota controlled (set aside), intensive agriculture for the 'Optimal' areas and extensification for 'Disadvantaged Rural Areas' ('Les Zones Rurales Fragils'), which technically covers 45% (25 million ha) of French Territory, and blankets 30 million ha of agricultural land in the Northern Mediterranean (Bazin 1988). The Aspre, split into its Haute and Basse reaches reflects both zonations on the ground. The negative impact of production quotas is arguably most felt in developing regions, such as the Mediterranean, where the production structure is still in evolution. Marginalization and Regional inequality is a historical by product of the development of capitalist economies. The steady implementation of industrialised agriculture since the 1960s prompted a strong rural exodus, and the abandonment of 'marginal' spaces and places. Not only is it agriculture, but its accompanying market forces which dictate the kind of society and landscape produced. As stated by Kroll (1988), "Le désert économique entraîne bientôt la desertification du milieu".

The polyculture of places like the Haute Aspre never had a competitive advantage on the world market place and have been progressively abandoned since the late nineteenth century. The change in the crop rotation system and the introduction of artificial fertilizers, meant that arable and pastoral agriculture ceased to be tied to each other (see chapters 3 & 5). The vineyards of the Basse Aspre no longer needed the organic

manure from the herds of the Haute Aspre, opening the way for the monoculture of vines, and severed one of the traditional links between the plain and hills of the Mediterranean. Gradually the Haute Aspre joined the ranks of the estimated five to six million ha of French soil classified as 'Friche' (Fottorino 1989). The French term 'Friche Agricole' does not have an equivalent in most other European languages. Technically it is translated as waste or fallow land, but, as we shall see in chapter 8, the symbolism of the phenomenon is far more powerful than that. It is perceived as a sort of evolutionary cul-de-sac, with strong connotations that, 'la terre en friche égal l'esprit en friche'. The horror of the 'friche' is not new, since the development of agricultural science it has been associated with marginalization and anti-progress (cf. Luginbuhl 1989). Today, not only does it signify that farmers are out of work, but it also signals the death knell to the rural communities and their network of schools, shops and post offices that were dependent on them; proof of the social embeddedness of agriculture. Rural depopulation and land abandonment go hand in hand. Following fast in the 'friche' footsteps is another derogatory term 'Arrière Pays', with its connotations of an aging, stagnant, forgotten place¹. The vast majority of the communes of the Aspre are burdened with both the above 'negative' terms.

Farmers and 'le goût de terroir' have always enjoyed a special place in French society, with the family farm epitomising the solid values upon which it likes to think that its society is built. What Giscard d'Éstaing referred to as farming's "civilizing mission", Milhou (1961) described as "source de vie et cadre de vie.....qui a son tour façonne l'homme, son caractère, sa mentalité et son destin". The emotional ties with the land run deep. The visual anarchy of 'la France en friche' is undermining the very fabric of its cultural and societal identity. The response of the EEC and French Government to the 'friche' syndrome is a series of extensification agro-environmental policies, locally referred to as the 'Gardien de l'Environnement' scheme. This 'New Agriculture' has major repercussions for the Aspre, it may appeal to societies desire to

¹Tourist brochures advertising the Aspre use the symbolism of the 'arrière pays' to evoke the 'charm of another age', like the charm of 'l'arrière saison', that which rests after the season is over.

conserve the reassuring image of its rural patrimony, but as we shall see in what follows, it has provoked a major identity crisis among the 'farmers'.

The 'friche' is also making inroads into the orderly vineyards of the Basse Aspre and plain of Roussillon. The EEC grants for uprooting vines, in an effort to control over production of a commodity there is a falling demand for, once more enhances land abandonment. Clearly, it is no longer enough to be physically capable of producing an agricultural product, market considerations are as important as the fertility of the soil. Confidence is wavering and a cloud of uncertainty hangs over the agricultural future of the Aspre. It is ironic that the farmers of the Aspre, scions of an ancient agrarian civilization, should today be under threat from imbalances in international trade and from over production. The forces at work in this 'microcosm' of the Mediterranean are common through the Region. The rest of this chapter is concerned with how the people on the ground perceive and interpret these agrarian issues, which inevitably impact on their daily lives and perceptions of 'land degradation'.

6.2 A Changing and Uncertain Landscape: The Impact of CAP in the Aspre.

The field work clearly indicates that uncertainty and the accompanying feelings of insecurity are the major considerations of the farmers in both the Haute and Basse Aspre. This unease is linked to the tremendous wave of changes in agriculture that most of them have experienced in their own life time, and which show no sign of abating. Mechanization, followed by loss in diversity and the dying out of polyculture is unanimously sited as the major change factor in their life time, linked to which is the depopulation of the Haute Aspre. *"Before on this farm we had olives, sheep, vines, cereal, cork trees and a vegetable garden, now it is only the monoculture of vines. Five families used to live here, now I have only one workman"* (D). In effect what we are seeing here is a delayed reaction to the industrialization of agriculture. Mendras (1970) reminds us that 'la sagesse Française' kept the Nation from pushing the agrarian revolution of the eighteenth century, enabling them to conserve a large peasant class, while countries like Britain yielded to the logic of the industrial economy. France and the Aspre paused for over a century and a half, slowly accepting technological

innovation, like the mechanization of viticulture in the Basse Aspre, but remaining peasants at heart. Today the third agricultural revolution, driven by an industrialized civilization is throwing them into a renewed turmoil.

The imposition of the so called 'American Model' of industrialized agriculture is seen to conflict with the climatic, ecological, topographic, and dare I say mental constraints of the Mediterranean; within whose shores has evolved a specialized agriculture based on fruit, vines and vegetables (with extensive animal husbandry (*élevage*) on higher ground), often in small fragmented plots, requiring a lot of labour, specialized skills and a long term perspective. Unlike the agriculture of Northern Europe one is frequently reminded that it takes a vineyard or orchard over five years to mature and 15 years for the first cork harvest. The resultant necessity for a long term perspective is cited as a reason for the conservative nature of the society and its inertia to change.² *"In the North there is less of a sense of continuity, where a field of wheat today can be ploughed up and turned into a field of potatoes tomorrow"* (I). The transformation of this 'artisan' agriculture into an industry, trapped within the short term fluctuations of market demands is seen to produce great uncertainty in the future. *"This year the cherry market fluctuated from 40 F to 18 F to 8 F/kg without notice, depending on the day"* (H). Thus, one of the root causes of the perceived marginalization of Mediterranean agriculture from the rest of Europe is the conflict between two incompatible systems of production.

It would be inaccurate to project an image of a static and insular agrarian society, that all of a sudden had its doors flung open by the winds of change. The farmers of the Aspre, in keeping with farmers throughout history, have always lived with change and uncertainty; a glance at the socio-biophysical system outlined in appendix A, is proof of that. Not only have they wrestled with a highly unpredictable and fragile natural

²Braudel (1975), speculated that the traditionalism and rigidity of the Mediterranean was connected to the fact that agrarian individualism was never encouraged there. Newly acquired land remained under the control of the wealthy, unlike Northern Europe where a pick and an axe was enough to make the soil productive. The 'latifundiaire' system operating in the South required a disciplined holding of rank, possible only through a rigid social order.

environment, but they have never been insulated from the ceaseless turning of the millstone of the political economy within which they have always lived. Chapter five argued that it was essentially an economic crisis that depopulated the Haute Aspre. The traditions out of which have evolved the daily and yearly rituals, habits and routines of survival form the basis of their coping strategy, and it is that which provides them with a sense of continuity in what is otherwise a sea of change. Their sense of identity and continuity comes from the passing on of know how and patrimony from one generation to the next. As remarked by Blaikie (1987), frequently peasants view the future as the 'round of time' rather than the 'arrow of time'.

Temporal perceptions are important, a conflicting sense of time feeds into the present air of uncertainty. In market oriented agriculture the emphasis is overwhelmingly on the present and the ability to respond to the market needs of today. The past does not exist, or as Henry Ford remarked "history is bunk", and the future is brought forward via the immediacy of 'credit'. The resultant world vision is in direct contradiction to the Mediterranean 'bon père de famille', whom we found in Saint Marsal and shall meet again in the following chapter, who values prudence, restraint and frugality above all other virtues. From here springs their inherent abhorrence of 'falling into debt', and their mistrust of professional expansion and investment advice from Technicians, whose council is considered potentially very dangerous. There are seen to be far more constraints in the real world than their abstract theories allow for. It is felt that what the technicians consider as non viable holdings is frequently where one has to start. As one young couple starting out in agriculture remarked; *"We listened to our parents and relatives who know the land and the severe climate of the Aspre, where nothing is certain. Those who listen to the technicians end up in serious debt, like the Jeune Agriculture from Trouillas who committed suicide last year"* (H). That unfortunate incident was frequently cited as proof of the dangers of trying to get onto the 'Chef d'Entréprise' bandwagon.

The lack of a long term vision in present day agricultural policies is unanimously sited as a major source of uncertainty and insecurity. The farmers of the Aspre have shown

that they are capable of taking on board new ideas and changing accordingly, with the mechanization of viticulture being an obvious example. However, one must acknowledge that the initial modernization of French agriculture in the 1960s also met with widespread psychological opposition, which researchers at the time put down to 'traditional rural' value systems diametrically opposed to urban values and an enterprise culture (cf. Flatés 1963, Dubos & Darré 1964). Similarly behind much of the policy and social research into farmers attitudes towards agricultural modernization at the time, lay the assumption that farmers who rejected modernization were somehow irrational (cf. Houée 1972, Robertson 1984, Bugler 1990). Bodiguel's (1968) ethnographic research in Northern France, and research on the innovation process by van der Leeuw & Torrence (1989), suggests that the adoption of new farming techniques is processional, and what has always been important is the testing and trial of innovation in the social context of the farming community. The same arguments are resurfacing today and we are back to talking about the opposition between 'modernism' and 'archaism', and western economists and planners assumptions about the irrational small farmer continue to persist (cf. Crow 1987). A consideration of the non economic factors that influence economic activities is essential to understanding the social context within which farmers operate. In this sphere we can learn from work by Jollivet & Mendras (1971), Mendras (1970), Greenwood (1976), and Delbos (1978, 1982), whose research on French agriculture emphasised the socio-cultural influences in the adoption of agricultural change.

What modern agriculture is seen to offer the farmers of the Aspre today, is the 'challenge' of perpetual change, which on the ground translates into 'flux'. "*We are in a runaway train without a chauffeur*" (H). Neither are they very keen on the rumours they have been hearing about 'custodians of space'. The upshot of the optimization approach to agriculture is that on a National, logical scale there is no point continuing with agriculture in the Haute-Aspre while there is more favourable and easily mechanisable land idle on the plain. It is generally felt among the farmers of the Aspre that a local market economy would work to their advantage, and that the lack of flexibility in the current economic system militates against the low capital intensive,

small producers of the Mediterranean. *"Before one could sell a box of cherries, now one has to have a lorry full"* (K). What many of them advocate is a return to some form of Protectionism and Regionalism. The Maastricht treaty with its open frontier policy is seen to have squashed any hopes of that.

A manifestation of the present uncertain climate and in a sense their response to it is reflected in agrarian statistical trends, showing a decreasing and aging agricultural population, the lack of successors and the falling price of land. Table 5 indicates that there has been a 64% reduction in the number of farmers in the Vallespir-Albers in a period of 45 years, between 1944-1989. Figure 13 indicates that the number of farmers in the Aspre fell by 53% between the 1955 to 1989 agricultural census. Similarly, Figure 12 indicates that within the Department as a whole there has been over a 70% reduction in the number of farmers between 1881-1991. These trends are not confined to the Pyrénées Orientales, but are the norm throughout France and much of Europe. In 1900, 50% of the active population of France was agricultural, at the end of the second world war it was reduced to 33% and in 1985 it was down to 7% (Hervieu 1989). Today the agricultural population of the Pyrénées Orientales at 12% of the total population, is still higher than the National average of 5% (Solans 1993).

Agricultural Regions	1944	1955	1970	1980	1989	% Variance (1944-1989)
Plaine du Roussillon	17,221	15,463	12,044	9,253	7,525	-56
Vallespir et Albers	1,608	1,732	1,337	887	581	-64
Cru Banylus	953	1,327	1,173	933	703	-26
Conflent	3,109	2,974	1,854	1,385	1,119	-64
Cerdagne	891	655	281	188	148	-83
Capcir	367	268	113	64	36	-90
Corbieres	3,487	2,524	1,982	1,626	1,489	-57
Fenouilledes	796	610	396	364	272	-66
Total	28,432	25,553	19,180	14,700	11,873	-58

Table 5: Regional Evolution in the Number of Farmers in the Pyrénées Orientales (1944-1989). (Data Sources: Gavignaud 1983; Recensement d'Agriculture 1955 to 1989).

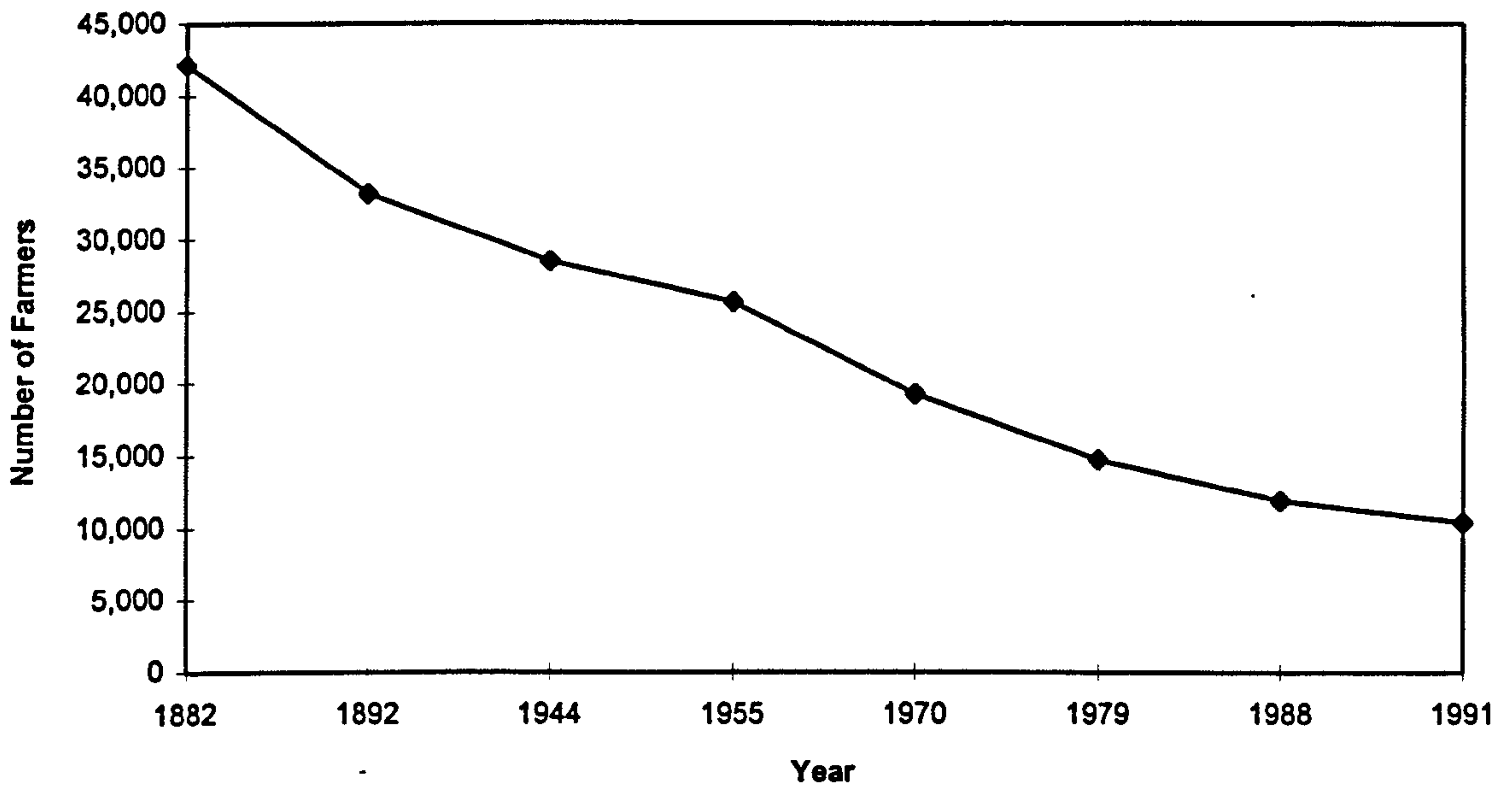


Figure 12: Evolution in the Number of Farmers in the Department (1882-1991)

(Data Sources: Gavignaud 1983; Recensement d'Agriculture 1955-1989; Atlas Agricole 1991).

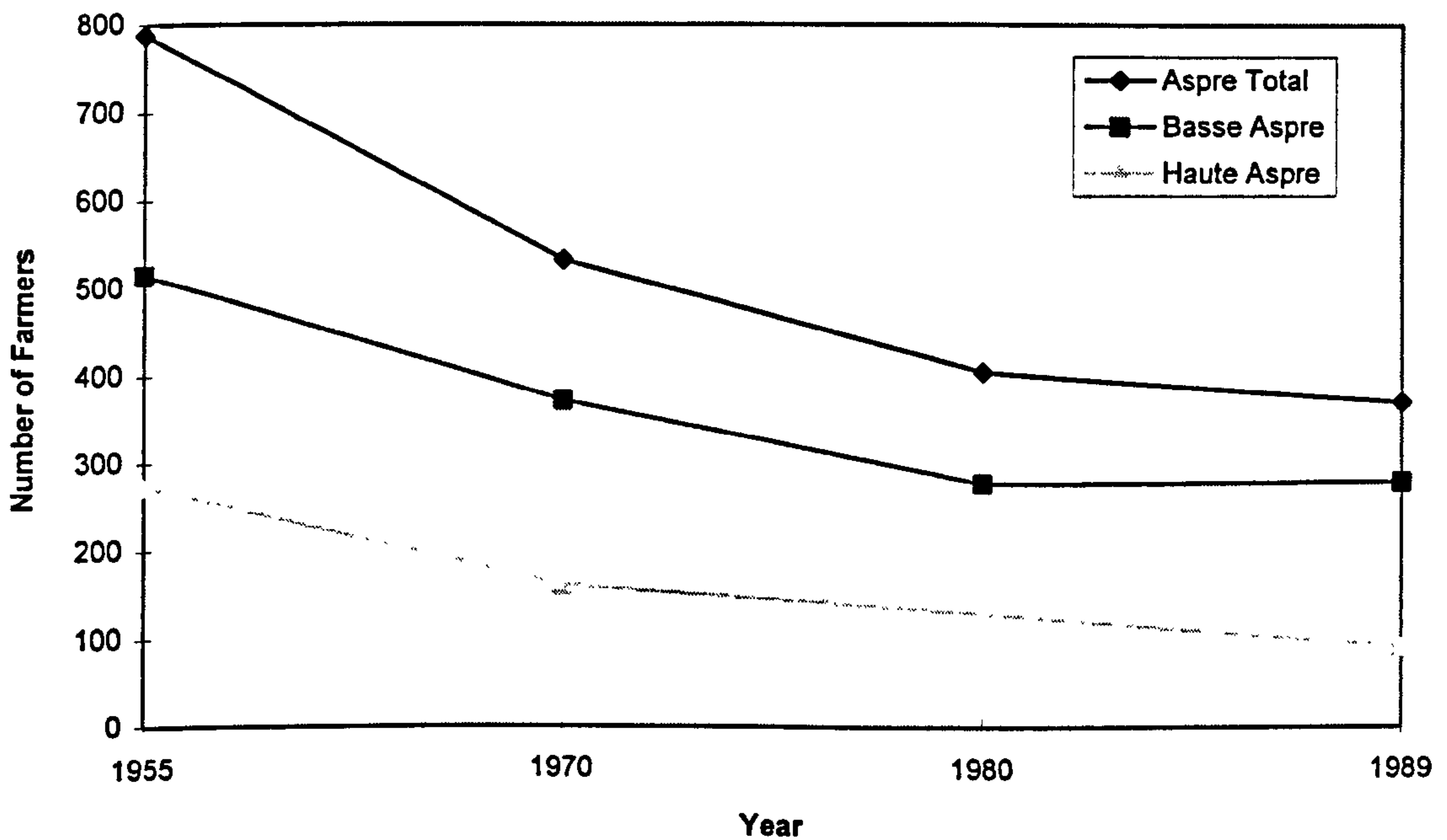


Figure 13: Evolution in the Number of Farmers in the Aspre (1955-1989)

(Data Sources: Recensement d'Agriculture 1955, 1970, 1980, 1989).

In league with a declining agrarian population has been a reduction in the surface area of the Department used for agriculture, which has fallen from 44% in 1955 to 24% in 1989 (Recensement d'Agriculture 1955 & 1989). Similarly, only 23% of the Aspre's total surface area is currently used for agriculture, one third of which is under permanent grassland (see Table 9, p202).

Chapters 4 & 5, highlighted the link between demography and the environment. It is still a vital thread today and what is occurring in the Haute Aspre is a form of 'degradation' due to depopulation. The falling price of land and low inflation indicate that it is not a good time to invest in agriculture, least of all to borrow for expansion and intensification. Another less precise indicator though no less telling is that, 'the 'Notable' (Doctors, Lawyers etc.) are said to no longer invest in the land but in apartments³. However, in Roussillon the land is still an important source of patrimony and a major speculative tool. The decline in agriculture and the emergence of land speculation linked with tourism, is reflected in the changing mode of land use in the Department. Table 6 indicates that since the 1970s there has been a significant swing towards renting land rather than farming it directly.

Year	1882	1892	1944	1955	1970	1990
Farmed by Owner	69%	71.6%	91.1%	94.1%	96%	66%
Rented (Fermage)	5.7%	7.5%	6.3%	2.7%	3%	32.6%
Rented (Metyage)	2.9%	6.6%	2.5%	2.9%	1%	1.5%
Mixed	22.4%	14.3%				

Table 6: Change in Mode of Departmental Land Use (1882-1990).

(Data Source: Gavignaud 1983, and Recensement d'Agriculture 1970 & 1989).

³An employee of the 'Crédit Agricole' in one of the villages of the Aspre, indicated that the trend is for local people with savings to put them in the bank rather than risk investing in apartments, which is considered too risky and demands follow up.

The confusion and uncertainty surrounding the future of agriculture is compounded by the fact that the farmers are receiving conflicting signals and information. On the one hand they are encouraged to expand and modernize, which is the message emanating from the 'Jeune Agriculture' courses, (which are "all about book keeping, borrowing and expansion" (Q)), the Plan d'Initiative Local (PIL), aimed at regrouping fragmented vineyards, and the SAFER (created to give priority of land sales to farmers); but on the other hand there is the EEC 'Prime d'Arrachage' paying viticulteurs to uproot their vines, and the new agro-environmental policies which encourages extensification, reduced production, and the maintenance of landscape patrimony essentially for tourist purposes. Added to this EU policies are seen to be constantly changing direction, with no vision of the long term. *"The EEC has destabilized all markets, there is no certitude any more. They do not understand the problems here, their vision is short term and market oriented, they are treating agriculture like an industry, but they have even failed there look at the number of unemployed "* (H).

6.2.1 The Framers Perception of the EEC.

The farmers of the Aspre perceive the EEC as a large bureaucratic, distant, removed, and faceless Northern Institute, which neither understands or wants to understand the constraints and problems of the Mediterranean. There is seen to be a big gulf between what goes on in Brussels ("ils rêvent dans leur bureaux" (WW)), where strategy is decided and the reality of the 'victims' on the ground. They express a sense of powerlessness and helplessness when confronted by such a large alien bureaucracy, one detects a sort of fatalistic acceptance. Research by Douglas (1987) indicates that this is a fairly typical reaction of people to large bureaucracy in general. For most people the EEC is something far away and complex, something they could not begin to understand, best left to the Director of the wine co-operative to deal with. Neither do they feel well represented in Brussels or Paris by their own politicians, who are dismissed in typical Mediterranean fashion as incompetent and corrupt. The Department voted against Maastricht and its open frontier policy, which was seen to offers them no protection and is unanimously viewed as unjust and unfair. They believe it puts them at a competitive disadvantage, the question invariably asked is; *"How can*

we compete with countries that are not at the same 'niveau social', with different tax systems, labour costs, pollution laws, currency etc"? It is strongly felt that the rules should have been harmonized before the frontiers were opened. Similarly the open frontier policy is seen to affect their agriculture more than that of Northern Europe. Their 'exotic' produce of fruit, out of season vegetable and wine are seen to be less well protected than the cereal and dairy products of the North, which can be 'shipped around the globe' and play an important role in international trade agreements such as GATT. In contrast the EEC is seen to reinforce the tourist option for the Mediterranean, turning the place into 'une promenade pour les gens du Nord', and by so doing creating a 'two speed agriculture' and a 'two speed Europe'.

Above all the EEC is perceived as the symbol of 'modernity' and equated with industrialized agriculture, monoculture and market economics, the enemy from outside so to speak. *"Cooperatives here are throwing away peaches in order to maintain prices, while at the same time they are importing more. They are treating agriculture as an industry and playing political games. The EEC has become a 'banc de speculation" (Y).* The industrial approach to agriculture is seen to promote a mass of middle men, 'trafiquants', who are considered the real benefactors of their policies. *"What we are witnessing is dehumanization not desertification" (GG).* Not only is the EU seen to promote monoculture within agriculture, but it is also seen as having a homogenizing affect on culture, *"but every country is different and we want to keep our identity" (AB); "Even within a village no two houses are the same" (R).* It is the driving force behind the changing identity and self-image of the farmers. *"The underlying message from the EEC and Government is that they want us out of production, there is a surplus of everything and one will always find somewhere else that will produce it cheaper, while still 2/3 of the world does not have enough to eat" (B).*

As previously indicated, one of the most frequently commented on attributes of EEC policy is its infamous lack of long term vision. It is perceived as solely responding to the 'crisis of today', thus deepening their fears of uncertainty in the future. The general

consensus is that there are lots of short term EEC subsidies, which change from day to day, have no follow up, demand mountains of repetitive paperwork, and are mixed up with the politics of the day. The resultant flux does not instill confidence among these conservative and traditional communities, who hold a different concept of time, with long term security being a priority. An agricultural technician described the impact on stockbreeders (éleveurs) as follows: *"The EEC subsidies for élevage change on a regular basis, depending on market trends, making it impossible for them to predict what next year is going to be like. They find all that conflict and uncertainty very confusing, hard to keep up to date with and even harder to apply for. They are not always aware of what they are entitled to"* (EF). This may all change after 1997, when it will be necessary to hold a 'Baccalauréat' qualification (something very rare among the farmers of Roussillon), in order to qualify for 'Jeune Agriculture' status. This uncertainty is carried over into the EEC agro-environmental policies, which as we shall see in section 6.4, are looked upon as totally experimental and dehumanizing. The subsidies are equated with charity which is seen to trap them in a strange type of dependent agriculture, there for the benefit of the 'tourists', for whom they hold no affection.

The interference of the EEC in what they consider to be their local or National affairs is highly resented. For example, there is strong local resentment to the EEC trying to take over the work of the National 'Organization Interprofessionel' which was set up in 1943 to control the price, marketing and distribution of AOC wine. An even more heated debate surrounded the imposition of EEC cheese making hygiene laws. It is given as yet another example of bureaucratic homogenization, and not understanding the reality on the ground⁴. An agricultural technician expressed the following sobering opinion on the matter; *"There is nothing to prevent one making unhygienic cheese in a hygienic building. There are too many rules and not enough sense, as a result we are loosing 'le goût de terroir' and forced to eat plastic supermarket cheese"* (HH). The

⁴Part of that reality is that there are still some people in the hills of the Aspre who choose to ignore such laws, and continue to make and sell their 'unhygienic' cheese. One man declared he would continue to do so until such time as he was either put in prison or the Gendarmerie smashed up his unhygienic dairy (WW).

days when DeGaulle referred to France as an ungovernable country with 265 varieties of cheese are over. The cheese laws had a detrimental affect on many of the small, frequently Neo-Ruraux producers of goats cheese in the Aspre, who depended on it as their major source of ready cash, but did not have the capital to build modern dairies conforming to EEC regulations. A lot of EEC policies are also described as contradictory and lacking ecological sense, for example, the subsidies for uprooting vines are seen to contradict the environmental protection policies, as was the 100% grant for planting highly combustible conifers in the Mediterranean and now the grant for building and repairing terraces after the people have left.

It is obvious that the EEC is used as a convenient scapegoat for all the ills in agriculture. However, it cannot be held responsible for the depopulation and decline of agriculture in the Haute Aspre, which happened long before its creation. The market forces now impacting on the wine growers of the Basse Aspre is part of a general world economic system, within which the EEC operates. In a sense the EEC price support subsidies insulated them in the past and is now allowing a form of heavily subsidised 'agriculture' in the Haute Aspre. The reason it provokes such a strong reaction from the farmers of the Aspre is because it is a tangible reflection of the 'New World Order', the new 'modernity' which leaves them in a rather weak position. But, it is equally true to say that it is not responding to their needs and the constraints of their environment. In summary, it is the inability of the EEC to understand the people and their world vision, followed by the inability to respond to the great variability of needs and constraints on the ground that is perceived to be missing form present day EU policies. The fundamental question is how can a large institute like the EEC accommodate context within its universal approach? It would appear that people and their aspirations need to be considered more in the policy making process. We shall now examine the agricultural aspirations of the farmers in the Haute and Basse Aspre, bearing in mind the European agricultural context outlined above.

6.3 Viticulture in the Basse Aspre.

Theoretically there is still a good living to be made from viticulture in the Basse Aspre,

with average returns from AOC (Les Appellations d'Origine Contrôlées) wine ranging from 15,000 - 30,000 F/ha, (depending on weight, vine stock and alcohol content) and 12,000 - 15,000 F/ha for table wine and 'vin du pays'; but charges are rising and prices have been stagnant for some time. After the repayment of costs such as insurance, bank repayments, chemicals & fertilizers the average monthly pay cheque of viticulteurs in Terrats is, according to the Director of the wine co-operative, in the region of 8,000 to 10,000 F/month. Vine yields in the Aspre are low due to environmental conditions, which are however ideally suited for low yielding quality AOC wines, such as Vins Doux Naturels (VDN), Côtes du Roussillon, Côtes du Roussillon Villages. Roussillon has over half (67%) its vineyards under AOC vine stock, producing 43% of its total wine volume (Bilan Economique 1990). In the past the Department enjoyed a monopoly over its famous 'Vins Doux Naturels', still today it produces 88% of the Nations supplies, but recently market demand and correspondingly prices for this sweet wine have been falling. Figure 14, indicates that wine production in the Department is steadily falling.

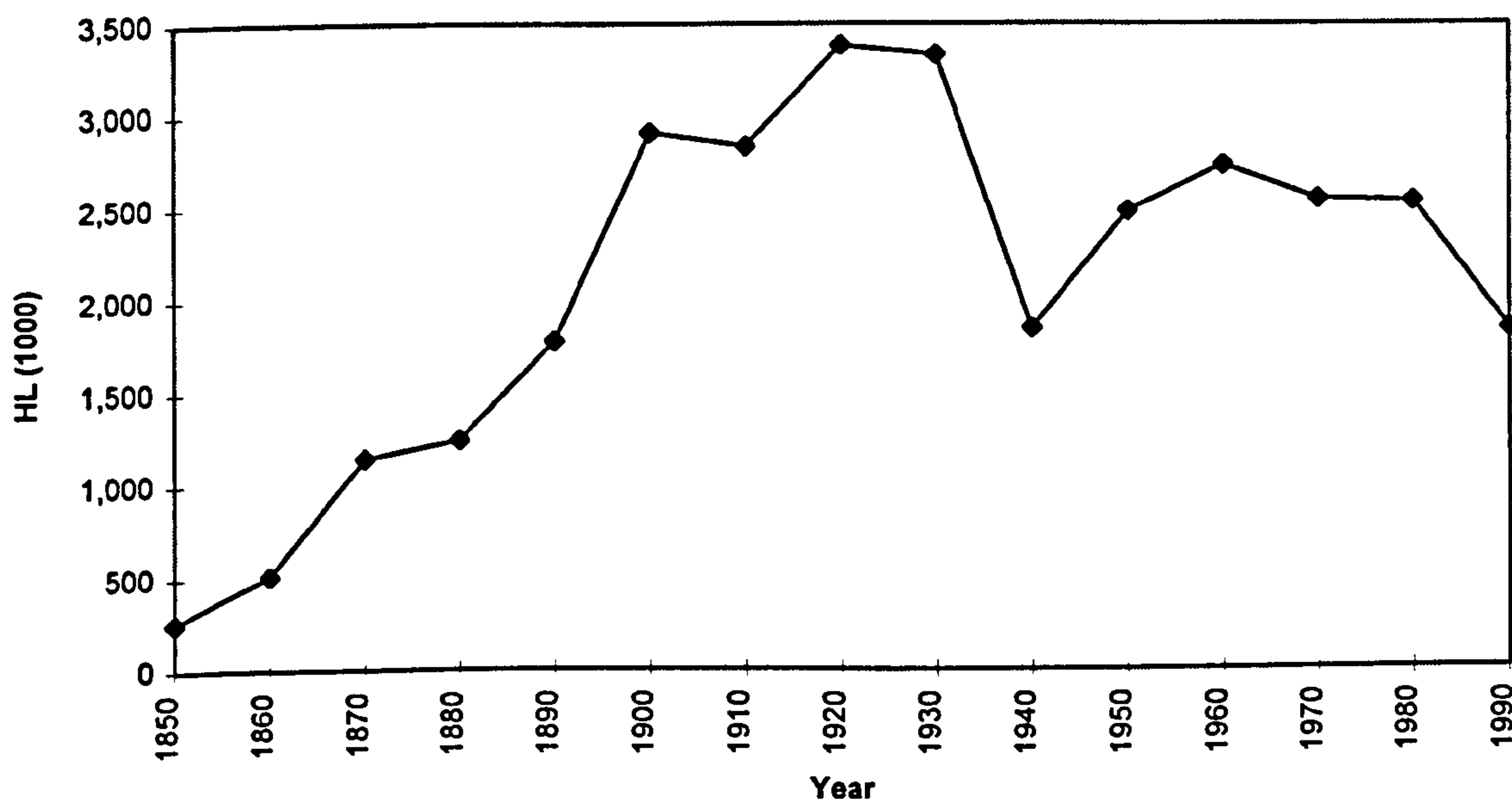


Figure 14: Wine Production in the Pyrénées Orientales (1850-1990)

(Data Source: Cholvyg 1979; Atlas Agricole 1981 & 1990).

Wine production yields are a good indication of the socio-economic history of the Department. The late 1870s phylloxera invasion was reflected in a temporary levelling off in production; however, world war one and closer market integration in the early twentieth century had a more pronounced impact, from which production figures once more quickly recovered, reaching a peak in 1920. In the course of the second world war, wine production figures in the Department suffered a severe decline, from which it never recovered its pre-war yields. Over production, market saturation and changing consumption patterns are reflected in another steady decline in yields since 1980, bringing the figure back down to the world war two figure.

However, Figure 15, indicates that wine still accounts for approximately 40% of the Departments agricultural revenue (Bilan Economique 1990).

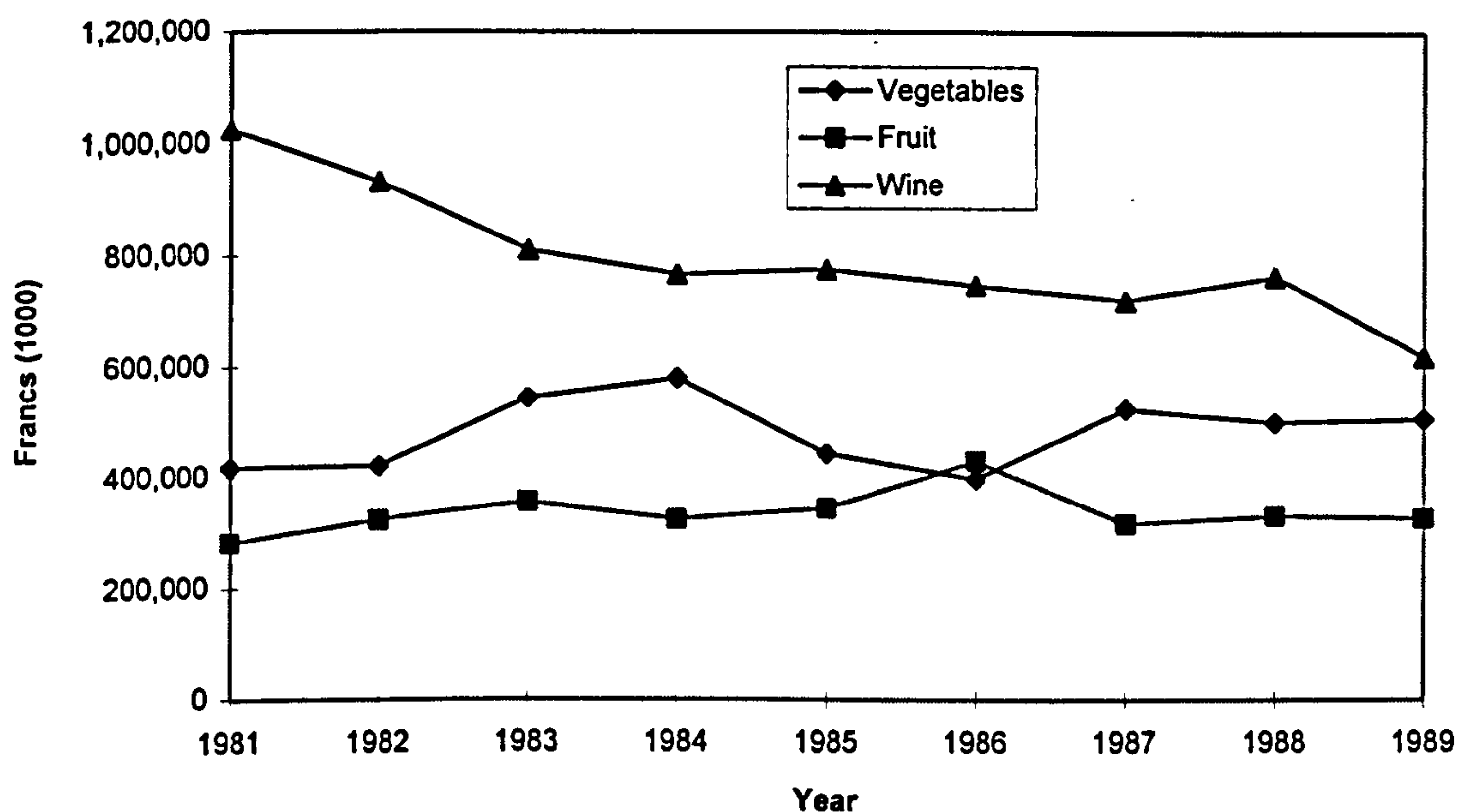


Figure 15: Departmental Revenue from Principles Agricultural Produce (1981-1989). (Data Source: *Les Comptes de l'Agriculture des Pyr. Or, Retrospective 1981-1989*).

Languedoc-Roussillon produced 48% of the Nations wine in 1991, undoubtedly it is

very important to the economy of the Region. Over production in the sector is a major problem today, with Regional stocks of 25 million hectolitres of non AOC wine in 1990 (Atlas Agricole 1991). These statistics are reminiscent of the 1848 'mévent', when three quarters of the harvest was left unsold. The crisis affecting wine in the Department is among other things related to changing consumption patterns⁵ .

The present situation in viticulture in the Region is also a product of its past. The general consensus is that in the past they neglected quality and marketing and were content to make poor quality wine, besides they believed that the V.D.N was the best in the world and there was no need to market it. That worked O.K until the seventies, but today they find themselves 25 years behind other vine growing regions and with the world market saturated. The lack of dynamism in the wine sector today is frequently attributed to human error with the wine co-operatives being cited as among the major offenders. Since the establishment of the first 'cave co-opérative' in Bompas in 1907, the ethos in this communist Department has always been to protect and insulate small growers, the larger vigneronns having their own cave and marketing their own wine. The certitude and insularity of the co-operatives in each little village was seen by the small vine growers as very attractive, and in time they began to look upon it as a form of social security, seeing themselves as 'fonctionnaires' of the cave more interested in getting their salary on time rather than participating in its running or direction. The co-operative spirit was never very strong in this individualistic Department, rather it was looked upon as something one got the maximum out of and invested the minimum in. For example the cave in Passa has 130 members, at its annual meeting in 1993 less than 25 people turned up, which was considered an average attendance.

The Directors of the wine co-operatives are frequently cited as one of the major culprits in the human error saga. One of the Departmental Agricultural Technicians stated that;

⁵According to the Departmental Viticole Director, "People are consuming less wine but of higher quality, even within France it is becoming a luxury, it is no longer fashionable among the young, they are turning to coca-cola and beer. The market now is only for quality wine, but the wine of Roussillon is not of great quality nor is it well known, due to lack of initiative and marketing in the past". (GH)

"The Department did everything to improve the quality of wine, changed vine stock, modernized the caves and vinification technique, but the problem was the men at the head of the caves, they were content to make a lot of poor quality wine. That was acceptable up until the 1970 but not any more, now it is too late to change, there are no good vine stock left and no openings in the market" (HH). But, as the Director of one of the caves in the Aspre pointed out; *"The Director can only go forward if the members of the cave are with him"* (DE). The Director is also elected by the members of the cave. Naturally there is an element of leadership and motivation, the proof of which is the cave in Terrats, widely considered the most successful in the Aspre and with a high reputation throughout the Department. Its success is invariably put down to having had a series of dynamic Directors, who started bottling and promoting their wine 20 years ago, which the others are only starting to do now. The mark 'Terrassous' is well known and the cave appears to have a bright future, unlike neighbouring caves, with stocks of wine held for 2 to 6 years before being sold or distilled into EEC stocks of ethyl alcohol, under exactly the same cultural, environmental and economic conditions.

An important factor feeding into the overall lack of dynamism in the viticole sector is the phenomenon of 'double emploi' (double employment), very pronounced in viticole towns such as Thuir, though less common in the viticole villages of the Aspre. From Table 7, we note that less than half the farmers in the Department are full time⁶. Sixteen hectares may be the average size of vineyards among full time farmers, but globally 42% of the Departments viticultures exploit a surface area of less than 10 ha, many only a fraction of a hectare (cf. Atlas Agricole 1991). Many of the vine growers have other forms of income, such as, part-time jobs or dividends from property or the sale of land. Undoubtedly, this adds to the overall 'laissez faire' attitude and not wanting to unduly 'rock the boat', and thus the difficulty of the cave Directors in motivating their part time members.

⁶However, full-time farmers farm 85% of the Departmental agricultural land, and account for 87.6% of the Departmental agricultural revenue (Atlas Agricole 1991).

Full Time Farmers	No. of Framers & % of Total	No. of Ha Farmed & % of Total	Average Age of Farmers	Average Farm Size (Ha)
Vinegrowers	2,401 (42%)	38,252 (46%)	50.5	15.93
Fruit Growers	1,306 (23%)	12,632 (15%)	50.9	9.67
Vegetable Growers	1,193 (21%)	5,576 (7%)	47.5	4.67
Animal Husbandry	381 (6%)	20,535 (25%)	47.8	53.9
Total Full-Time Farmers	5,745	82,693	49	19.3
Total Part-Time and Full-Time Farmers	11,873	97,200	54	8.2

Table 7: Breakdown of Farming Types in the Pyrénées Orientales.

(Data Source: Atlas Agricole 1991).

To a large extent culture is held responsible for the present state of affairs; the viticulteurs saw the future as a continuation of the present, "*vivre bien sans faire trop d'effort*". When the changes in agriculture over the last 50 years threatened to undermine their world they made major concessions by modernizing, mechanizing, using chemicals etc, but the vast majority of the small viticulteurs of the Aspre are more reticent to make major structural changes such as borrowing heavily to expand and industrialize their small fragmented holdings. They could not fully take on board the logic of capitalist enterprise, all the voices from the past and their cultural values were telling them '*laissez passe*', '*laissez faire*', '*vivre bien sans faire trop d'effort*'. The traditions and customs to which they had always conformed no longer furnished them with models of cognition and behaviour adapted to constantly new situations. They sense that the world of the 'cave coopératives' cannot insulate them for much longer. Their incomprehension of market economics, driven by the lure of fashion, forces them to rely on the opinions of 'irresponsible' technicians, or the influence of neighbours as confused as themselves. Inevitably their 'kind' will disappear.

Linked to the strong fear of falling into debt is the fact that the principle of borrowing to invest is not readily understood or accepted. The wine co-operative in Terrats is not unanimously considered a success, people are fast to point out that it is '*supposed to have a large debt and that is bad*'.(NN) Similarly when one asks why they did not start promoting their wine sooner one is invariably told that; '*this is a poor region and we can't afford to spend money on advertising*'.(EE) The transition from peasant logic to economic rationality is not yet complete, they are dancing to a different tune. Not only are there environmental and economic constraints to the adoption of an enterprise, market oriented approach to agriculture here, but the inherited mental barriers are equally strong. Rather than throw all caution to a very uncertain wind, demanding perpetual change - "*vineyards today, crocodile farms tomorrow*" - the small viticulteurs decided to give up and educate their children away from the land, as the generations before them had done in the Haute Aspre. One could draw some parallels with the research of Delbos (1982) on agricultural workers in the North of France, who in order to remain 'peasants' in character, and guard the old established agrarian values got out of agriculture when it was modernized after the war.

Consequently one of the biggest problems facing viticulture in the Aspre today is the age of the producers, (the average age of fulltime viticulteurs being 54), and the lack of successors. The young do not see a future in the small uneconomic holdings of the Aspre. The only village where this trend is reversed is Terrats, whose viticulteurs are expanding and buying up vineyards in neighbouring villages. One can detect the first signs of land consolidation here with the average size of holdings between 15- 20 ha, as opposed to the Departmental average of 6-7 ha. The trend towards concentration of production is backed up by the fact that 20% of Terrats viticulteurs produce 80% of the grapes entering the cave (Director of cave, Personal Communication). One is reminded of Ladurie's (1974) research which uncovered the waves of land concentration and subdivision in Languedoc during the middle ages.

However, the Government's 'Plan d'Initiative Local' (PIL), set up in 1990 to aid the transfer and regrouping of small parcels of vineyards (many only 6 m²), by contributing

10,000 F/ha towards the price of adjacent plots, was never very successful in the Aspre, though it did attain its target of 70 ha per annum (Fons 1993). The problem in the wine sector is seen to lie more with market demand than with fragmented plots⁷. The other reason the PIL was never very popular is because land speculation is rife in the Aspre, and everybody knows it is easier to get planning permission for small plots. Besides the local 'Crédit Agricole' and other farming organizations actively encourage the parents to get their children off the land.

The self image of the viticulteurs is changing from *'pride in our tradition of a noble culture'*(F), to *'our products are only considered a nuisance by those in Brussels'*(R). The decision to uproot the vines, which for these people is not just another agricultural crop but a whole way of life (part of the Mediterranean trinity of vines, olives and wheat), linking them to their ancestral roots is not taken lightly rather it causes great distress. One woman approaching retirement and fearing the inevitable day equated it with *"committing a crime, like killing my grandfather"* (EE). Another man having educated his children away from his 12 ha of vineyard, exclaimed with tears in his eyes that he fears he will fall ill when that day comes, *"I live for the vines they are my children"* (R). Still the harsh reality calls and the possible cost of a private retirement home must be faced. An indication of the general devaluation and low status of small farmers in society is seen to be reflected in their retirement pension of only 2,500 F/month, as opposed to 12,000 F/month for retired Gendarmes.

One of the strongest symbols of their marginalization which frequently cropped up in conversation, was the imprisonment for ten days of two viticulteurs from the Pyrénées Orientales, who took part in a wine growers demonstration in Montpellier in 1992. That was 'tres mal vue', and a sore reminder that gone are the days when the viticulteurs of

⁷The Director of the wine co-operative in Fourques summed up the local sentiment when stated; "The main reason the PIL did not work is because the problem does not lie there. Small fragmented plots may be an inconvenience, loosing time and travelling costs, but even if all the plots were together, it would still not be profitable. There is no point in being more efficient when there are no markets for our produce. Le PIL a quoi ca sert?" (I)

the Midi could hold the country at ransom during the Languedocian wine growers revolution of 1907, and the subsequent frequently violent demonstrations in Carcassonne, Beziers and Narbonne. They are fast to point out the unequal treatment of 'their' viticulteurs with that of the striking truck driver and Breton fishermen.

In contrast to the PIL the EEC 'Prime d'Arrachage', arising out of the 1983 Dublin Accord, offering a subsidy of 30,000 to 35,000 F/ha for uprooting vines in an attempt to control over production, is proving a very popular option for the viticulteurs on retirement. Between 1983 and 1991, 12,568 ha (14% reduction over eight years) were uprooted in the Department, well in advance of the quantity of new vineyards planted (see Figures 16 & 17). In comparison to other Regions, notably the plain of Roussillon, Figure 17 indicates that the Basse Aspre has not recently uprooted vines on a large scale (except perhaps for the grouped communes of Passa Llauro Torderes, bordering the Haute Aspre), in fact Table 9, (p202), indicates a slight increase in the number of hectares under vines in the Aspre between the 1955 to 1989 agricultural census. The reason for this regional discrepancy is explained by the fact that vineyards taken out of production in the Aspre are invariably left fallow, as there is perceived to be no alternative crop suitable for the non irrigated poor soil of the Aspre, which is not the case on the irrigated alluvial plain of Roussillon. But, it is expected that when the present generation retires this will change.

The encroachment of the dull brown colours of the 'friche' on the hitherto well cared for vineyards has had a major psychological impact. The Director of the Cave in Terrats declared that; *"The EEC 'prime d'arrachage' is catastrophic, firstly its psychological impact discourages those who remain 'à la limite', and secondly it is bad for the environment, if the stumps are not properly uprooted they can bring disease to nearby healthy vines. It also means that access roads and drains are no longer maintained, accelerating erosion. Visually it is depressing"* (DE).

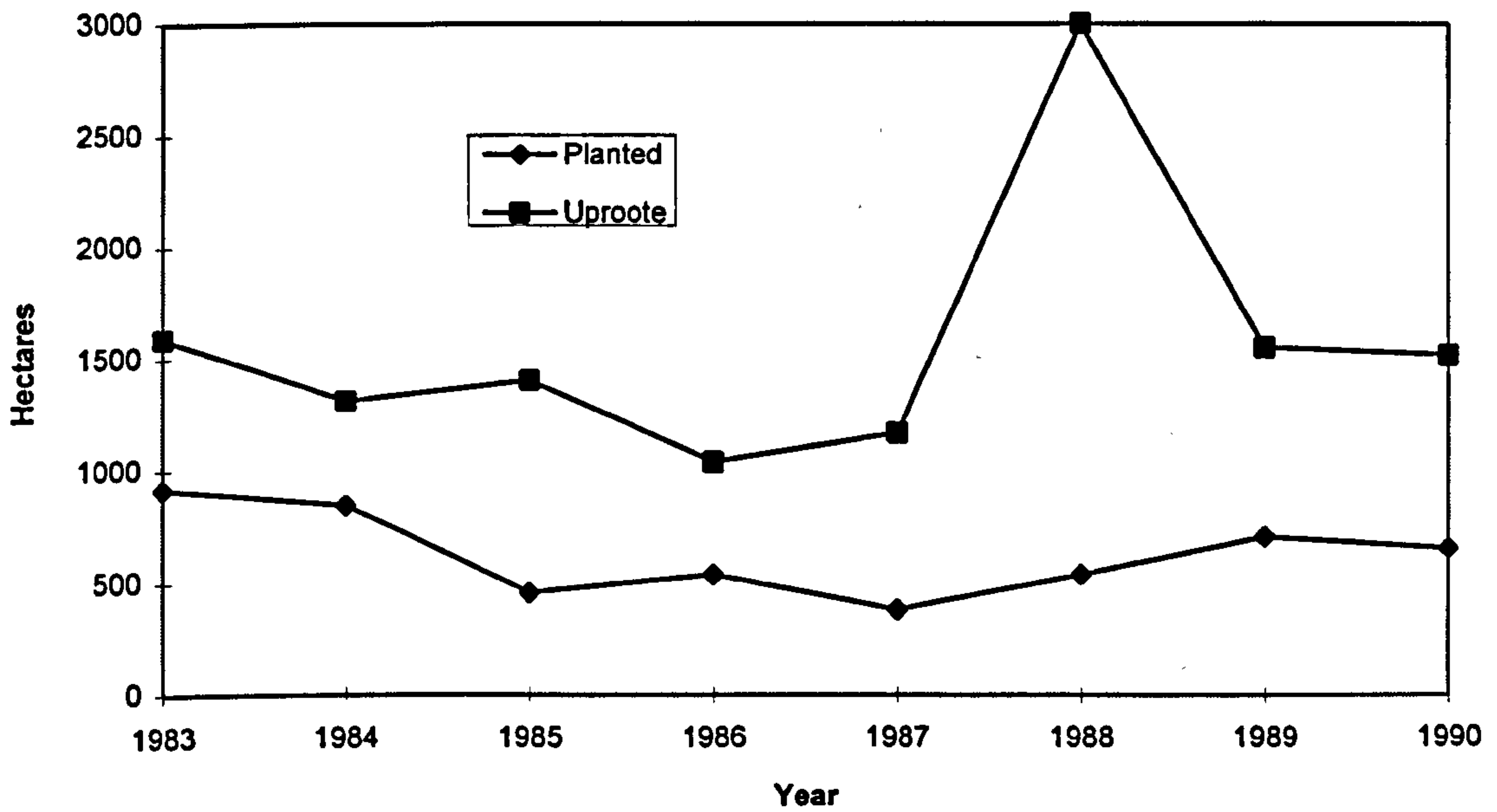


Figure 16: Departmental Vineyards Planted and Uprooted (1983-1990)
 (Data Source: DDAF Viticole Report 1991).

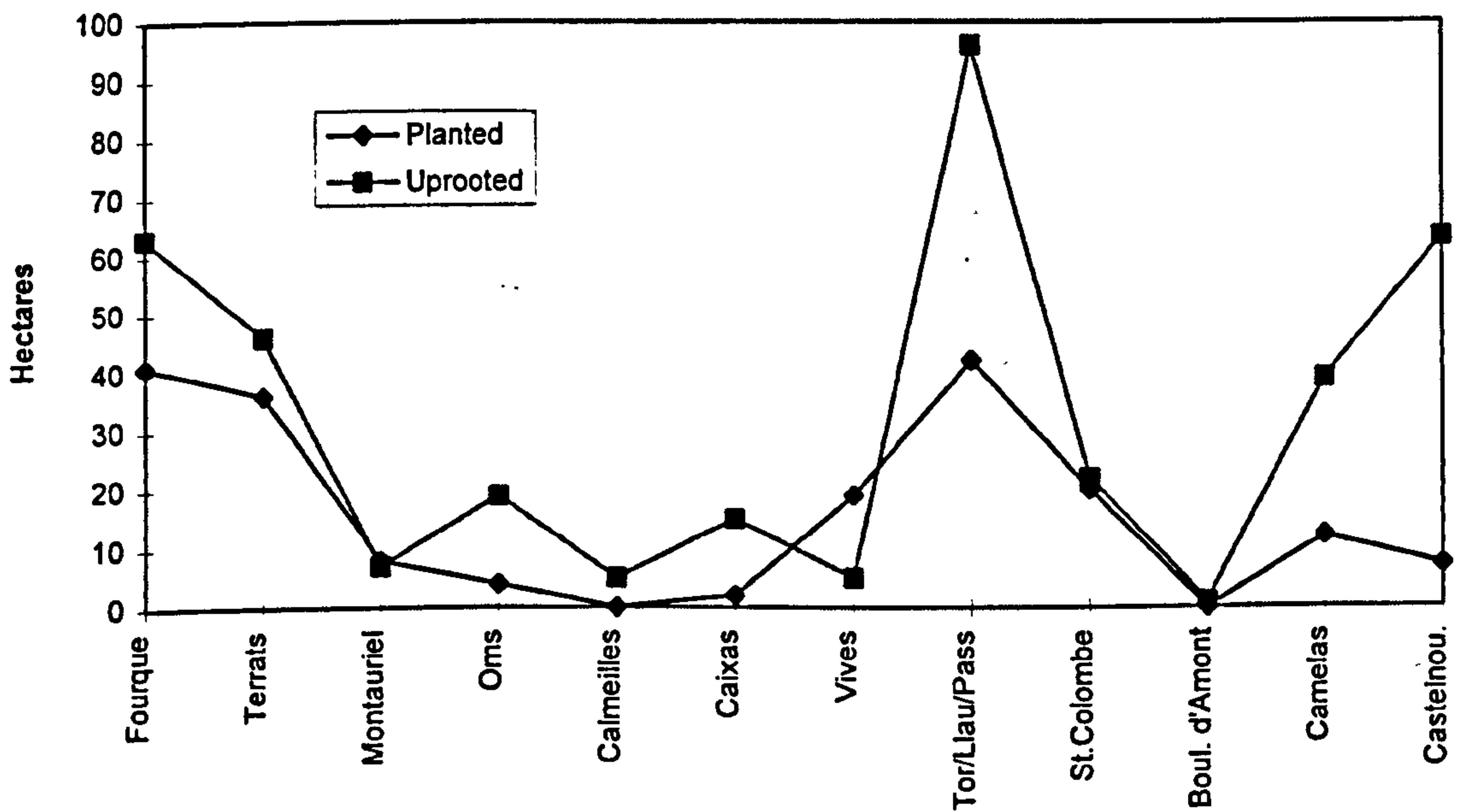


Figure 17: Summary of Aspre Vineyards Planted and Uprooted between 1982-1990.
 (Data Source: DDAF Viticole Report 1991).

The general tendency in the Basse Aspre is not to sell the land, (thus the obvious attraction of the 'prime d'arrachage'), the reason is two fold; (a) they are waiting for the boom price of the 1980s to return, and (b) a sense of security, the land is still perceived as an important source of patrimony, reflected in such general statements as '*la terre faire vivre toujours*' (R), '*jamais vendre la terre*' (C) (except for tourist prices, which one would be a fool not to avail of). In these uncertain times there is a feeling that their children or grandchildren might one day need the 'lopin de terre' in the Aspre, "*on ne sais jamais*" (R)!

Economic rentability is a preoccupation with the wine growers who remain in the business. On the one hand the small 'inefficient' producers without successors and a traditional peasant mistrust of falling too deeply into debt, are being squeezed out of production; On the other hand the 'Chef d'Entréprise', who tends to have inherited large vineyards to start off with are expanding, aiming for around 40 ha of mechanized plots. Their philosophy could be summed up by the following comment; "*Economic survival is the name of the game. I will do whatever is necessary to provide for my family and secure the jobs of my two workmen*" (G). The Departmental Viticole Director sees the future very definitely with the second group: "*There will be less people on the land, they will be better trained and more of the Department will be abandoned. The young who stay on the land today are more careful about which plots they buy, they want all their holdings together to make them suitable for mechanization. They generally have an agricultural training unlike their predecessors. Subsistence farming is out, Capitalist enterprise is in*" (GH). As we shall see in chapter 8, the economic system driving such an approach has ecological implications.

In the final analysis the viticulteurs of the Basse Aspre have shown that they are capable of adapting to new ideas and changing accordingly. The reason many of the smaller viticulteurs are now opting out of the race and educating their children away from the land is one suspects due to a combination of three factors, (a) the light they see at the end of the expansion tunnel is crippling debt, over production of a product there is falling demand for, and perpetual change dictated by international market fads; (b) it

is incompatible with the physical environment and the agrarian structures on the ground; (c) culturally this new model of production does not appeal to them, it is not their world and does not incorporate their value system and their traditional preference for 'rente' rather than entrepreneurial enterprise. Alas, Mendras (1970) reminds us that technological civilization lives on perpetual change and economic contingency, and dooms the quietude of immutable habits. They cannot rediscover the equilibrium of their fathers, those who remain in viticole are very much aware that they must conform to economic viability and rationality.

6.4 'La Nouvelle Agriculture' in the Haute Aspre.

The agricultural agenda in the Haute Aspre is very different to than of the Aspre Viticole. There is a general agreement among the indigenous farmers and agricultural technicians that productive agriculture in the Haute Aspre is finished. Table 8, indicates that in 1980, 89% of the surface area of the Haute Aspre was under a combination of 'friche' (scrubland) and forest, as opposed to 67% in 1882. Arable land has dropped from a peak of 15% to 1%, and the hitherto 12% under vines never recovered from the 1880 phylloxera invasion.

Year	1835	1882	1913	1934	1953	1980
Friche	50%	43%	60%	44%	54%	41%
Forest	25%	24%	28%	40%	35%	48%
Arable	13%	15%	9%	7%	5%	1%
Vines	10%	12%	2%	6%	5%	1%
Diverse	2%	6%	1%	3%	1%	9%

Table 8: Evolution in Land Use in the Haute Aspre (1835-1980).

(Data Sources: Broc 1955 and Dutech 1985).

As previously outlined in chapters 4 and 5, the agriculture of the Haute Aspre was

always complemented by outside work in the mines, the forest, forges, textile industry, or seasonal work on the plain, and the area has been steadily depopulating since the late nineteenth century, corresponding with the opening up of opportunities in the plain and urban centres. A human modified environment without its people has obvious repercussions for both the landscape and society. As indicated in the previous chapter, the vacuum created by the demise of agriculture was to some extent filled by the arrival of foreign property speculators in the sixties and seventies who bought up almost half of the surface area of the Haute Aspre. The major agricultural and social issue in the Haute Aspre today is what to do with its abandoned and functionless land. The pockets of activity that remain are composed of a few indigenous traditional farmers waiting for retirement, some neo-ruraux who moved into the area after 1968, and the rest are holiday home owners or retired outsiders. Land is abandoned when the system is stressed by external forces or because of its own dynamics towards extensification or intensification, which is usually driven by economic conditions or the social environment (Baudry 1991). The latter is the condition driving the situation in the Haute Aspre. There have been several case studies of land abandonment in France, for example, INRA-ENSAA (1977), Bazin (1983), Balent (1987), Kroll (1988), Hubert (1991), all showing the same dynamic centred around various computations of evolving interactions between the physical environment, economics, a changing society, and new techniques.

The analysis in chapter 4 on life in Saint Marsal, in the mid nineteenth century demonstrates that the physical environment of the Aspre is capable of sustaining a much larger population than its present day one. There is no reason to believe that the so called 'carrying capacity' of the environment has decreased since then, if anything the indications are that it has improved under the protection of forest cover. The key lies with changes in the socio-economic environment, a changing value systems, the introduction of new technology, all of which feed into changing perceptions of the landscape patrimony, something we shall return to in chapter 8. The mechanized model of agriculture could never take root in those schist hills, and even less the industrial one. Nevertheless their impact was strongly felt here, progressively the Haute Aspre

became more marginalized from main stream agriculture.

What is proposed as an agricultural alternative for places like the Haute Aspre today is the so called 'Nouvelle Agriculture'; a range of EEC and National agro-environmental policies aimed at compensating farmers for the natural 'handicaps' of their environment, with the objective of stabilizing rural depopulation and maintaining landscape patrimony. The EEC Directive 75/268, drawn up in 1975 was the first European attempt at recognising the difficulties of mountain and other disadvantaged environments, and to address the problem of regional economic inequalities. This Directive gave renewed impetus to existing under funded National initiatives (see Besson's 1982 report), including the 1972 'Indemnité Spéciale de Montagne (ISM), which pays a fixed sum per annum to mountain livestock farmers. Under the EEC 75/268 Directive, 45% of French Territory (39% of agricultural land) was classified as 'Disadvantaged'⁸. In total 68.4 million hectares (52%) of agricultural land within the European Community is classified as 'disadvantaged' (Bazin 1988). We are talking about vast tracks of land. One needs to look more closely at what exactly this term means. Zones classified as 'disadvantaged' by the EEC correspond largely to elevated terrain on slopes in which animal husbandry, generally sheep, is the major occupation (Ravigneau et al. 1990). In essence their handicap reflects the present day criteria for mechanizable agricultural land and the estimation of cereals over the products of animal husbandry. This twentieth century judgement is far from absolute, Oliver de Serres songs of praise for the bounty of mountain life, plus the fact that in feudal times all the large and prosperous property owners of the Aspre were concentrated in the hills and mountains, indicating that in other times society looked differently on its present day handicaps.

The EEC directive 797/85 drawn up in 1985, continued along the lines of development

⁸Of which 25% is classified as mountainous, i.e., elevated terrain over 600 meters, with slopes of 25° or more. The remaining 20% of 'disadvantaged areas' includes such places as foothills, bogs, arid or isolated places.

and environmental protection. Article 19 of the Directive⁹ relating to agricultural practices compatible with the conservation of environmentally sensitive areas, was implemented in the Aspre in the domain of fire prevention. Similarly the ideas emanating from the EU Regulation No. 2078/92, in particular the 'Plan de Développement Durable' (PDD) and the 'Prime à l'Herb' (both centred around extensification), were under experimentation in the Aspre in the period of my field work. Together these EU Directives make up the core of agro-environmental policies in existence or under experimentation in the Aspre. The French 'Loi de Montagne', No 85-30 of 1985, with a budget of 300 million francs, reaffirmed the National Governments intention to support mountain agriculture and its social communities, with the stated ambition of equalizing revenue and standard of living between mountain areas and other Regions of the country ¹⁰. More specifically the aim is to encourage economic diversification and autodevelopment in mountain areas, with aid provided by 'Fonds d'Intervention pour l'Autodéveloppement en Montagne' (FIAM).

In retrospect aid targeted specifically to mountain and disadvantaged areas did not compensate for inequalities in market support subsidies and the agricultural exodus continues. Prior to the 1992 amendment to the CAP the more a farmer sold the more he got in aid. According to research by Coulomb in 1985, the big cereal croppers of the Aisne got more per hectare and per family worker than their colleagues with average size livestock farms, and much more than farmers in difficult areas like the mountains, who supposedly got more aid simply because they got more direct grants. Similarly, Bazin (1985) calculated that in 1983 public aid for farmers on the plain was in the order of 31,000 F per farm and 20,000 F per active person, in comparison to 21,000 F and 16,000 F respectively in mountain zones. In effect the more handicapped

⁹This directive was modified and added to in 1987 (No 1760/87), 1990 (No. 3577/90) and 1991 (No. 2328/91), and Article 19 is now contained under Articles 21, 22 and 23 of the 1991 Directive, but on the ground it is still referred to as Article 19.

¹⁰The Synthetic Regional Index for Metropolitan France, which is the index used by the EEC to measure Regional unevenness, ranks the Languedoc-Roussillon Region at 21 st place out of the 22 Regions of France, just above Corsica (Buzelay 1993).

areas received less community aid, but they did help redress the inequalities in farm incomes. For example, in the 1970s mountain farmers earned 42% less than their equivalent counterparts on the plain, in 1981 that was reduced to a 25% difference (Bazin 1988). The 'Loi de Montagne' highlights the limitations under National agricultural policy to compensate for inequalities between regions. It conflicted with EEC objectives on such fundamental issues as the imposition of milk quotas contradicting the National policy of favouring livestock and a dairy economy in Regions that did not have an alternative.

In summary, the basic thinking behind the 'New Agriculture' is since there is already excess production under the CAP, there is logically no point in marginal and ecologically fragile areas going down the intensification path. The idea is to transfer some of the profits from intensive agriculture in the optimal areas to maintaining the agricultural and landscape patrimony of disadvantaged places such as the Aspre, often with high tourist potential. Either way the cost of over production or protection falls on society (Roux 1988). However, there is a clear economic rationale behind all these initiatives with the economic importance of tourism in mountain and disadvantaged areas being a constant theme. The presence and conservation activities of farmers being a backdrop against which local tourist economic activities could develop. According to the European Commissions document 'A Future for Rural Society', (CEC 1988) restructuring is about managing change and diversifying the rural economy and pattern of land use, and not the removal of farmers and the abandonment of land. The European farm survival policy is supporting a pattern of farmer participation in environmental conservation, to be rewarded by income aid rather than releasing large amounts of agricultural land to conservation lobbies. In order to become the custodians of the countryside the farmers of the Aspre are in effect asked to shift their focus from agricultural development to rural development. The agricultural model proposed is based on the slogan 'produir autrement', which on the ground translates into extensification, bio-diversity, local markets, preservation of rustic races and landscape features such as terraces and irrigation canals, local crafts, afforestation and tourism.

6.4.1 Extensification: From Slogan To Reality.

Traditionally farmers have been the backbone of rural societies and the major occupiers of space. As yet society has not found a viable alternative, with pursuits such as tourism or sport occupying only a fraction of the space. Besides tourists do not appreciate a totally depopulated countryside, which proved to be a problem around the ski resorts of Haute Provence. Forestry is an option frequently put forward, but a completely forested environment risks being monotonous, not very attractive to tourists and besides studies have shown that neither is the Mediterranean forest economically viable (Glass 1993). With forestry there is the added problems of increased fire risk and neither does it counteract rural depopulation. So we return to farmers as the 'ideal' occupiers of rural space. But, as previously outlined society no longer needs the produce of the farmers of the Aspre, especially those of the Haute Aspre. We are left with the dilemma of trying to figure out how we can have one without the other.

Extensification works on the opposite principle to intensive agriculture. Its emphasis on diversity and the use of more land to compensate for artificial inputs has much in common with traditional agriculture; the big difference being that today it is artificially supported by outside subsidies and emphasis has shifted from 'product' to 'service' in the 'Gardien de l'Environnement' sense. When one examines the agricultural statistics for the Haute Aspre contained in Table 9, one can already glimpse a movement towards extensification. There is a progressive reduction in the number of farmers, cereals and sheep, in contrast to an increase in the surface area of land use for agriculture and a significant increase in grassland, a good indicator of extensification. Discussing the issue in terms of extensive or intensive farming becomes very relative. What could be more intensive than the agro-sylvo-pastoral (Dehesas in Spain) activities at the beginning of the nineteenth century (cf. Kunholz-Lordat in 1945). In effect the extensification package proposed for the Haute Aspre is not about agriculture at all, its objective is the maintenance of social and landscape agrarian patrimony. Since society has not yet accepted a total segregation between agriculture and rural landscapes, we hang on to the comforting illusion of the old words and symbols, but in reality they bear little resemblance, a point we shall return to in chapter 8.

	Number of Farmers			Land Used for Agri. in Ha (SAU)			Vines (Ha)				
	1955	1970	1980	1989	1970	1980	1989	1955	1970	1980	1989
Basse Aspre	515	371	276	278	3,312	3,320	3,230	2,577	2,673	2,900	2,728
Haute Aspre	273	161	128	91	1,590	1,714	2,544	418	378	403	176
Total Aspre	788	532	404	369	4,902	5,034	5,774	2,995	3,051	3,303	2,904

	Cereals (Ha)			Number of Sheep			Number of Bovines				
	1955	1980	1989	1955	1970	1980	1989	1955	1970	1980	1989
Basse Aspre	140	5	8	266	998	489	207	0	0	0	0
Haute Aspre	300	56	27	2472	1,353	1,054	826	221	63	143	177
Total Aspre	440	61	35	2738	2,351	1,543	1,033	221	63	143	177

	Grassland (STH) in Ha			Orchards (Ha)		
	1970	1980	1989	1970	1980	1989
Basse Aspre	120	49	11	240	176	278
Haute Aspre	840	1037	2109	136	95	106
Total Aspre	960	1086	2120	376	271	384

Table 9: Agricultural Evolution in the Aspre (1955-1989)
(Data Source: Recensement d'Agriculture 1955, 1970, 1980, 1989).

How does the rather ambiguous slogan of 'produir autrement' translate on the ground? There is a local market for some of the diverse luxury products of the Haute Aspre, such as organic vegetables, goats cheese, honey, pate, and herbal medicinal plants, but this is a very limited market and easily saturated. The vast majority of people involved in such activities in the Aspre define economic survivability as their major problem. Other studies have shown that it is very difficult for local artisan products to expand once their 'label' is well known, due to competition from industrial processes imitating the product, Saint Nectaire cheese being a case in point (cf. Kroll 1988). Thus, they have to be content with a limited success and an under valued labour force, which in the case of artisan production frequently includes the whole family. Getting the initial capital to set up the enterprise is often cited as a problem in places like the Aspre, with the hygiene requirements for cheese dairies being a case in point¹¹. There are some good 'Jeune Agriculture' insertion grants of up to 136,000 F for Mountain Zones (under which the Haute Aspre is classified), which have helped a lot of sheep farmers get established.

Undeniably, there are some real obstacles to the implementation of extensive agriculture on the ground, not least the fact that the small fragmented plots of the Mediterranean must render it one of the most unsuitable places in the world for such an experiment. Added to this is the high proportion of absentee landlords, and the fact that the majority of the herders of the Haute Aspre do not own their own land. As a result there is no incentive for them to clear large tracks of difficult land that they could be moved off at any time¹². In order to maintain more land one needs more animals, but that conflicts with the EEC quota system. There is also the consideration of land tax 'impôt foncier', which would increase disproportionately to production revenue. Paradoxically, the French Departments suffering the greatest handicaps, including the

¹¹The unit of production and capital per head in the Pyrénées Oriental is the lowest in France (cf. Solans 1993)

¹²The 37 'Associations Foncières Pastorales' in the Department offer some protection to the éleveurs, but those agreements are not binding. If the owner of the land declares he is going to work it or plant trees the éleveurs contract is dissolved.

Midi-Mediterranean Region, are also burdened with the highest land tax (cf. Ravignean et al. 1990). The question that remains to be answered is can two conflicting models of agriculture co-exist within the European community and how can the products of extensive agriculture cope with market forces? Perhaps the question is wrongly posed, rather we are trying to find the right combination of diversification and specialization. In reality 'la Nouvelle Agriculture' based on extensification and 'produire autrement', is very difficult to pin down in practical terms.

It is difficult to conceive of a general retreat from intensive farming among a large section of the agricultural community, if only because the adoption of new technology and developments in bio-technology and genetic engineering will continue to allow producers to reduce production costs and increase short-term profits (cf. Potter 1991). The economic and technological barrier to widespread extensification means it has only a limited role to play in short or medium term agricultural trends. Ulbricht's (1989) 'horrifying prospect of really large areas of land going out of agriculture altogether while others are farmed more intensively' leading to a polarised countryside, is a more realistic vision of the future. In the Aspre the above issues need to be addressed, but perhaps the biggest obstacle of all to the implementation of the 'new agriculture' is the psychological barrier.

On the ground 'La Nouvelle Agriculture' is treated very suspiciously in the Aspre. The words used to describe it - 'bête', 'stupid', 'drole', 'fou', 'rigolade', 'pinible', *dégoûtant* - epitomise the sentiment. The subterranean clover trials planted on the fire breaks to prevent the regrowth of scrub, under 'Article 19' (cf. Masson 1988;1990), is seen as a typical example of the workings of this fragmented approach on the ground; "le reve de technicians, here is not Australia". As one farmer from the Haute Aspre pointed out; "*Subterranean clover must be grazed in winter while it is growing, or else it will not regrow next year, but 'élevage' is no longer viable here, so clover trials are not the solution without first having a viable 'élevage' (Y)*". This farmer fails to see that theoretically, under 'la nouvelle agriculture' the clover, as a fire prevention measure is far more important than his sheep. What they find most difficult is the

psychological transition from their 'noble' task of feeding humanity, to that of maintaining a functionless environment solely for the distraction of the 'bourgeois tourists', who in turn are accusing them of living off State subsidies and their hard earned taxes¹³. These independent and individualistic 'people visualize themselves as ending up like 'Indians on a reserve', with their dignity and liberty in tatters and dependent on hand-outs from bureaucrats in Brussels. Their fears are not totally groundless, a local shepherd was astonished to discover that there is a picture of himself and his flock in a museum in Collioure. The 'privilege' of being a museum piece in ones own lifetime is rare. The selfworth of the farmers, both indigenous and neo-ruraux, is very definitely dependent on the products they produce, that sentiment is epitomised in the following statements.

"Agriculture is finished in the 'arrière pays', the objective of the 'Gardien de l'Environnement' scheme is to maintain space for the tourists, which no real farmer could accept" (U)

"The land is there to serve man and not the other way around" (BC).

"To be a farmer the pleasure is to produce and not sit around in a cafe all day" (R).

"The vocation of farmers was always to live from their produce, it is another trade to be a guardian of space" (DE).

Traditional agriculture required that one survived through physical effort, toil and labour. Bourdieu (1980) vividly illustrates this point: "The peasant does not work in the strictest sense of the word he labours, as in the distinction made by Hesiod between *ponos and ergon*". Under this traditional model one does not sell ones labour, but the product of ones labour, which lies at the root of the 'real farmers' psychological

¹³One of the new arrivals in the Aspre expressed the following commonly held opinion on local agriculture: "I see the future here as the maintenance of patrimony, but in a coherent and logical mechanized fashion, not the tricks with the cows and goats. Those trials are only experimental, there to placate the farmers, which we have to pay for in taxes" (W).

blockage to becoming custodians of space.

The agricultural extension workers and those in the Department of Agriculture and 'Chambre d'Agriculture', Perpignan, also have problems with the philosophy of 'La Nouvelle Agriculture'. They are also demoralized by the abrupt shift in policy - from product to service - which goes against everything they have worked for all their lives. They continue to see the profession of farming in terms of production rather than landscape gardening and object to treating it as an industry. They share the farmers concern for the EU's lack of a long term vision and their blind faith in the so called 'God of Ecology', prematurely implementing bio-agriculture without knowing enough about it. As one agricultural professional in the 'Chambre d'Agriculture' put it; *"All the EEC can see is ecology, but what is serious is that the idea of compensating the farmer is gone and all of a sudden he has less income. Besides grass roots agricultural structures cannot change from day to day, it creates too much instability. If after five years they discover their experiments don't work, it would be very difficult to get back to productive agriculture again because all the support networks will have been destroyed. They have no vision of the long term. The big question is where are we going? Does anybody know where are we going?" (SS)*

The agricultural administrative structure and its members are also touched by the general air of insecurity, and a 'blurred' future. Some would argue that extensification is not a return to the past because there are new techniques involved, such as fencing off pastures and experimenting with new varieties of fodder; *"besides we tend to forget there was never profitable agriculture in the Aspre, it is not an agricultural zone"* (UU). This is a valid point. The agricultural extension workers realize that the implementation of the agro-environmental extensification programme demands a revolution in the thinking of the agricultural world. *"They are used to taking the production train, now they must leave that, even if there are people starving in Africa, and take the environmental protection train. We are at a crossroads, personally I do not see those policies lasting long. Environment is just the current fad"* (HH).

The general feeling all round is that they have no option but to go along with this 'betise' for the moment, or else the farmers must get out of production. Neither do they think that tourism will solve the problems of the 'arrière pays', *"unless they want to turn the place into a Disneyland"* (SS). The kernel of the problem being, *"Perhaps the EEC knows about agriculture in the community, but they don't know the farmers. For them agriculture is an accord with industry and international trade"* (SS). It would appear that they don't know their technicians either. They are selectively promoting what they consider advantageous for the farmer in terms of improving the infrastructure of their production system. Politicians and bureaucrats should guard against assuming that policies, structures, and financial incentives dictate behaviour. They undoubtedly influence it, but the farmers decision making process is more complex than that. Local traditions, values biases, perceptions and past experience must also be taken into account. Besides, as we have seen, on the ground policies can undergo quite a 'bouleversement', and be interpreted in unintended ways. The people of the Aspre are not passive recipients of outside instructions, rather they are active manipulators in their daily lives. The sentiment on the ground is best expressed in the peoples own words, refer to Appendix B, which reproduces the dialogue of a meeting I attended between a number of 'éleveurs' from the Aspre-Vallespir and the local Elevage technician, concerning the implementation and evaluation of agro-environmental policies.

The remaining indigenous or neo-ruraux farmers in the Haute Aspre are well aware that they cannot survive without EU subsidies. Take for example the livelihood of a typical sheep farmer from the village where I lived. The shepherd has a flock of 200 sheep. He sells the lambs at the age of 3 months to the 'Co-Opérative Ovine Pyrénées Orientales', in Perpignan which is trying to promote the mark 'Agneau Catalan' aimed at exploiting the local markets traditional preference for small milk reared lambs. He also castrates some lambs for his Muslim clients, which he sells when they are 5-6 months old. Even though it is illegal he sells as many lambs as he can to local clients, because the price is better than at the co-operative (note the infamous lack of fidelity shown to co-operatives). At the co-operative he gets 320 F for a lamb of 27 Kg, out of that he pays 120 F for grain and 50 F for hay for the mother, he is left with a profit

per lamb of 150 F. The annual sale of 180 lambs (allowing 20 to 30 losses) nets 27,000 F.

He finds buying hay and straw a problem, it has to be brought in from Aude, a neighbouring Department adding to the cost. Most of it comes in big round bales, which he does not have the machinery to handle. He gets two sorts of EEC subsidies (a) Compensation for the CAP, which all sheep farmers in the community receive, and (b) Special subsidy for transhumance farmers in disadvantaged areas. The two subsidies combined amount to 300 F a year per ewe, totalling 60,000 F for his herd. He maintains 3 ha of firebreak per year under Article 19 @ 900 F/ha, totalling 1,800 F. His total gross income per annum from his herd is approximately 88,800 F (£9,000). After paying for all the charges, for example, taxes, bank repayment, sheering sheep, transport costs for summer transhumance, veterinary costs etc, it is not enough for his family to live on.

He supplements his income with seasonal work in the vineyards, (as does his wife), in particular pruning the vines in the early morning (when the sheep are locked into their stables), for which he gets 60 centimes per plant. His day starts at 6 am and finishes around 9 pm. For the last few years he has burnt the once much sought after marino wool from the annual sheering of his flock, because there is no market for it. Like most of the 22 *éleveurs* in the Aspre he owns no land and has to stay with the flock all day, besides fenced plots would not work well here because the land is too poor, necessitating the frequent movement of the flock. It is common for the '*éleveurs*' of the Aspre to supplement their income with part time work, and some of their wives have fulltime jobs. It is clear that these farmers are not in it for the money, most of them being neo-ruraux who came here for the quality of life, but naturally they have to survive economically. The number of sheep in the Aspre has halved since 1970, in keeping with trends throughout the Department. In 1847 there were 155,000 sheep in the Roussillon (McPhee 1977), in 1990 there were 29,000 sheep, an 82% reduction. In Chevalier's (1956) seminal work on agrarian life in the nearby Ariège Pyrenees, he outlined the importance of improving the breed of sheep. It would appear that today's

market criteria has well outstripped breeding criteria.

However, there are signs of the emergence of a new breed of 'éleveurs', 'les chasseurs de primes' (subsidy hunters), referred to locally as the 'cowboy farmers'. These are outsiders with capital who rent or buy a Mas and stock it with the maximum of sheep or cows. In the true 'gardien de l'environnement' spirit the centre of their enterprise is the EEC subsidies and not the animals which they simply need for head counts. The few I have come in contact with cause a lot of local antagonism. Take for example the one (originating from Paris) installed in a rented Mas in Saint Marsal. He has 70 cows which he lets run wild, and according to his neighbours they are frequently hungry with carcasses scattered all over the mountain, polluting the water springs. The carcass of one of his cows was found in the water reservoir of the nearby village of Taulis. The village Mayors and inhabitants signed a petition against the cruelty to animals and sent it to the relevant sanitary authorities, but nothing came of it. *"He has connections, talks well and he knows that in this Department the authorities never interfere and one can get away with anything"*. (AB) After being ignored by the administration, in desperation they sent the petition to Brigitte Bardot.

There is another accountant 'chasseur de prime' in the village of La Bastide with a large flock of sheep. The description of his enterprise by a neighbouring traditional Catalan Shepherdess is very telling about both their worlds.

"Over the winter he calls in the State Helicopter to drop hay to his animals trapped in the snow. But that is not normal, the traditional farmers never did that. If he ran his farm properly he could foresee all these things and have hay in stock and his animals indoors during snow storms. He has too many animals and not enough provisions and is expecting society to bale him out. Last winter he went on holidays to Madagascar and left the sheep in the hands of some hippies, many of them died in the winter snow. I think the worst thing that ever happened are the EEC subsidies for keeping animals in 'Disadvantaged' areas. All it does is encourage people like this, farming is being taken over by speculators". (AB).

Of course these are isolated incidences, but they may be an indication of future trends. The above shepherdess feels very isolated in her mas, being surrounded by holiday home owners whom she has nothing to do with, and consequently she has nobody to turn to for help on the farm. The final straw came a few years ago when she had to stop growing cereals, because the owner of the one remaining thrasher in the area said it was not worth his while coming all the way from Saint Laurent de Cerdagne for her few hectares. But is she not complying with the 'produir autrement' sentiment?

Future agrarian trends and more generic conclusions emanating from this chapter shall be revisited in the thesis concluding chapter. Undeniably, agriculture is a vital link between society and the natural environment. Not only has this chapter exposed the issues pertinent to agriculture in the Aspre today, but it has also hinted at the underlying social diversity of the place and the emergence of new actors on its stage. Our next task is to get to know more intimately the society and people of the Aspre, their perceptions of each other, the environment, and alas, of land degradation.

CHAPTER 7: IDENTITIES and MENTALITIES: Insiders Versus Outsiders.

7.1 Introduction.

This chapter sets out to uncover the social identities and mental outlook of the present day inhabitants of the Aspre. Since all human-modified environments are embedded in a social matrix, human-environmental relationships are indirectly mediated through social structures and ideas, built up over a long period of time. Before addressing the influence of social systems on the landscape of the Aspre we must first get to know its people and render them intelligible in terms that are meaningful to themselves. More specifically we want them to identify themselves, and to expose the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion by which their social categories are created and maintained. The central set of questions this chapter aims to address are; how do the people of the Aspre perceive themselves and their own identity, how do they perceive the 'other', how do they think the 'other' perceives them, and how does the 'other' actually perceive them? For this process of self-identification, a social anthropological approach, combining participant observation and semi-structured interviews, as outlined in chapter two was adopted. It is from the fruits of this work, recorded in the field diaries and reproduced in appendix C, that the interpretation which follows emanates. In order to render the voices of the present intelligible that interpretation is grounded in the preceding history of the people and the land of the Aspre. Identity and mentality must not be seen as two separate categories, as shall become apparent in what follows, it is best to look upon the mentality as the corner stone which unveils the logic of a particular social identity.

Identities.

As the title of the chapter implies, feelings and thoughts of identity begin with contrast, 'insiders' versus 'outsiders', 'them' in contrast to 'us'. From the outset it would be more appropriate to talk of identities. Contained within the broad category of social identity are several sub-sets (some of which the thesis has already touched on), including political identity, environmental identity, ethnic identity, cultural identity, economic identity, personal identity, gender identity, religious identity, etc. These sub-

sets are far from mutually exclusive, rather they represent an interactive network feeding into the overall identity of the group defined. Neither are identities fixed or frozen entities, rather the moulding of identities is an ongoing process and people are constantly creating and recreating their own and others identities (cf. Zinovieff 1990). A further dimension of identity is its potential for multiple meaning, for example, the identity that a wine grower from the Aspre presents to the village community may differ from that presented within his family, or to an outsider.

In the insider - outsider quest for identities the critical focus of investigation becomes the social boundaries that define the group it encapsulates (cf. Cohen 1975, 1982, 1985; Barth 1969). The boundaries do not depend on the absence of mobility or contact between the two, rather interaction with the 'other' plays an important role in reinforces their own distinctiveness, and in that way perpetuates the boundary. The boundaries are not physical, rather they are symbolic and made up of the perceived differences between one group and another. That sense of difference lies at the heart of peoples awareness of their culture. It is that which distinguishes them from others and is thereby a vital source of their own identities and self-image. The valuing of such distinctiveness is a condition of its survival in places like the Aspre, that are and always have been in frequent contact with other cultures. The bases of that distinctiveness is founded on a culturally specific set of values, standards of behaviour and criteria for judgement. People are not necessarily aware of these differences as culture, but rather through their taken for granted everyday identity as Catalans from the Aspre, as opposed to Catalans from Barcelona or Belgians from Brussels. Thus it is the cultural 'context', its criteria for judgement and self-assessment which renders social behaviours intelligible.

Cohen (1985) argued that; "the hallmark of a community is that its members make or believe they make a similar sense of things....and that they think that sense may differ from one made elsewhere". That ability to make 'a similar sense of things' lies at the heart of a communities identity. What enables them to accomplish this feat and identify their own members is the sharing of a common pool of symbols. Like the notion of

boundaries, symbols are mental constructs, capable of storing a great deal of information in an economic manner and exhibit a range of meanings depending on context or use (Douglas 1970). They encapsulating the nuances of such things as local history, its ordinary and extraordinary events, perception of outsiders and the outside world, accepted 'normal' behaviour and moral conduct, affronts to honour, environmental knowledge and attitudes to the land. In short they encapsulate the essence of what it is to belong to that community. Essentially symbols embody meaning and provide people with the means to make meaning, but as Cohen (1985) rightly reminds us the interpretation of that meaning may differ slightly from person to person, thereby allowing for both individuality and group cohesion. The 'outsider' to the community is not expected to share the same set of symbols, or more importantly the meaning attached to the symbols may well be completely different, and the resultant constant 'crossing of wires' restricts communication, understanding and acceptance. Inherently they know they are not playing the same game. Thus by the manipulation of the symbols each defines the boundary of its own territory.

The power and effectiveness of the symbol lies in the fact that it is ambiguous and subjective. If the demarcation symbols were too intelligible they would be redundant. They are designed to perpetuate the boundary, not demolish it. They are the 'tools' which allows the community to conduct a private conversation in a language unintelligible to the 'outsider'. Because of the 'silent nature' of symbols, uncovering their meaning and significance for the people who use them can only be found through acts of interpretation. It was argued in chapter two that ethnographic field work is the most appropriate means of decoding the symbols. By essentially placing oneself on the 'chess board' of daily life in the Aspre, the participant observes is bit by bit exposed to the meaning of the 'squares', the significance of the moves and rules of the game. An alternative Functionalists approach which is based on the premise that structures dictated behaviour and consequently the study of community and the identity of the people it contains is to be reached by analyzing the 'structural scaffolding' of the society is seen as placing an over emphasis on form and an inadequate attention to substance and meaning. Structures may well influence behaviour, but they do not

determine it, and neither are people passively given an identity. People manoeuvre themselves into situations where they act upon the world as well as being acted upon, and as clearly demonstrated by the field work, the meaning they impute those outside structures with may be very different to that intended. Our approach to the field work and its analysis is based on the belief that meaning and the intentionality underlying behaviour can only be got at by trying to penetrate the subterranean veil of symbolism. Attention to the 'mentalité', or way of thinking, is an appropriate starting point in unveiling the groups ability to make a 'similar sense of things'.

Mentalité.

People function as both biological and mental beings, and cannot be understood or explained away solely via the tools of intelligence. It is in this respect that the French term *mentalité*,¹ or the mental climate of a people so successfully captured by the Annale School of historians, (reflected in the works of people like Febvre (1922; 1938), Bloch (1928;1966), Ladurie (1974;1980) and Braudel (1975)), is a useful concept enabling one to explore the subterranean level of meaning which lies behind 'the way of thinking', which in turn is integral to perception and social identities. Bloch (1928) defined the place he assigned to the study of 'mentalités' as follows: "Social realities are a whole. One could not pretend to explain an institution if one did not link it to the great intellectual, emotional, mystical currents of the contemporaneous mentality....the interpretation of the facts of social identity from the inside". The Annales frequently used the concept of 'mentalité' to underline the particularities and meanings in society through characteristics observed in past phenomena, and thereby uncover the particular logic of contemporary society (cf. Burguière 1982). Continuing in this vein we acknowledge that contemporary 'mentalités' in the Aspre are embedded in their social, psychological, political and cultural heritage. Thus in this research we are using the concept of 'mentalité' to gain insight into the ideas and circumstances that lead people to act in a specific manner, perceive the world in a particular way and thus add

¹The French term 'mentalité' has more of an culturally encompassing meaning than its English counterpart, 'mentality', which refers more specifically to properties of the mind.

meaning to their activities by way of an intentional depth analysis. It is the resultant 'understanding of understanding' which allows one to interpret peoples perceptions and experiences within the framework of their own ideas of selfhood and normality. In effect the 'mentalité' is the 'way of thinking' that links 'interactions' with 'inneractions'. It is the 'carrefour' where all influences past and present criss-cross and melt into the subjective consciousness of that society. It is the cradle of the 'weltanschauung', or world vision. However, it must not be portrayed as a sort of superstructure that drowns out individual variance, but rather like identity, as the set of unselfconsciously accepted mental 'sign posts' and shared symbols, defining the taken for granted normality of that group, which dictates practical things like whether smuggling is an honourable occupation or not. The whole point of this approach and the ensuing field work was to gain access to the conceptual world in which our 'subjects' live, the insider view, which in turn is integral to how they perceive and interact with their surrounding biophysical environment.

As early as 1941, Febvre remarked that; "The more the mental faculty develops, the stronger the tendency to consider emotions as a disturbance of activity - something dangerous, something inopportune and ugly; let's say it better, something immodest". Alas, far from being objective and universally rational things like perception and identity are quintessentially subjective and to a large extent context specific. Thus at the risk of being 'immodest', I must declare that I cannot grasp the multiple identities and environmental perceptions of the people of the Aspre solely from cold-blooded sociological 'facts'. The intrigue and subterfuge of life in the Aspre is to be found in its 'twilight zone', not under the bright lights of midday, its designated siesta time.

7.2 Insiders Versus Outsiders in the Aspre.

As stated in the introduction 'insider' - 'outsider' categories are constructed and given identity by the actors themselves. The word 'outsider' signifies exclusion, in contrast to 'insider' which denotes inclusion. Belonging to one or other category implies sharing the basic identity and values of that group, which are manifest in such overt signals as appearance, dress, language, accent, occupation, car, house, life style, and

in the more silent value orientations, beliefs and standard of morality by which performance is judged. Common to the insiders of the Aspre is a shared Catalan ethnic identity. However the notion of ethnicity and the idea of common blood is not seen as an appropriate insider - outsider demarcation criteria. In conversation the Catalans of the Aspre may refer to their brothers and sisters across the border, but if either of them came to live amongst them they would be outsiders in the Aspre community. The identification of another person as a fellow member of the 'insider' or 'outsider' group implies sharing what Barth (1969) referred to as the "criteria for evaluation and judgement". It entails the same assumptions as being a member of a community, sharing the same basic identity, but it also implies a claim to judge and be judged by the standards that are relevant to that identity. As with identity it is a matter of knowing that the other members of the group one belongs to are basically playing the same game and making a similar sense of things. The dichotomization of the 'other' as an outsider implies a recognition of limitations on shared understanding, linked with different value criteria, life experiences and different standards for the judgement of performance. There are different degrees of 'insiderness' and 'outsiderness'. Traditionally somebody from a village in the Aspre marrying into another village of the Aspre would describe themselves as outsiders in that community². The degree to which they are outsiders is a lot less than that imposed on somebody from Paris or Brussels. A lot also depends on individual behaviour and efforts to integrate; one may never cross the insider - outsider demarcation line, but some individuals are more welcome visitors than others.

In the context of the Aspre 'insiders' may include one's immediate family, one's relatives, fellow Catalan villagers, Catalans from the Aspre or even Catalans from the Pyrénées Orientales. 'Outsiders' can include any person from outside the most local community. One hears of Catalans coming from Perpignan, only twenty kilometres away, being referred to as outsiders all their lives. In general the term 'outsider' refers

²As we shall see in section 7.2.2, the in-marrying wife, even if she came from the same village, may be perceived as an 'outsider' in her new family all her life.

to people from other parts of the Department, France and all foreigners. There is no distinction made between outside French people and non French Nationals, except that the French outsiders may have the possibility of voting in the local elections. The majority of the outsiders in the Aspre are either retired or holiday home owners, from Northern France or Northern Europe. There are also a few unemployed families from outside the area, and some Perpignan commuters, who are generally to be found in the 'viticole' villages nearest the plain. The 'neo-ruraux' constitute the final complement to the outsider list.

It is difficult to define what exactly the term 'neo-ruraux' means. Generally it is associated with anyone, local or foreign, who decides to live in some way connected to the land of the 'arrière pays' of the Haute Aspre. If they did the same work on the plain, or continued on with a family farm in the Haute Aspre, they would be considered farmers. Included among this group are Catalan neo-ruraux, frequently second generation citizens of the Aspre, once removed from the land, who were brought up in nearby towns or in villages of the Aspre, but not on farms. Their driving motivation is to maintain an active agrarian presence and identity in their ancestral 'arrière pays'. As a group the philosophy of the neo-ruraux and their reason for settling in the Aspre is most aptly summed up as a search for a better quality of life; the desire to live close to nature, grow their own food, weave their own clothes, or maintain ancestral links. Frequently they are trying to escape what they refer to as 'the urban impasse' and the unemployment they left behind them. They talk of a sense of freedom and the vision of a better world stemming from the 1968 movement, where their origins lie, in fact they are commonly referred to as 'les enfants de '68'. Locally they are associated with the hippies of that epoch. In the final analysis, the term 'neo-ruraux' is probably best described as a state of mind. Some of its sympathizers may hold 'respectable' white collared jobs, but for the vast majority it is a more direct back to nature experience. Some of the present day so called neo-ruraux in the Aspre, may have had nothing to do with the 1968 movement and its ideals. Similarly the category has evolved a lot since the sixties, with some of its present day members resembling more entrepreneurs than hippies; one Dutchman having transformed his initial aspirations into a modern

goats cheese making plant, another, of Catalan origin has a very successful duck pate enterprise, both serving local markets. However the locals still insist on painting all of them with the same brush, by labelling them under the somewhat pejorative and definitely marginal 'neo-ruraux' term, a sign of the disapproval of what they are doing. It is interesting to note that the Catalan neo-ruraux with family contacts in the Aspre, are undeniably insiders, "we are from the community" (P), even though they do not share its consensus and their behaviour is disapproved of. They know the rules of the game, the fact that they choose to play otherwise does not take away their 'citizenship', proof of the dialectical nature of identity. On the other hand the 'outsider' neo-ruraux who try to imitate what they perceive as the former agrarian, subsistence identity of the 'arrière pays' will never be accepted as insiders in the Aspre community.

In its strictest sense an 'insider' is really somebody from the village. However, for the purpose of the thesis, an 'insider' is taken to mean a Catalan originating from the Aspre, and 'outsiders' as everybody else. The field work demonstrates that the 'insider' and 'outsider' categories are inadequate, being far from homogenous they contain much variety, yet on the ground they form a much used self-imposed generic classification, demarcating the boundaries between 'them' and 'us'. In the Aspre all outsiders are referred to as 'les étrangers', and fall under the generic classification of 'tourists', which holds obvious temporal connotations. The term is used to signify people who will in time move on, in contrast to the permanency attached to the notion of an 'insiders', whom even if they spend their working life outside the Aspre will always 'belong' to the Aspre, remain 'one of us', and will most likely return there to retire.

In addition to the social metaphors, them in contrast to us, there are also spatial metaphors ('within and without', north - south, rural - urban) and temporal metaphors ('then' & 'now') in operation in the Aspre. Integral to the Aspre identity is its self-perception of being rural and Southern. A persistent theme running through the field work is the perceived threat to that identity from urbanization and the policies and culture of the North of Europe, where the urban seats of power, such as Paris and

Brussels, impacting on its destiny are to be found. Exasperating that threat is the incomprehensible behaviour of the outsiders in their midst, the majority of whom happen to be from Northern cities.

7.2.1 Insiders Self-Perception.

Marginalisation.

Concern with peoples self-perceptions and their view of the world inevitably centres on how the group defines both its own members and the 'other'. A dominant theme emerging from the ethnographic field work is the perception of marginalization among the indigenous inhabitants of the Aspre. Several factors are seen to feed into this mental outlook, not least the history and geographical position of the Department; - "le fond de la France, le bout du monde". As previously outlined the Aspre and the Department in general occupies an ambiguous Mediterranean-Pyrenean frontier world, encircled by the mountains and the sea. The perceived peripheral, 'fringe' position of this Southernmost Department of mainland France is seen to alienate its inhabitants from the Northern seats of power, reinforcing their perceived inability to affect the course of events pertinent to their own destiny. Their geographical peripherality is among other things translated into a 'marginal' self-image, and an inferiority complex when confronted with the outside world. They perceive themselves as a forgotten and powerless people, whose political representatives are not listened to due to a combination of incompetent and frequently corrupt representation, and the peripheral and insignificant status of the Department they represent.

In short, the indigenous population of the Aspre portray themselves as 'victims', upon whom unfair treatment has been enforced on from the outside by people who neither understand or want to understand their lives and problems. Their feelings of neglect are substantiated by statistical evidence, which points towards a lack of industrialization in what could aptly be described as a pre-industrial Department, with only 8.6% of the salaried work force employed in industry, the lowest in France apart from Corsica, Hautes Alps and the semi-deserted Lozère Department (INSEE 1992). The Pyrénées Orientales has one of the highest levels of unemployment in the country, 16.8% as

opposed to the national average of 10.9%, exacerbated by a recent trend for unemployed Northerners to in-migrate in order to 'live their misery in the sun', which the locals perceive as unfairly raising their taxes. Salaries are 15% lower than the national average, and the Department's aging population, 28.1% over 60 years in contrast to the national average of 19.9%, is frequently linked with the general lack of dynamism (statistic source INSEE 1990, 1992). Not surprisingly the Department is also economically 'marginal', and poorly integrated within the larger French and European economies. Solans (1993) described it as an 'economie de rente', a 'rentier' or person of private means, being somebody who does not participate in active production, but receives a part of the value of what is produced. Essentially they live off pensions and dividends from the gestion of patrimony - land, real estate, financial placements etc³. This locally centred economy, frequently referred to as an appendage of the past, is in direct opposition to the structure of an entrepreneurial capitalist economy. As outlined in the previous chapter the EEC's open frontier policy is perceived as adversely affecting their agriculture, which in keeping with the rest of Mediterranean agriculture is perceived as being sold out to tourism. Tourism is perceived as something else that was forced on them from outside in the seventies and from which they believe they have profited very little, except for selling the odd plot of land. One is frequently reminded that all the hotels and restaurants along the coast as well as the few in the Aspre are owned and run by Northerners, and that even the construction labourers were brought in from outside because the locals were considered unskilled and poor workers. It is claimed that the old people of the Haute Aspre were tricked into selling their land at below the market price. Similarly, materials in Roussillon are said to cost 30% more than in the North of France. One could continue outlining their, for the most part, well founded grievances ad infinitum.

³The salaried work force is 49% of the total work force, which is very inferior to the National average of 65%, and reinforces Roussillon's dependence on 'rente; with 28% of the population living off pensions, 16.8% from State benefit and 6.2% from investments (Solans 1993). Of the salaried work force 7.8% are employed in agriculture, 58.7% in service industries, 8.6% in industry, 16.2% in commerce, and 8.7% in construction and Public Works (INSEE 1993).

The feeling of being powerless, misrepresented, exploited and ignored are ubiquitous features of peripheral communities located on the fringe of industrialized political economies, see for example Cohen's (1985b) work on Whalsay Island; Fox (1978) on Tory Islanders; Brody (1973) on the West of Ireland. The economic disadvantages of geographical peripherality generally leads to a decision to emigrate (cf. Brody 1973; Mewett 1982). In the Aspre the case is not so clear cut, granted many have emigrated to Perpignan, Paris, Marseille etc. for work purposes, with those in Perpignan frequently returning to the Aspre every Friday night of their lives, and it is a well known phenomenon that all its children return to retire. Apart from this enforced work migration which is seen as a last resort, the indigenous population of the Aspre express an overwhelming desire to live their lives 'Chez Nous'. One suspects this obsession is a function of the fact that they feel their identity under threat, and realise that it could not be sustained beyond their boundaries, in places like Paris or Marseille where ones own comparative performance is inadequate. Besides they feel misunderstood in the outside world. They tend to travel very little, rarely beyond their capital Perpignan. Some of my informants explained that phenomenon by the fact that: *"Life in the village is too good, why travel? (NN). "We have everything here sea, sun and mountains, why travel? Besides the world comes to us" (QQ)*. The outside world which visits them is perceived as stressful, noisy and full of people who do not understand them. How one of my informants suffered during his military service in Strasbourg, among the Northern factory workers who ridiculed him as "le petit Espagnol". Note it is not just in the past that the military service posed problems for the men of Roussillon. Their insecurity in relation to the outside world, combined with their fear of losing their identity is translated into a strong feeling of insularity and of attachment and belonging to the Aspre, their refuge since time immemorial.

The marginal, victimized image of the Department is magnified in what is seen to be the abandonment of the 'arrière pays' of places like the Haute Aspre. In addition to the above list of grievances they suffer the extra handicaps of all mountain regions, such as poor land, roads, large transport and veterinary costs, combined with depopulation and the centralization of public services such as schools and post offices, in effect

making it very difficult to live there. For example, a mother from Boule d'Amont, deep in the 'arrière pays', described how her five year old son has to get the school bus at 7.30 am for the town of Ille sur Têt, returning home that evening at 6 pm. Should he want to continue his education after the age of sixteen, he would have to attend a boarding school in either Prades or Perpignan. Another, much resented sign of the abandonment of the 'arrière pays' was an attempt in the late seventies to regroup some of its Municipal councils, - 'Mairies' [*"the only symbol of democracy left in these villages"* (Y)], including Passa-Llauro-Tordères, in the name of efficiency. Alas, the experiment did not work, all the grouped villages got their 'independence' a few years later, yet another symbol of the importance and distinctiveness of locality. In the following chapter it shall become apparent that the social perception of marginalization, is in the Haute Aspre reinforced by its anti-social marginalized, 'friche' landscape.

There is undoubtedly a link between their perceived marginalization from the outside world, only feeling at home in those hills, and the separatist identity of Roussillon which, as outlined in chapter 4, has been French for only the last three hundred years. As in Languedoc, Pays Basque and Corsica, Roussillon feels it has been neglected and poorly treated by Central Government. Its long tradition of opposition to the State is reflected in a general disrespect for law and order, and the Department's traditional Communist political orientation which of late is combined with support for the Fascist policies of Le Pen. As argued in chapter 4, the communist vote in what is otherwise a very individualistic and egotistical Department, should be seen in terms of opposition to the centre right wing, who have dominated French politics, rather than to profound communist convictions. Similarly, the recent vote for Le Pen is perceived as making another rumbling of dissatisfaction, combined with the feeling that all the emigrants, including the 'pied noir' (repatriated French-Algerians after the 1954 Algerian war), are dumped on them.

The feelings of marginalization in the Aspre feeds into 'l'esprit d'échec' (failure), the sense that nothing works here (neither tourism, industry or agriculture), and the whisper of 'auto-betrayal' for having sold so much of their world to the 'strangers'. *"We are*

saturated, times are very difficult,- between tourism, agriculture and unemployment- everything is difficult. I fear for the future, my sons are only doing odd jobs around the village, there is nothing but unemployment for them in the cities" (Z). Passivity and fatalism are setting in, epitomised in a conversation I overheard in the bakery in Fourques one day, when one woman declared; "Comme DeGaulle a dit, la vie est ce que nous sommes donné". A local Art Historian contributed the general air of passivity to the influence of an ancient Mediterranean civilization and the influence of Islam: "The older a civilization is the greater the weight the ancestors take and the more pronounced the fatalism, everything becomes due to the grace of God" (V). Lets not forget that apparent passivity is also an active strategy. Throughout history their mode of adjusting to change and the various invaders was to passively 'absorb' them, rather than change direction or mount a counter-offensive.

Another critical factor in interpreting the insiders threatened and marginalised self-image is the perceived mistreatment of their ethnicity. Great atrocities are seen to have been committed against their Catalan culture, one of the most serious being the enforced speaking of French at school. While language is generally seen as an important element in the construction of ones identity (cf. Llobera 1990; Terradas 1990), it is not the only indicator. Among the younger generation of the Aspre and the Department in general the Catalan language is certainly dying out, in contrast to its renewal across the border. It is interesting to note that even when they speak French, they frequently comment on the fact that they are not understood beyond the boundaries of the Pyrénées Orientales, because of their heavy accents. Perhaps, this accounts for the fact that at times one can detect a distinct attempt to imitate the Parisian accent on the local radio (with the exception of the weather forecasters). Even their voices root them in this landscape. In the past they have been masters of the art of shaping their political identity, today a question mark still hangs over their ethnic identity. Some of my informants claimed to be Catalan first and French second, but the vast majority described themselves as French first but with a 'Catalan heart' and cultural identity; *"Française d'abord, mais avec les racines profondément Catalan"* (CC). Not surprisingly they do not feel very European, something they associate with distant and bureaucratic Brussels. Unlike

Southern Catalonia they express no separatist aspirations, with the exception of the Perpignan intellectual circle. Culturally they may feel closer to Barcelona, which is only 200 km away, but it is perceived as more desirable to be attached to Paris for economic reasons. The Departmental administration is heavily subsidised by Central Government, and they still manage to get more from the State than they give in return (cf. Solans 1993). It is felt that every little region, Provence, Roussillon, Pays Basque etc, cannot have its own independence. In a sense their Catalan identity is for outside purposes renegotiated to that of 'folklore', and the Catalan language is reduced to that of 'patios' or dialect, in contrast to its political significance and everyday usage across the boarder in Southern Catalonia. But alas the attachment to 'folklore' and the past is very strong here: "*Sans racine on ne peut pas avoir les branches*" (K).

Relating to the question of ethnic identity my field results are not consistent with those of O'Brien (1990) who did ethnographic research in Saint Laurent de Cerdagne, a nearby mountain border town in the Haute Vallespir. She reports the local people as being ashamed of their ethnic identity, referring to it as a 'stigma'. In the course of more recent field work, in the late 1980s, she describes how that cultural stigma had been transformed into a resource to attract tourists. Admittedly there may be a perception of Catalan culture as 'backward', something that is reinforced by exposure to outside influences such as television and the outsiders who visit or dwell among them. The combination of those signals in one way or another depicts them as parochial and irrelevant to contemporary circumstances. But that is how they think the outside world sees them, which is not the same as how they perceive themselves. I certainly did not get the impression that the Catalans of the Aspre were ashamed of their origins and cultural identity; on the contrary they are very proud of it, but that pride is renegotiated to the 'private face', something they implicitly recognise among themselves but it is not for public display. Today their Catalan and French identities co-exist, with French nationalism being the mask they project to the outside world. They are aware that if they want to share in the opportunities available within French society, they must camouflage to a certain extent their ethnic identity. One must distinguish between the communities voice to the outside world and its much more complicated message to its

own members. As Cohen (1985b) points out; "We must try to make the public message intelligible in terms of the private conversations and not the other way around". The Catalan or more specifically the Roussillon identity is renegotiated to the subterranean level of 'meaning', which is not readily accessible to the outsider. But, this does not imply that its strength has diminished, on the contrary there is much evidence that the maintenance of their cultural identity is the 'raison d'être' for both the young and old who have made a conscious decision to remain against the odds in their own 'arrière pays'.

One must remember these people are still juggling with identity and trying to draw maximum benefit from an inherited ambiguous situation, they cannot afford to be too overt and out spoken (except when dealing with 'hippies'). Their cousins in the South consider them 'traitors', the North is full of 'outsiders' who do not understand them but whom they have to court for material gain, little wonder their identity has become 'silent', or rather it operates at a local frequency level that few people are tuned into. Brunet's (1990) observation that around the time of the French Revolution, the village was the State in Roussillon, still has a ring of truth to it. As we shall see in the forthcoming discussion their 'State Apparatus' - the 'Mairie' - is something else they are very possessive of. In the following chapter another profound rupture to their identity, in the form of the split between culture and agriculture in the Haute Aspre will be discussed. If the strength of identity is measured by variety, openness, receptivity and cohesion, in situations where the reverse is manifest and uniqueness, insularity and specificity are emphasised, as among the insiders of the Aspre, there are strong indications of fear of losing identity.

The exercise in defending and asserting their own identity, 'Chez Nous', was firmly brought home in an incident that occurred during my field work. It is a tale about a car rally which is held every year on the back roads of the Aspre. In 1993 the 'neoruraux' of the little village of Taillet, decided to block the rally going through their village at high speed on the grounds that it was dangerous. However, I think the real reason was to make their presence felt and assert their own identity. As their Catalan

representative put it: *"Even though they sold the land the Catalans still consider the place as theirs, and ignore the presence of those who now live here and work the land. They must open their eyes and recognise our existence, they are no longer 'chez eux', we live here now. They must open 'la loi du sang" (QQ).* The ensuing battle hit the headlines in the local newspaper. The feeling was how dare those hippies challenge us 'chez nous'! The mayor of the village is quoted as having said "all those hippies should be gassed" (the neo-ruraux tend not to vote). The organizers of the demonstration, which held the raleigh up for a few hours, afterwards received threatening phone calls, informing them that they could be expecting some armed visitors any night, who were going to kill them and burn down their shacks - 'vivre la vendetta'!

7.2.2 Insiders Value System and Sense of Community.

To comprehend the values and mentalité of the indigenous population of the Aspre today one must have an understanding of their history, life experiences, where this society is coming from, combined with the illusive 'Esprit Méditerranéen'. Historically the family occupied a very important place in Mediterranean countries, being both a social, moral and economic unit (cf. Campbell 1964; Solinas 1986; Davis 1977; Peristiany 1976, 1965; Bailey 1971). We have already seen from the section on the social morphology and family structure in Saint Marsal in chapter 4, that the Aspre was no exception to the rule. Translating those values into the 'mentalité', one is dealing with a conservative, traditional, frugal and patriarchal world, where conformity, security, obedience, patience and submission were virtues ingrained on young minds. Traces of that conformity, otherwise referred to as 'l'esprit du cloche', are still alive and well in the Aspre today. *"If you do not do like them you are an enemy, one must not be different" (LL).* A 'Pied Noir' viticulteur in the Basse Aspre described his adopted community as follows; *"They stick together and all do the same thing. They travel very little outside the village, they are born, live and die here, they would not dream of retiring somewhere else" (F).*

The authoritative rigid holding of ranks, which was so apparent in St. Marsal, discouraged the dangers of individualism, which one could speculate lies at the origin

of the present psychological trait of not taking responsibility for their own actions and destiny. Someone else is always blamed for their present predicament; it was the fault of the ancestors that they did not promote the wine of the Department, the fault of Central Government that their economy is weak, similarly the old people were tricked into selling their land. In the recent past of the Aspre it was common for three generations to live under the same roof, and with the late succession of the land the grandfather held control until his death, reinforcing a conservative approach, which could be seen as a traditional coping mechanism in this rather unpredictable and harsh environment, where an innovative mistake could entail serious consequences.

The physical environment of the Aspre played its part in shaping social values. Chapter 3, exposed the spartan and frugal nature of that environment, no doubt its human inhabitants, schooled in its sobriety had to adjust accordingly. The visible signs of the inherited poverty is noticeable in the frugality in the human nature, - *'on ne jete pas le pain ici'*; a speculative mentality but resistance to long term or significant risk taking, and everyday symbolism, such as the stigma attached to working with goats, - 'the poor mans cow'- a vital source of subsistence in the past now associated more with an element of sorcery. 'L'homme du café', or 'l'homme de vacance' is definitely not respected in the Aspre⁴. The tradition of 'double emploi' (more than one job) and 'rente' both of which are still with us today, is perceived as an insurance against the dangers of putting all ones eggs into the same basket. The conservative survival instinct live on, for example, the vote against Maastricht in 1992 was frequently interpreted by the people themselves as not necessarily being against the terms of the treaty, but rather the fear of being wrong and preferring to wait and see, let someone else make the first essay. A somewhat similar attitude to agricultural innovation can be detected in the previous chapter. A secure job in the administration with a good pension is what the children of the Aspre aspire to, why else did so many of these 'lawless people' join the Gendarmerie, with its early retirement and very large pension?

⁴A vine grower from Terrats tell how he was once punished for going on holidays and leaving his vines unprotected. In his absence the vines were attacked by mildew, and since he was not there to spray them for the disease, he lost a quarter of his harvest (R).

Still today a typical mother's prayer in the Aspre is for her offspring to be "employed and have a fixed salary every month" (MM). The combination of the above factors feeds into the mentalité and economy 'de rente'.

The unpredictable environment of the Aspre was in the past compensated for by a firm and predictable patriarchal family structure. Traditionally the role of the family was to manage the patrimony and pass it on to the next generation, under the watchful guidance of 'le bon père de famille'. Anthropologists of the Mediterranean have written extensively about sets of values known as 'honour and shame' (cf. Peristiany 1965; 1976). Honour being the expression of a man's worth, based primarily on sexual virtues and the shame and modesty of his woman folk. The honour of the individual is linked to that of the family, and if honour is attacked it may be a far worse affront than physical violence. One of my informants, recalling her youth in the Aspre, declared that in keeping with the traditional family structure and the influence of 'l'esprit Arab' the women of the Aspre; *"belonged to their fathers first, then their husbands, and if he died to their sons"* (EE). The intrusive in-marrying woman is a Mediterranean wide characteristic, epitomised in the phrase "the foreign sex enters in", (cf. Campbell 1964) but not without a good dowry. The insularity of the Mediterranean family and the barriers it erected against the outside world, including the in-marrying wife, is illustrated by the following touching anecdote recorded by Lisón-Tolosana (1976). It relates to an old Spanish man, the head of the lineage, who used to pray the rosary every night surrounded by his offspring. Towards the end he would recite the Our Father for the neighbours, friends and all the dead of the parish and used to conclude: "For the welfare of everyone in this house except for the daughter-in-law who is an outsider". Once more our insider - outsider category is insufficient. With age and via the influence of her children the intrusive wife may be incorporated into the family and even gain some authority.

In the Aspre, as elsewhere in the Mediterranean, the family structure has changed and adopted to the exigencies of the twentieth century. Today it is frequently the wife who has an outside job, to complement her husbands insufficient agricultural income.

However those old values and traditions are still among us, rooted in the 'mentalité', and continue to influence the conception of the family and its values. In theory men and women may be equal today, but as one of my female informants put it: "*There are still some infantile women who have not grown up*" (AA). The family unit and its value system is still at the centre of the Aspre's society, and it is interesting to note that children tend to be the only outsiders readily accepted.

The symbolism attached to religion and spirituality is another key to unlocking the local mentalité and value system. In the past religion was very important in the Aspre and no community was complete without 'le cure', who sometimes doubled as the Mayor and a contact with education and the outside world⁵. As in the rest of France, church going religion has declined dramatically over the years, besides it did not really fit with the idea of a communist Department, and eventually the men were embarrassed to be seen at church. Moreover the fact that the church supported Franco during the Spanish civil war is seen as another factor in its decline. The rejection of church going religion is yet another example of Roussillon rejecting the established order.

Today church going may be dead, but the attachment to the ritual of religion and the ancient cultist symbols live on in the Aspre. Things like celebrating the feast days of the village saint, devotion to Marian cults, pilgrimages to sacred shrines in the mountains where petitions ranged from evoking rain to human fertility. The local Priest (of Dutch origin), who now has to cover over twelve communes of the Aspre, described his flocks religious beliefs as 'primitive'; "*Ce sont les chose terre à terre, tres simple qu'ils apprécient le plus*" (N). It is the ritual of things like the priest saying the mass in Catalan, (or even just wearing a red and yellow Catalan ribbon around his neck), or in the little hermitages high up in the mountains so that the raised up eucharist is nearer the heavens, or being buried in ones own land; this is the religion they appreciate far

⁵For a century following the Treaty of the Pyrenees, Roussillon, with the Aspre and Cerdagna at the forefront, underwent a popular 'obsession' with sacred Baroque Art. Wooden statues and gold plated alters, complete to the minutest detail still adorned the churches, both big and small. One senses the release of emotional anxiety in an artistic stupor, which admittedly was nudged on by the Jesuits (cf. Reynal 1989).

more than profound evangelicalism. The 'cult du mort' (death) symbolised by the 'harricot blanc' (white beans), is still a sacred tradition in the Aspre, and as much as the over stretched Curate tries to hand over the ritual of the burial service to Deacons within the parish, the community will not accept this arrangement. They still need the Curate for baptisms, marriages and funerals, the major events in their lives. Interestingly, the Latin Mass which is still said in the ninth century Trinity church in Prunet et Belpuig, in the heart of the Aspre, is very popular and people travel from all over to attend it services. The Tridentine mass is said by a very old priest with his back turned to the congregation, who is literally held up by a Swiss female aid. The contradiction is obvious, but as previously noted the Aspre is expert at assembling what appeals to it from all ages and making its own of things. Their religion like their culture is important to them but not in an analytical sense, rather they are part of their existential taken for granted world, something we shall return to in the following chapter in relation to environmental identity.

On the whole one senses that the indigenous Catalan population are looking back over their shoulders rather than forward. A French sociologist who has lived amongst them for over ten years declared; *"Their inability to adapt and accept, or even recognise outside influences is typical of the local mentalité"*. The strong attachment to tradition, ritual, folklore and folklore art smacks of a disrupted evolution, a phenomenon of a people cut from their identity. An internationally recognised Artist from the Aspre (whose work is not locally appreciated) described the local psychology as follows: *"The problem with the mentality here is expressed in their appreciation of art, they are only sensitive to the folklore element - 'la cruche noir' (black jug), the Sardana dance - they are blocked at that stage, there is no live evolution"* (RR). Alternatively one could interpret their attachment to the folklore element in their culture as more symbolic ammunition for the fortification of the boundary, demarcating the difference between themselves and the outside world. Along similar lines Douglas (1970) argued that closed social groups, who feel their boundaries under threat tend to revert to a high level of ritual and symbolic activities.

Sense of Community.

In combination with changes in the family and the land, profound alterations are seen to be afoot in the community, one of the most important definers of identity. The old solidarity of the 'face to face' society, where everyone was related to everyone else, is being replaced by a far more materialistic and individualistic outlook.

"Before life in the village was like living in one big family, every one know every one else; they knew the hypocrites and those who stole, but they were all accepted in the sense that every one had a place and they were controlled by the community. It was rare to help each other with work, except for the big occasions, like the vendage (grape harvest) or olive picking, but those were more like fêtes and were important for match making" (U).

In the past, life in the village was to use Berger's (1979) metaphor, "a constructed living portrait", in which everybody is portrayed and everybody portrays. Gossip was the means by which it defined itself and controlled those straying from the accepted path. It was the little discrepancies between the symbols and the individuals interpretation of them that kept the portrait up to date. Under such circumstances the communities knowledge of the individual was very extensive, one suspects not much less than God's. Unlike highly mobile modern communities the families 'pedigree' was known for generations back. The detailed knowledge they had of each other was potentially dangerous and it became necessary to conceal certain things from public knowledge. One could speculate that this was a factor in the sacrosanct attachment to the inside of the house, 'le dedans', what went on behind closed doors within the confines of the family was as far as possible sacred, and there was a constant vigilance waged against allowing that information reaching the village square. The symbolism attached to the sacredness of 'le dedans', is still a formidable psychological obstacle to allowing tourists inside the home. The idea of 'bed and breakfast' is alien to the Aspre and Roussillon, only Northerners could run that sort of 'business'. The danger of the stranger is to be kept outside the home.

The general consensus running through the interviews is that society and its values has

profoundly changed and that life may be easier now but it was better before, the sense of community is lost and all that counts now is money. A big influence on the community of the Haute Aspre, which encompasses the greater part of the study area, has been the decline in agriculture, the resultant splitting of culture from agriculture, and the appearance of the 'other', with a different vision, ways of doing things and often with striking differences in wealth. *"Before everyone in the village was at the same level, we all had bicycles for transport and there was a strong sense of community"* (NN). The hardships of life in the Aspre in the past are now regarded as having been compensated for by the warmth of community. The absence of the old sense of community and the sense of belonging to 'the family' of the village coupled with the physical uprooting from the land in the Haute Aspre has left a gaping void in their lives. Many of the older indigenous inhabitants no longer recognise themselves in the 'village portrait'. They feel alienated and redundant, like the very old lady from Camélas who was watching a Gladiator programme on television when I went to visit her, but when I asked her what she thought of the Gladiators, she obviously did not know what I was talking about.

A symptom of the present 'bouleversement' is nostalgia for the past, which is invariably presented as 'le paradi':

"Before there was a great sense of community, the village of Tordères was one big family. The children would irrigate the vegetable gardens after school, at night people would sit around playing cards. The houses were full of rats, because the animals, harvest and food were all stored in the dwelling house. To eat ones own meat, sausage, wheat bread, vegetables, - ah that was the good life. Before there was respect for girls, one had to court then for five or six years before asking the father for their hand in marriage. Before it was magnificent, now everything is 'pourri'. It hurts me to see the swimming pools over the old vegetable gardens. It is no longer Tordères for me" (BB).

This man is partaking in the favourite local pastime of romanticising the past, but I could not help remarking that he sold the field with the sacred family tomb on it for a

holiday home. The dominant trend seems to be, 'glorify the past but profit from the present'. That profit is obviously feeding their pockets but not their souls. Lowenthal (1975), remarked that one of the essential requirements of nostalgia for the past is a "sense of estrangement, the object of the quest must be anachronistic". For the newcomers and locals alike, the charm of the remoteness of the past in the Aspre can only be enjoyed once they are perfectly reassured that those days are well out of reach. Only after the past has been 'silenced' can nostalgia creep in. The above informant forgot to mention the endemic cholera and typhoid resulting from the rat infested houses. I meet only one person, an old unmarried woman who in the past did not have a sufficient dowry to warrant the respect of the 'gentlemen', who categorically declared that the past was far from 'le paradi', "c'etait l'enfer" (hell).

"People lived too much on top of each other, they were too insular and their lives were controlled by restrictive habits. There was a lot of 'movais esprit'; if a woman crossed the village square (except on Sundays), or saluted or spoke to any man there she would become the source of gossip, they would say she was having an affair. When I started taking the bus to Perpignan on my own, without Mama, to see a bit of the outside world, the gossip around the village was that I was going to meet a man. There is still some of that mentality left, but television has opened up their minds to the outside world" (EE)⁶.

It is all too easy to look at the past with rose tinted glasses, but one could conclude that there was a stronger, if at times claustrophobic, sense of belonging and having one's place in the world marked out for you in the past. Society has changed, but one senses that the images have not evolved correspondingly, they are using the old symbols to redefine their new identities. They are trapped in a series of misconceptions, by which they see only changes in values and not the basic structural changes that has led to such value modifications. The present for many of the older indigenous inhabitants of the

⁶Note she was also reflecting on the neighbourhood bound position of women in society.

Aspre is incomprehensible and in flux, "*the unemployed in the village now have cars and no vegetable gardens*" (T). They feel under attack from all sides, from outsiders, unemployment, migration, aging population, agricultural viability, changing landscapes, changing values and changing mentalities. By remaining rooted in the old social order they risk becoming anachronisms in their own villages. Mistrust and fear of the future feeds into the nostalgia for the past, from the vantage point of the present the past was 'safe'. As the structural basis of the boundary becomes undermined as a consequence of social change, they resort increasingly to symbolic behaviour to reconstitute what is left of the boundary. They may be petty and jealous among themselves, but the field work clearly demonstrates that two undeniable facts remain; (a) at all costs they want to remain 'chez nous', and (b) all differences are put aside in the fight against the common enemy, - 'les étrangers'. "*Les gens ici veulent être chez eux, et ne pas avoir de contact avec les étrangers, comme partout dans le monde*" (AA). The efforts involved in collective identity change or maintenance are dramatically highlighted in situations where different people that were hitherto separate from one another come into association, especially in a relationship where the advantage is seen to be with the new arrivals.

7.3 Insiders Perception of Outsiders:

According to Benedict Anderson's (1983) famous phrase, "imagined communities are delimited by powerfully imagined other communities". Interaction with the outside world sharpens and informs a community's consciousness of itself. How one defines the 'other' says a lot about how one defines the 'self'. All outsiders in the Aspre are, as previously stated, classified as 'tourists' and 'Doryphores'. 'Doryphore' being a pejorative term - meaning beetle -, used to describe the Germans during the war. The continuation of the symbolism employs that the outsiders are perceived as 'the new invaders', the new colonizers. The fact that the Aspre has witnessed many invaders come and go, is given as the reason why they are now somewhat un-welcoming: "*They keep their distance from strangers, they are even afraid of them*" (S).

Realistically this is not a trait unique to the Aspre, the outsider need not expect a

warmer welcome in places as far a field as Timbuctoo, Provence, Brittany, the Scottish Isles or the West of Ireland. In many insular and fragile rural and urban communities the outsider is seen as a threat, an encroachment on the boundary, invading 'le terroir'. The incredibility of the 'intrusion' feeling was epitomised by an old man from the Aspre who spent most of the second world war in a German concentration camp, when he stated: *"I never thought I would see the day my vegetable garden in Saint Marsal would be bounding that of a German's"*⁷ (CD).

One of the commonest means used to erase the presence of the 'doryphores' in their midst is denial, they pretend they do not exist or rather they use the 'weapon' of temporality as reassuring confirmation that it is only a passing fad, none of them stay long, eventually they all move on. The indigenous population are unanimous in their judgement of the neo-ruraux as 'bricoleurs qui ne tiennent pas le cou' (can't stand the pace), few of whom last more than five years. The consensus on their own 'bricoleurs', the Catalan neo-ruraux, is that they could not survive without family financial support. In fact all the neo-ruraux are perceived to be living off state subsidies and benefits, or family support. The retired are said to love the place when they come here in their sixties, but in their seventies they all move back to the urban centres they came from in order to be nearer their children and their doctors. The holiday home owners only come for a few weeks of the year, they find it O.K while their children are young, but as the children get older they find there are no distractions for them in the Aspre, they become bored and want to move towards more animated places. The commuters are said to spend their time on the roads; they stick the pace for the first few years, then the novelty wears off and there is the added hassle of the children's education and the difficulty of socialising with their colleagues at night, thus, in time they too return to the urban fold. The urban unemployed are made to feel so unwelcome, that they quickly get tired of sticking out like a sore thumb, besides they are said to find the country oppressive; *"instead of going for walks they spend their*

⁷The strong symbolism attached to the vegetable garden, 'le potager', is a remnant of the past, when the produce of that garden made up the ingredients of the staple meal 'le potage' (soup\vegetable stew).

days listening to loud music" (P). In common with the more marginal 'neo-ruraux' they are also held responsible for bringing 'une movais vie', in the form of drugs, Aids and stealing to the villages. In effect all the 'doryphores' are taken care of in time, the operative phrase being 'in time they all move on', or are absorbed by their passive 'sponge' affect. One is reminded of Vidal de la Blache's (1943) observation on the invaders of the Mediterranean: "*They may arrive as conquerors, yesterday's barbarians, todays men of property: but how long can they resist the scorching heat of summer and ...the malaria*". The malaria may have disappeared, but the invaders are still perceived as temporary. In the interim they are tolerated mostly for what they can get out of them, for example, raising the price of land is perceived as very useful. A large element of the above logic is true, most of the outsiders do in fact move on, but what the insiders refuse to take on board is the possibility of 'permanent temporality', when one wave of outsiders moves out another moves in to replace them.

Because the outsiders are perceived as passing through rather than rooted in the Aspre, it is felt that it is not worth upsetting their schedule for them. The municipality would not appear to be very concerned about meeting the school transport needs of isolated 'neo-ruraux' children. One 'respectable' commuter family who had lived in the Aspre for over ten years, found to their surprise that their children were not taken into account by the local school when they were calculating the intake of students necessary to keep the school open. The usual reproach being; "*Oui bien, mais est ce qu'ils vont restent*"? (FG). Alas the obsession with delusion and fantasy lies at the heart of humanity.

Another overwhelming insider consensus emanating from the field work, is that the rich outsiders assume a superior air and look down on the local 'peasants': "*Ils prenent trop d'importance, ils sont bien gonflent*" (S). Their superior economic power reflected in their cars, houses and way of life, reinforces the difference in status and provokes pangs of jealousy, at a time when many of the locals and their offspring are having great difficulty surviving economically. "*Here we are a people of the soil, not well educated. The people from the North treat us as stupid and inferior*" (U). The fact that many of the rich retired outsiders are ex-colonials, having made their fortunes in

Africa, under what the locals perceive as dubious circumstances, adds to the perceived colonial threat. Given half a chance it is felt that they come here with the intention of treating the locals like 'les petites Arabes', addressing them in the common 'tu' rather than 'vous' form. The rich outsiders are perceived as coming to the Aspre for the sun and tranquillity, forming an ex-patriot clique and of treating the locals as anachronistic, picturesque relics of the past. As we shall see in the final section of this chapter, the locals are quite capable of taking care of themselves, and in their own ways fight back and keep them in check.

The rich outsiders who live locked up in their villas, with their swimming pools and guard dogs, typified by the almost exclusively ex-colonial dwellers of the Calcina hill overlooking the village of Llauro, are perceived as having an adverse affect on the local culture. In one sense the locals admire them because of their economic success, which they themselves aspire to, but on the other hand they consider them completely different to themselves, aliens with whom they have nothing in common. In effect they rarely meet, the rich outsiders do not shop locally, and a quasi complete apartheid system is in operation. Thus both camps feel free to fantasise about the other; the ex-colonials of the Calcina are said to be given to swimming in the nude and wearing leopard skins and war paint at their parties. Alternatively, they perceive the locals as primitive. The mental barriers and the rural - urban, north - south divide is greatest here. Their Northern urban rhythms and aspirations are seen to conflict with the much valued traditional Mediterranean rural life of the Aspre.

"We can no longer keep pigs or cocks in the village, they are trying to ban tractor work on a Sunday; we can no longer sell our own cheese or kill our own sheep, our dogs have to be tied up, but they are friendly unlike their savage guard dogs" (GG). On the grounds of having visited over seventy backyards, I would confirm that friendly canine litmus test. These restrictions are not just confined to the Aspre, there is an ongoing debate in the Austrian Alps about banning cow bells, which are disturbing the sleep of some of the visitors. There is an obvious conflict in interest here, what is perceived as a working environment by the locals is being turned into an aesthetic environment

by the outsiders. However, the indigenous population no longer want to work the land of places like the Haute Aspre, the neo-ruraux who are attempting to do just that are perceived as a 'marche arrière'. The rich outsiders are integral to the locals land speculation aspirations, the new 'rente', but they do not want to have to subdue to their suburban laws and town planning, altering their society and the lay of the land. The locals are caught in an impossible situation, needing the outsiders but not wanting them.

The rich outsiders may to a large extent be an unknown quantity, but the curious thing is the indigenous population of the Aspre resent even more the outsiders not so different to themselves, in the form of the neo-ruraux mucking around with their sheep and goats, and many of whom make an effort to integrate. They shop locally and support local schools and markets. The finer the difference between people the stronger the commitment they have to them, reminiscent of what Freud referred to as the 'narcissism' of small differences. Thus, it is on these people that the locals let loose their unreserved wrath. One suspects there are a number of reasons for this, firstly they come into more direct contact with them, they have working the land in common, in many respects they are seen to be playing around with their own symbols and this is dangerous, especially since the projected public meaning of their symbols frequently does not correspond with the private one. In short they are perceived as a serious threat to the boundary. There is also the concern that they may be profiting from their soil - definitely taboo - besides their active agricultural presence in the 'arrière pays' of the Haute Aspre points a finger of auto betrayal at the 'deserters', who claim they had no choice but to sell their beloved land. In short they do not want them to succeed where they themselves have failed. Contrary to the outward nostalgia and symbolic attachment to the land, the game has altered, it is land speculation not subsistence agriculture that is in vogue now. In contrast to the rich outsiders the neo-ruraux are perceived as having nothing to offer, (they can't afford to buy the land), and thus they cannot profit from them. Because they generally come here with very little capital they are perceived as failures in life; since the rich outsiders look down on the locals for much the same reason, they in turn feel free to release their frustrations on these 'bricoleurs' who are even further down the pecking order. It is a question of the

'marginals' among the 'marginalized', sharing a 'fringe' habitat. The neo-ruraux are also perceived as eroding the moral fabric of the society with their liberal attitude to drugs and sex. On the whole they are dismissed as dreamers and *"townies who do not have the force or knowledge to work the arrière pays"* (NN).

One must be careful not to over generalise, there are many exceptions to the rule. Some neo-ruraux families do integrate and are accepted to a certain degree, a lot depends on the individual, their behaviour and length of residence. For example, the community rallied around a neo-ruraux family from Paris, who have lived in Tordères for twenty years, when the Catalan owner of their house and farm, who is said to have gone mad, tried to evict them. This family may be popular but they will never be insiders, and are not part of the established social network, never getting invited to dinner parties etc., and no matter how long they live there, the Aspre will not be considered their 'home', even though they might help in preventing them being evicted. The insiders frequently comment on the fact that many of the neo-ruraux are supposed to come from good families and are well educated, insinuating that their misconceived dreams arise from academic rather than practical knowledge.

Local Politics.

The most feared and resented intrusion of all outsiders is their involvement in local politics. This is considered the ultimate invasion of their territory, and painfully contradicts the illusion that they 'do not exist'. Since the 1982 decentralization laws in France the local Mayor and Municipality have much increased powers, for example, they have a large say in the drawing up of the all important 'Plan d' Occupation des Sols', which decides which plots of land are designated as constructible (The land owners on the 'Conseil Municipal' are perceived as having a head start in the race). Due to the demographic transformations of the last fifty years, especially in the Haute Aspre, the indigenous population have a constant battle on their hands trying to maintain control of the Mairie and the 'Conseil Municipal'. For example, in the village of Llauro there are 255 people of which 190 are outsiders. Of the 11 people on the conseil municipal 6 are from Llauro and 5 are outsiders. The work of the local Mayor

trying to reconcile the different needs of the two sides is very difficult. She warned that the day the outsiders will have the majority vote on the conseil municipal, *"il faut se méfier"* (beware)! She is torn between the outsiders whom she described (to an obvious outsider) as *"more objective and easier to work with than the locals who always ask favours for themselves and not the community"* (Z). What's more she is related to most of the locals, who invariably bring up family connections, patronage and never forget old feuds. *"The locals do not understand that the old way of life is finished, and that they are now obliged to live with 'les étrangers'"* (Z).

In the depopulated communes of the Haute Aspre the Mayors are in a particularly difficult situation; they need the newcomers to keep the numbers up, the more inhabitants a commune has the more privileges it is entitled to, such as, schools, phones, post offices etc. Thus, they are torn between wanting the newcomers on 'paper' but not in 'body'. The concern in the viticole villages of the Basse Aspre is to maintain an agricultural Mayor and a majority of viticulteurs on the conseil municipal, - *'who else would understand us' (R)?* The viticole village of Montauriol suffered the ultimate indignation in 1983, when the outsiders gained the majority on the municipal council. The result has split the village in half to this day: *"The old people are especially angry and still brood over it, they do not forget easily"* (S). The only place the locals are said to feel comfortable now is in the village café, into which no outsider would dare venture.

Due to the importance of 'the vote', one gets the impression that the locals prefer outsiders with holiday homes to those who live there all year round, or non French nationals who do not have the right to vote. In order to vote in the municipal elections one must be a French National and pay their taxes ('impôt') to the local commune. Some of the foreign outsiders expressed a hope that Maastricht will change the voting laws within the EU, allowing foreign residents to vote in local elections. As one frustrated retired Belgian put it, *"si les chose sont laissent aux gens du village rien bouge"* (II). He fails to see that is exactly what they want, they like things as they are or rather were, and want to maintain their stamp on the place.

7.3.1 Insiders Attitude to Tourism:

Working the land was traditionally perceived as a 'noble' profession, tourism is only acceptable as an economic necessity. A little tourism is considered acceptable even desirable, but there is much resentment to turning the place into a 'holiday island' or 'tourist parc', which as outlined in the previous chapter is perceived as the option the EEC and its 'Gardien de l'Environnement' programme is forcing on them. Mass tourism is perceived as potentially very degrading and impoverishing and would benefit very few people, invariably the outsiders, the only ones capable of exploiting the market. They are aware of the 'concrete atrocities' along the Mediterranean coast only twenty kilometres away, and what one woman described as the 'assassination' of the mountains in Cerdagna by ski resorts. Once more they point out how the wrong type of tourism, mass tourism of the '*congé payer*' type, was forced on them in the seventies, instead of opting for the more profitable quality tourism model of the Cote d'Azur. One doubts that they would be in a better position to exploit that market, but it would mean even higher land prices.

There are perceived to be two types of passing tourists, coast and 'arrière pays', the distinguishing characteristic being "those who spend and those who don't". The local population of the Aspre definitely want to keep the 'barbarians' on the hitherto uninhabited, mosquito ridden salt marshes of the coast. Tourism is central to the economy of the Department, but contrary to the talk about developing environmentally friendly 'Green Tourism', Figure 18, indicates that 61.2% of tourist capacity is still to be found on the coast, 19.2% in the ski resorts of the mountains, 6.9% in passage zones, and only 12.7% in the Arrière Pays. Similarly, Figure 19 indicates that the major tourist growth area remains the mediterranean coast. Tourism in the Aspre is for the most part confined to retired and holiday homes with a trickle of day visitors, coming in from the coast on wet or cold days. Table 10 indicates that almost half the houses in the Haute Aspre are secondary residences, and Map 8, demonstrates that for the Department as a whole 30% of its housing is declared as secondary residences, as opposed to a figure of 11% for France as a whole (INSEE 1990). Passing tourism in the Aspre is only available in July and August, linked to school holidays.

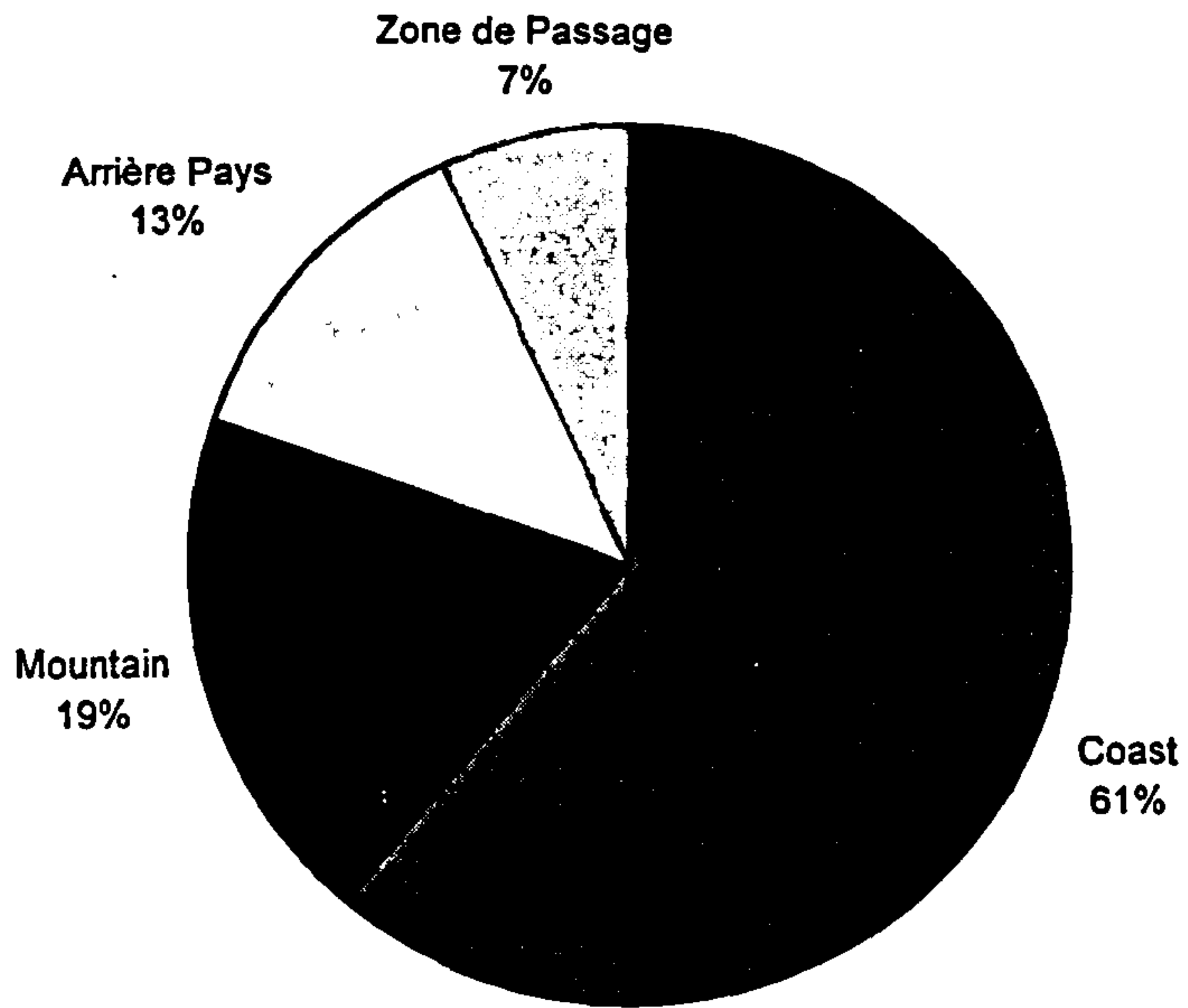


Figure 18: Tourist Capacity in the Pyrénées Orientales in 1993.

(Data Source: Conseil Général 1993)

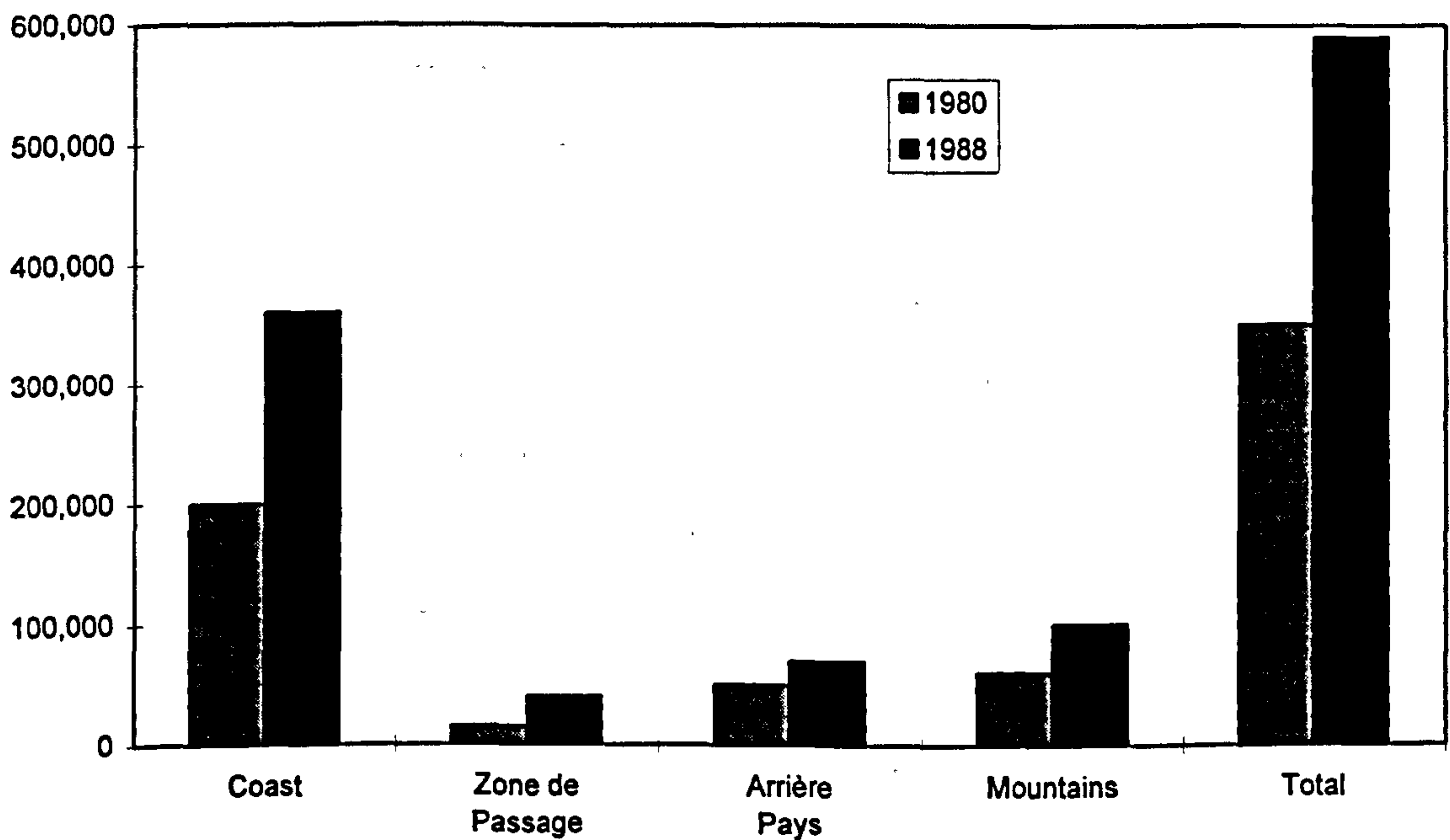
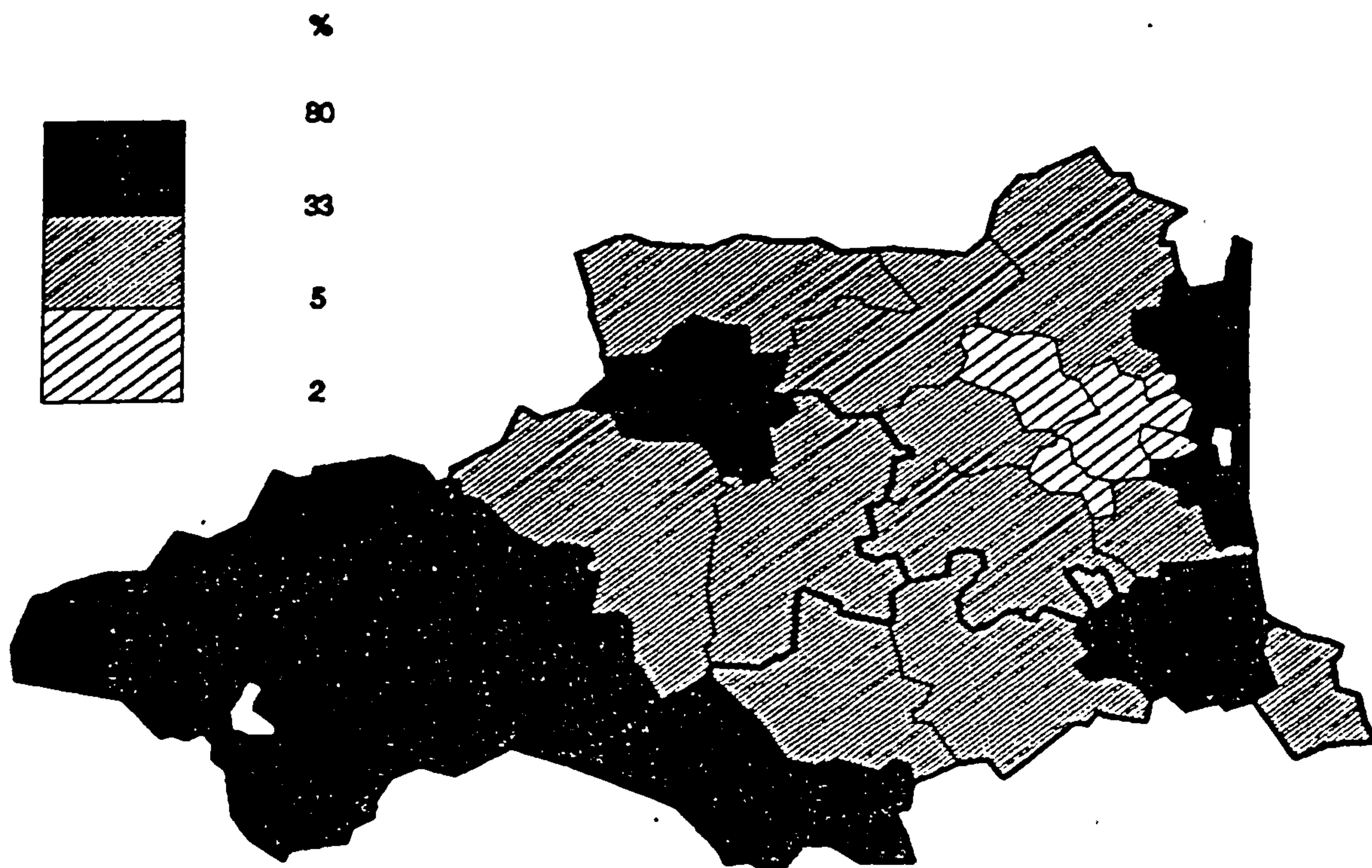


Figure 19: Evolution in Departmental Tourism (1980-1988).

(Data Source: Conseil Général 1993)



Map 8: Secondary Residence in the Pyrénées Orientales (*Source, INSEE 1990*).

Village	Principal	Secondary	Vacant
La Bastide	30	32	9
Boule D'Amont	24	19	14
Caixas	23	20	12
Calmeilles	19	29	9
Casefabre	12	5	3
Oms	60	36	35
Prunet et Belpuig	19	16	6
Saint Marsal	49	45	4
Taillet	23	17	7
Taulis	22	11	3
Total	281	230	93

Table 10: Principal and Secondary Residence in the Haute Aspre.

(*Source: Inventaire Communal 1990*).

The short duration of the tourist season is often put forward by the agricultural lobby as proof that one cannot live all year round from that. The outsider owner of the Tordères Gîotel would testify to that, being over booked for a few months of the summer and empty the rest of the year.

A successful Belgian Aubergiste in Saint Marsal believes the reason the indigenous population cannot exploit the tourist market is because they do not have *"un esprit commerçant", being too close to autarchy* (KK). As previously noted there is a barrier about allowing strangers into the sanctity of the home, but even those who have tried to cope with them outside, for example, 'camping à la ferme', have major problems. Basically the effort is perceived as too much of a psychological trauma, even though they admit they need the money. It is felt that it is easier to sell them a plot of land than having to put up with their insults and bizarre behaviour on a daily basis. One young, capable and well educated Catalan woman gave up 'camping à la ferme' because, (a) the clash in mentalities was so severe that the whole family was beginning to dread the summer time, and (b) they could not make a living from it, being only viable for a few months of the summer, which clashed with their agricultural work.

"They came with the mentality of the town. They wanted to see everything fast and in cars, and blamed us if it rained, was too hot, too cold, too windy etc. They were never satisfied. We used to sell them some of our organic vegetables, home made jams or traditional Catalan dinners, but they had no appreciation of quality all they could understand were prices. They would appreciate a meal at the 'Quick' more than wholesome home cooking" (H).

Their inability to meet the tourists needs and cope with their "daily insults" is a recurrent theme running through the field work. The Commune of Llauro tried camping, Gîtes, holiday apartments, but the Mayor declared the Gîtes and apartments are empty most of the year, the camping is two star and now they are demanding three. *"People ask for too much, the commune has not the means to do that. In the long run it would be better to support agriculture"* (Z). The locals are of the impression that the tourists consider that the countryside belongs to them, their 'backyard' so to speak; and

they come to conquer with their 'four wheel drives' what is to them 'virgin territory', armed to the teeth with cameras and video equipment. Not only do they perceive themselves as under threat from colonial imperialism but also from urban colonization. Alternatively, the locals perceive the tourists as 'townies', urban weaklings, out of their element in the country, allergic to grass, afraid of insects, muck and animals. They watch the passing charade, try selling them a few bottles of wine, and patiently wait for the schools to reopen and for the 'Brownies' to return to their bricks and mortar. The local consensus on the passing tourists is that they are attracted to Roussillon by the image of sun, sea and mountains, but when they are confronted by the image they destroy it. I was amazed to find somebody employed just to pick up the papers around the remote hermitage of Saint Ferreol, near Céret. *"The only thing they understand is having somebody standing over them with a fine, without that control on holidays they are lost. Their bizarre behaviour is like something out of a mental asylum"* (QQ). It would appear that not everyone is sufficiently educated to appreciate 'Green Tourism'. Besides the Aspre is probably not well positioned to exploit that market, because it is too near the Mediterranean coast and urban centres.

The successful Belgian Aubergiste, whose establishment is the only one in the Aspre that manages to remain open all year round, due to his large local retired clientele and being on the route for some organised Pyrenean walks, believes that the secret is to give people what they want, *"quality, consistency and reasonable prices"* (KK). He believes the locals are not capable of delivering that service with their autarchy ideas, 'mentalité du soleil' and the fact they are not prepared to invest in the long term. *"They want immediate profits, but that is impossible, it took me ten years to build up this business to what it is today. The Catalans exploit the beauty of their country simply by selling it"* (KK).

There are major misunderstandings and communication problems on both sides. In the village where I lived I was told stories of tourists walking into the village houses asking; *"is this provisional?"* or *"is this for sale?"* One family was subjected to the close scrutiny of a group of tourists who climbed up on a wall to watch them eat their

dinner in the garden one evening. *"They treat you as an ignorant peasant"* (A). I considered those tales a slight exaggeration, until one day it happened to me. I was sitting outside my house reading a book, when I was confronted by a German tourist in a pink florescent coat, grey woolly socks and birkenstock sandals. She started asking me all kinds of questions about the village, which property was for sale, how many swimming pools were there, how far was it to the snow, the sea, the motorway etc. From the consumer greed in her eyes she reminded me of a hawk eying the property. She proceeded to tell me that she thought the village was quaint and I was weird to be able to live here for so long, declaring she could only spend a day or two here. She proudly told me that she was planked in a modern apartment right on the beach. She then wanted to see the inside of my 'uninhabitable house'. I refused on the grounds that she might have it bought from under my feet before the day was out. After she left I turned for some solace to writing about the incident in my diary. It was a very unnerving experience, here was somebody completely out of their element, but who tried to make me believe that it was I who was out of place. What was even more frightening was the realization that even though she obviously hated the place she would consider buying property here, simply because it was the thing to do, the 'arrière pays' had become fashionable and the car would allow her the freedom of not having to spend much time there.

This was an isolated incident, the vast majority of passing tourists I came in contact with were perfectly pleasant, but there are exceptions to the rule. A local writer Adrienne Cazeilles (1984), epitomised the local sentiment when she wrote: *"Pour un grand nombre de gens, de France et d'ailleurs, le Roussillon, avec quelque autre provinces Méditerranéenne, c'est leur part de soleil. Le hic, c'est que pour nous, Catalans dits du Nord, nous ne nous sentons pas d'ici pour bronzer, mais pour y vivre notre vie"*⁸.

⁸"A lot of people from France and elsewhere, perceive Roussillon, along with a few other Mediterranean Provinces, as their portion of the sun. The problem is that for us, Northern Catalans, we are not here to tan ourselves, but to live our lives".

She also refuses to recognise that the tourists are now an important part of that life. At the root of the refusal to accept tourists, is the fact that they contradict most of their traditional values of prudence, frugality, hard work etc. The idea of blatant, self-indulgent pleasure is somehow distasteful to a people who always had to place duty before pleasure. As one of my informants put it: *"The only value now is pleasure, but that can never work, life is always an effort, a struggle"* (RR). Does he not realise that the pursuit of 'pleasure' is also a massive struggle! In the final analysis all bad things in the Aspre are perceived to come from the outside.

7.4 Outsiders Perception of Insiders:

The characteristic most frequently commented on is the infamous local lack of dynamism, put down to the 'mentalité du soleil' and the traditional 'laissez faire' Mediterranean attitude. The general consensus among the outsiders is that it is impossible to get anything done here; *"They start a job, come for a day and then disappear, it took us three and a half months to get the phone installed"* (TT). The 'bible' for many of the British ex-patriots is 'A Year in Provence', by Peter Mayle. One means of getting around the local impasse is the recent trend for British workmen - masons, electricians and builders to set up in the Aspre. They find there is a lucrative living to be made among the foreign network system. Many of the rich outsiders have tremendous problems getting the locals to work for them; they frequently conclude that the unemployed have it too good these days. Those with more insight believe that the locals are too proud to work for them. This is an obvious sign of local resistance, one means by which they make their presence and feelings felt. For example, a retired Belgian couple who have lived part time in the Aspre for the last twenty five years and describe themselves as well integrated, could not find anybody from the village to cut their lawn after the husband suffered a series of heart attacks, eventually they had to make do with a seventy year old man from a town, some distance away.

It is generally felt that the locals are not capable of running a business, they invariably remark that any café or restaurant that works well either in the Aspre or Perpignan is owned and run by a Northerner. Some express the fear that the locals incompetence

and greed for money is going to ruin the place with cheap souvenir shops and land speculation. Interestingly the Catalans fear the same of them. The locals refer to the retired outsiders as the 'kiss of death', parasites who neither produce nor consume locally. The retired however perceive themselves as the life of the place and central to the local economy, stressing that it is they who buy the land, build houses, employ workmen and cleaning ladies etc. The reason they do not shop locally is due to lack of choice, prices, freshness of the produce, and the near impossibility of finding all the village shops - Butcher, Baker, Épicerie, - open at the same time; admittedly that is a real challenge. The rich outsiders are of the general opinion, that the insiders, especially the young, have no choice but to accommodate their presence, since tourism and the leisure industry is perceived as all that works here now.

On the whole the rich outsiders perceive themselves as a "*well travelled, industrious bunch*" (TT), who have nothing in common with the locals. They are full of ideas as to how the locals could become more innovative and industrious; simple things like not filling the grape vats to the top would improve the quality of the wine, experiments with winter wine as in Germany, or they refer to a recent study which showed that the place is ideal for growing bamboos. The opening being that if the locals were not so stubborn, traditional and lazy, they could improve their lot and become dynamic like themselves. An English holiday home owner, commenting on their protectionist aspirations, manifest in the recent over turning of a lorry load of mirrors from Italy, which they mistook for fruit, declared: "*These little introspective communities do not understand the workings of the world economy*" (TT).

Many outsiders comment on the deceptive warmth and friendliness of Mediterranean society, their own experience being proof of how closed and difficult it is to integrate here. The usual obstacle of getting invited to their homes is invariably mentioned. "*The North gives the impression of being cold, but in fact we are far more open and friendly*" (FG). When I asked one open minded Catalan about this recurrent problem his response was that, "*The people of the North live indoors and the interior of the houses are always well arranged. Here people live outdoors, our houses are only used*

for eating and sleeping, and if we invite anyone it is to an open air 'cargolade' (snail or sausage barbecue). If the Northerners made an effort to understand our ways they would be accepted" (U).

The point is that the majority of the newcomers do not understand their ways, most of them being totally indifferent to them, and those who make an effort need not expect any initiation lessons. The overwhelming, well substantiated consensus is that 'they want our money but they don't want us'. Consequently it is felt that the outsiders have to make all the effort to integrate, they must go to the locals they will never come to them. The locals are not perceived as hostile just indifferent, they are said to show no interest in the outsiders or the outside world they come from. This indifference is epitomised by the experience of a Belgian woman who constructed a holiday home in the Aspre over twenty years ago. The local man she bought the site from kept referring to herself and her family as "Vous les Anglais". She tried several times to get her identity sorted out, explaining to him that she was Belgian not English. Immediately after their little 'tête à tête' he would address them as "*Vous les gens du Nord*"; but invariably on their next encounter he reverted back to his generic term for all outsiders, "*Vous les Anglais*".⁹ 'L'esprit d'arrière pays', and the fact that they travel very little is held responsible for their indifference and lack of curiosity about the outside world. Here the stranger was traditionally feared, the 'evil eye' in the Aspre, as in many other parts of the Mediterranean, is blue giving a good clue as to its origin.

They are aware that getting involved in local politics is 'taboo', but those who can vote feel obliged to make their presence felt, because the locals are perceived as too incompetent to leave decision making to. The mental characteristics associated with the local population are, insularity, closure, traditional, conservative, dour, incestuous: - "*They are harsh like their mountains, and with the hard mentalité of their earth*" (LL). Some comment on the fact that "*it is the outsiders who make this place livable and*

⁹The English aristocracy were among the first foreigners to visit the health spas in the area, for example the hot springs in Amélie les Bains.

interesting" (YY). It is felt that it takes a long time to be accepted by the local community, most never attempting it. The rare few who have 'conquered their sympathy', (e.g married to a local person) note that they are extremely kind and "repay a little favour three fold" (S). This could be interpreted as another sign that they are ill at ease, and do not want to be under any complement to them. Children are considered very important in this society, and many outsiders find that the only way to integrate is to put their children into the local school, that way their children get asked to parties, etc.

As previously noted the relationship between the insiders and outsiders, especially the rich ones, is dominated by lack of direct contact, they live and work apart. The lack of contact is frequently reflected in the outsiders naive understanding of what is going on around them. Many of them are baffled by the expensive restoration work going on in villages like Saint Colombe, the appearance of new suburbs in Céret and Thuir, the new hypermarket in Perpignan; they frequently conclude that the wine industry is booming and the place is thriving. In comparison to the appearance of the place when they arrived here over twenty years ago, with pigs and goats wandering around the villages, things are perceived as having much improved; "Il y a du progrès, ça avance commem" (II). They also perceive them to be far more separatist than they claim to be.

It would be wrong to give the impression that the local barriers to integration are solely differences in capital and needs, those are definitely issues, but the psychological and cultural ingredients cannot be ignored. Take for example an English neo-ruraux couple, with some capital, who have lived in the 'arrière pays' of the Aspre for over fifteen years; as usual they complained of the locals indifference to their presence, and described a frustrating scene of 15 years of smiling and greeting them in the local shops, without any encouraging response, finally declaring that they were getting tired of their efforts to befriend them. They went on to tell me that actually the Catalans are a primitive, uneducated bunch and that their culture is unrefined, the 'Sardana' dance consisting of only 6 or 7 repetitive steps and that it was waste of money doing up places like Serrabonne Priory as in their opinion there is nothing for tourists to see there. She

went on to tell me that she would like to see some light ecologically sensitive industry set up in the *arrière pays* for the outsiders; *"forget about employing the Catalans they have urban bourgeois aspirations and would not dream of working in the arrière pays"* (FF). She concluded with a brilliant ethnographic description, reminiscent of colonial anthropology; *"The Catalans are hard and basic like their environment, even their small hunched physiques and hard dark faces gives that impression"*¹⁰. Geertz (1973) described several interpretations of a 'wink' in Morocco, so too in the *Aspre* a 'smile' can be heavily loaded. Because of the extensive knowledge the local people have gathered about their neighbours over a fifteen year period of observation, it takes more than a smile to convince them of their sentiment. There are definitely some outsiders, regardless of capital differences, who enjoy the feeling of difference, living apart, and wallow in illusions of 'imperial superiority'. An outsider may never become an insider, but some are definitely more acceptable than others.

Some neo-ruraux depict the insiders as being very hostile, but the more general picture is that the locals are said to keep their distance for the first four or five years. During that probation period they are judging their performance, and if they are deemed to be of the serious rather than the extreme marginal type, a limited interaction may be possible. All the neo-ruraux comment on the difficulty of getting a written lease on a 'mas', and the fact that the locals never miss an opportunity to discourage them and point out the futility of their ways. Because of the marginal, non serious image the indigenous population paint of the neo-ruraux, their voices are to a large extent silenced within the community.

As is apparent from the preceding incident some neo-ruraux do not want to integrate with the locals. Even though they may be mimicking what they perceive as the former's subsistence relationship with the land, there is the feeling that somehow they

¹⁰It is commonly believed, especially in the past, that upland and mountain populations all over the world are culturally and intellectually backward. In 1911, Semple, declared that; "Mountains are just regions of much labour and little leisure, of poverty today and anxiety for the morrow, of toil cramped hands, and toil-dulled brains....[mountains] discourage the building of genius, because they are areas of isolation, confinement, remote from the great currents of men and ideas".

have elevated it to a higher philosophical level. A recurrent talking point among the neo-ruraux is the education system and the fact that their children are subject to 'brain washing' models of progress in the local State schools, centred around, "hard work, good education, good job, big house and car" (QQ). They are always talking about setting up an alternative Steiner School, but as yet none have materialised.

A local characteristic the outsiders never fail to comment on is the fraudulent nature of the Department, the local hostility to law and order and the rule of never co-operating with the Gendarmerie, who are perceived as the enemy¹¹. The tradition of never denouncing anyone to the police, even in villages where there are known drug pushers, is seen as a hang over from the days when contraband was a respectable occupation, in which most of the community was involved (refer to chapter 4). The law of silence, 'l'omerta', lives on. The traditional justice system in these hills was the 'vendetta', where by families settled their own affairs. Remnants of that mentality remain in the Aspre, (e.g Taillet rally incident), with fire being frequently used to sort out differences. In the seventies at the peak of the property boom, there was a wave of setting fire to Belgian holiday homes. It is believed that the Réat conifer forest in Tordères was deliberately burnt and it is not unknown to settle a feud by setting fire to a vineyard. Under such 'lawless' circumstances the outsiders do not feel protected by the force of the law, which may well account for their obsession with fences, security systems and guard dogs. The outsiders find that when they call in the law to fix disputes, like having their houses burgled, the Gendarmes turn up "*with folded arms and they don't look very far*" (II). The Gendarmes are fully aware that their presence in the villages is rather ambiguous and traditionally they have always had to tread lightly in this frontier provence¹².

¹¹It is testimony to the dialectical nature of the people that their lack of respect for the law did not prevent them from encouraging their sons to join the Gendarmerie, which they did in their hundreds because it was perceived as a secure job with a very large pension. The only crux being that the recruits from Roussillon were sent directly to Paris, to guard against 'the mafia' effect.

¹²Naturally this is to some peoples advantage. A neo-ruraux who lived in a Mas in Boule d'Amont in the seventies, tells the story of how one evening he was drying his marijuana seeds by the fire when the local Gendarme paid him an unexpected social visit. The Gendarme simply commented on the fact that he was

This is another means by which the locals can assert themselves and act as a 'thorn in the side' of their unwelcome visitors. In the village of Llauro there is an alcoholic, (a 'bon enfant'), who lets his five horses wander all over the place. Naturally this behaviour is tolerated in the village where there is not much damage they can do, but not surprisingly the horses found richer pastures among the shrubs and lawns of the Calcina, the foreigners refuge. The outsiders have called in the police on several occasions, but they take no action, they feel as helpless as themselves and know better than to provoke local antagonism. The locals are fast to point the finger at the savage guard dogs of the outsiders and their threat to both humans and sheep. In these little 'tit for tat' power struggles both parties actively define their differences, reinforce their identities, and test out the 'boundaries'. In such boundary consciousness almost any behaviour can be made grist to the mill of cultural symbolism.

The loose interpretation of the law also poses a problem at the Departmental level, where there is supposed to be a maximum of Catalans in the administration and many irregularities. In short the so called 'Catalan Mafia' can make life very difficult for you, especially if one happens to be an outsider with not a lot to offer, the 'pour boir' (back handers) being standard practice. The French owner of the small Gîtotel in Tordères was constantly chequed by the social security, during the construction of his business, to make sure he was not employing any black market labour. Every one knows that the big construction firms on the coast like Riboral, get a fill up of Turkish black market labour at Place Cassan, Perpignan, every morning. Similarly it is common knowledge that this was the labour used to build the new prison in Perpignan. In Roussillon as elsewhere, statutory rules are open to interpretation and riddled with ambiguities which leave most room for manoeuvres and political patronage. Because of the perceived fraudulent nature and economic structure of the Department, with most incomes being of a non-salary type, the outsiders and some of the administrators believe that tax evasion is rife, with the farmers being one of the biggest culprits, investing their 'argent cache' in real estate outside the Department. The Departments panache

setting his tomato seeds early that year (GG)!

for black marketing is another thing blamed on the Arabs.

Back in the Aspre the interpretation of the 'rules' can be very confusing for those outsiders not accustomed to this 'liberal' philosophy. My 'smiling' neo-ruraux friend has good reason to mistrust the Catalans. Herself and her friends wanted to set up a herbal plant cooperative in the Aspre. After drawing up the plans the next logical step for her was to declare it to the administration for tax purposes, naturally wanting every thing to be above board. When she went to declare her business at the 'Chambre de Métie' in Perpignan, they strongly advised her 'not to bother', because her business was so small that if she had to pay taxes on it, it would be totally unviable. She was shocked and could not understand this logic; *"They treat you as stupid if you are not prepared to join in their illegal doings"* (FF). Not only is the incident a good insight into the clash of mentalities, but it is also a charming anecdote between those preferring to live a lie rather than tell one.

Similarly, the property market, the Departments speciality, is perceived as being riddled with irregularities and loopholes. The Estate Agents, the Building Contractors and the SAFER are perceived as being in league and having the whole property market sown up between them, leaving the outsiders with no option but to walk into the trap set for them. Stories like the outsider who bought half a forested mountain from the SAFER, to discover afterwards that the trees were already sold under a separate agreement, are common. Contrary to outward appearances the 'outsiders' do not have it all their own way in the Aspre, they are made to pay for their 'place in the sun'. The local distinctiveness of the Aspre and the Department of the Pyrénées Orientales, has become incorporated into its mental, social and structural organization. The identity presented to the outside world is informed by these internal intricacies, which are rarely explicitly expressed, but whose nebulous threads are woven into Weber's 'web of significance', where the uniqueness of context and pervading macro cultural and socio-economic processes are clearly interdependent. It is within this 'web of life' that the physical environment must be situated. In effect it is a socio-natural web. The following page summarises the conflicting insider - outsider world vision.

CONFLICTING WORLD VISIONS.

INSIDERS.

Rural - Urban.

Quiet - Noisy

Calm - Stress

Clean - Polluted

Wholesome - Drugs & Crime

Secure - Insecure/Violent.

Traditional - Modern

Roots - Flux & Rootlessness

Peasant - Bourgeois

Community - Materialism

Family - Individualism

Friendly - Unfriendly

Warm - Cold

Nature - Concrete

Humane - Competitive/Ruthless

Conservative - Cosmopolitan

Duty - Pleasure

Permanent - Temporary

Solid - Wavering

Order - Chaos

Authentic - Commercial

Agricultural - Industrial

Wise - Naive

Patient - Impatient

Tolerant - Intolerant

Victims - Conquerors

Rural - Urban

OUTSIDERS

Urban - Rural

Civilized - Primitive

Cultured - Uncultured

Progressive - Backward

Motion - Static

Active - Passive

Modern - Traditional

Efficient - Inefficient

Clean - Dirty

Open - Closed & Insular

Intelligent - Stupid

Superior - Inferior

Work - Holidays

Scientific - Superstitious

Facts - Folklore

Dynamic - Lazy

Honest - Fraudulent

Sophisticated - Awkward

Chic - Old Fashioned

Rich - Poor

Polite - Rude

Refined - Unrefined

Core - Periphery

Adventurous - Unadventurous

Well Travelled - Village Bound

Universal - Separatist

Positive - Negative

Future Looking - Nostalgic

Gay - Dour & Broody

So we come to see that the actors on the stage of the Aspre are well versed in the art of intrigue, role playing and the use of masks. One is reminded as to how misleading ones initial assumptions on this 'apparent' peripheral backwater, which one can drive through in the space of an hour, might be. Far from an escape from the outside world the Aspre is one of its cross roads, a microcosm where many of the contemporary Mediterranean and European social, agricultural and environmental issues are played out. One is also impressed by how difficult it is to make generic statements, no sooner is a category or theory set up than one finds an exception to the rule. The insider - outsider categories contain much diversity and form an inadequate classification of the Aspre's actors. However, as stated from the outset they are self-classifications emerging from the field work rather than imposed by the researcher. This in itself is a vital clue as to how the people of the Aspre cope with the social complexity within their boundaries; both the insiders and outsiders end up with a simplified and partial view of the other. To a large extent it is this simplification, its myths and half truths that allows each social group to conserve their identity and stake out their boundaries. The neo-ruraux who are in frequent contact with the locals are proof that those boundaries are not fortified by lack of contact, but rather through symbolic manipulation.

A more open society might be expected to be more curious about its co-habitants, but one must remember that all the social groups in the Aspre feel in one way or another under threat. The indigenous population are obsessed with the fear of losing their identity and being colonized by both the economically more powerful urban outsiders, and the 'starry eyed' neo-ruraux. The neo-ruraux had to block a high speed rally in order to prove to both themselves and the world that they still exist. Priority investment for the rich outsiders is security systems around their villas and taking out hefty fire and arsenal insurance. All groups find approval only from within its own boundaries, with the Catalan neo-ruraux being the only people who have links with more than one social group, their indigenous roots and the outsider neo-ruraux.

The field work in the Aspre demonstrates that any meaningful study of people and place

needs attention to both the overall cultural context, the external influences impacting on it, but one must also be able to elucidate the specificity of people and place, ie. how all the parts are woven together. Without knowledge of the local tapestry, its mentalité, culture, self-perception, and the snow-ball effect of its long history, one risks abstracting a piece of social process from its moorings resulting in total misunderstanding. The local specificity and its living history must be incorporated into accounts of changing social and environmental structures, or else we shall never get beyond the monolithic 'plastic mask' of superstructures.

Contrary to what we previously implied the social diversity contained within the natural boundary of the Aspre, shall insure that its portrait will continue to be updated. That portrait may not be as finely detailed as before, when it was essentially confined to the 'homogenous' social group of the village. The frame has enlarged to accommodate a cosmopolitan twenty first century stage set. All that is missing from our portrait is the landscape. Our final task is to expose how the social space of the Aspre is being mapped onto its physical space in the contemporary creation of place.

CHAPTER 8. THE PERCEPTUAL CONTEXT OF LAND DEGRADATION IN THE ASPRE.

"Once we see our place, our part of the world, as surrounding us, we have already made a profound division between it and ourselves. We have given up the understanding that we and our country create one another, depend on one another, are literally part of one another, that our land passes in and out of our bodies just as our bodies pass in and out of our land; that as we and our land are part of one another; so all who are living as neighbours here, human and plant and animal, are part of one another, and so cannot possibly flourish alone; that, therefore, our culture must be our response to our place, our culture and our place are images of each other and inseparable from each other, and so neither can be better than the other".

(Wendell Berry, The Unsettling of America)

8.1 Place, Perception and Meaning.

The term *place* implies a location and an integration of nature and culture. How places are made is at the core of human geography and no attempt is made here to do justice to the subject, rather we are looking for a 'thread' which exposes 'place' in the context of the Aspre. There is a sense in which every place has two geographies. The first is the familiar one of flat maps, the pattern of populations, the distribution of crops etc. Geography has been largely preoccupied with this abstract, measurable and objective concept of space and place. The resultant systemic assemblages of physical facts, mental maps and human artifacts, portrays place as "little more than frozen scenes for human activity" (cf. Pred 1985). Within this conceptual framework one is always outside a certain place, perched over it like a hawk whose steady eyes scans its every detail. Such an approach generates useful information about the lay of the land, but it cannot explain how 'space' becomes 'place'.

There is another branch of human geography, which is harder to define and more difficult to grasp. It is a geography formed by an internal agency, a map shaped by memory, culture, history and experience. It is a sense of the life lived in a particular place, and the way that life is expressed by its inhabitants. Like all such maps it is personal, multifaceted and incomplete. The significance of what 'place' mean to people

and how people interpret place is therefore primarily derived from the humanistic tradition, heavily influenced by phenomenology and existentialism (cf. Ley 1981a; Duncan & Ley 1993; Ralph 1976; Tuan 1973, 1974, 1991; Buttner et al. 1980; Berdoulay 1989; Entrikin 1976). The foundation of French geography laid by Vidal de la Blache, had a lot in common with the concern for place, and set a precedent by focusing on the lived environment as experienced by people, - 'genre de vie', which gave it its highly humanistic overtone¹. To make place a useful concept within this research, one should consider that it is about meaning, meaning grounded in social relations which unfolds within place. Uncovering that meaning is like telling a story. But, it is not just any old tale, it must reflect the very complex interweaving of the relationships among the people, the intentionality underlying their behaviour, the rocks, the soil, the ancestors, the power struggles, the symbols and the messages infiltrating from outside that impact on that specific place. Strictly speaking 'sense of place' is connected with feelings about place, but this is not just a free flowing phenomenon, it cannot be dissociated from what Eyles (1985) referred to as 'ones-place-in-the world'. The internal experience of place and the external participation in the material world and political society are dialectically fused (cf. Pred 1983; Cosgrove 1978).

We have seen in chapter 5, that it was essentially due to external socio-economic factors that the people of the Haute Aspre deserted their 'place' in the early twentieth century. Similarly, we could not talk about that place today without acknowledging the influence of National and EEC agricultural and social policies. Small places are not an escape from the wider world, but a series of networks that are connected to it and in that way draw the wider world to it. As remarked by Dunne (1993), local places are not a set of prejudices and superficial assumptions; they are infinite. As with culture, place or sense of place cannot be found by itemizing or categorizing its parts, and neither can it be presented as a segment of experience concerning place alone, rather it must be

¹For critical comments on the treatment of place by the 'new humanistic' geographers, see Cosgrove (1978); Sayer (1979), Ley (1981b); Pred (1983); Paasi (1991).

related to the seamless totality of everyday life as lived².

Place is therefore a social construction, a human product, which as we have seen in the Aspre involves an appropriation and transformation of space and nature, that is inseparable from the reproduction and transformation of society and nature in time and space. But as Ley (1981a) reminds us, the relationship between people and place is a mutualistic one; "places in turn develop and reinforce the identity of the social group that claims them". As shall be apparent from what follows the environmental symbols of the Aspre are part of the groups boundary maintenance, whereby social identities and claims to space and time are defined and validated. Place, like identity, is not a static concept, rather the nature of places change over time as the society and the environment interact and co-evolve. The Aspre, especially the Haute Aspre, is a good example of a place in transition, moving away from its historical agrarian identity and struggling with the emerging new one. The landscape of the Aspre is precisely where these new meaning structures are being built.

Due to the fluidity of place and sense of place, emergent properties must be recognised; minor changes or chance phenomena can produce a fundamental rearrangement of a given place. In the Aspre we have seen how villages only a few kilometres apart, sharing a very similar physical and cultural environment, interacting with the same state apparatus and the same world economic system, each 'become' in somewhat different ways. A striking example being the success of the wine co-operative in Terrats, in a sector typified by economic difficulties; similarly the 'Calcine' hill overlooking the village of Llauro, has somehow acted as a magnet for retired ex-colonials, thus transforming the spatial, political and social relations of the sleepy village of Llauro. In each place the agency and the external - internal dialectic of specific individuals, locations and circumstances has had its say. In each case the unavoidable distinction

²The lived experience is what Buttimer (1976) referred to as the 'life world', Ingold (1993) and Heidigger (1971) called it the 'Dwelling Perspective', Tuan (1974) coined the term 'Topophilia' to describe it, De Chardin (1959) used the term 'Noogenesis', and Jung (1970) referred to it as 'Anima Mundi'.

of local becoming is compounded either by micro-macro variations in either the physical, social or production system, guaranteeing that no two places are the same.

Much goes into the 'making' of place, but the sense of place becomes manifest at the level of the individual; and is produced by an unique mixture of location, personality, history, culture, circumstances, ones place in the world and in the socio-economic order of things. However that personal sense of place can, as one of my informants who spent a short time at the other side of the Pyrenees discovered, be something as simple as having the Canigou in the 'right' position. *"I felt completely disoriented there, I did not feel at home. It was weird to see the sun rising from behind the Canigou"* (QQ).

Relph (1976) argued that one must be 'inside' a place to fully grasp its meaning. He went on to describe three forms of 'insiderness';- the 'behavioural, emphatic and existential, - which we shall refer to in the following interpretation of place and sense of place in the Aspre. The precise relationship between mind, society and environment, in creating and sustaining place cannot be stated as a general theory, rather it must be worked out in concrete studies of real places, people and landscapes. Like the phenomenon of land degradation it does not exist 'a priori'. Throughout the thesis we have implicately been talking about aspects of place in relation to the Aspre; chapter 3 outlined its geographical environment, chapters 4 & 5 its historical socio-natural environment, chapter 6 was concerned with its agricultural agenda, and chapter 7 revealed its social environment. Within this chapter we aim to complete the portrait of place in the Aspre by drawing on both the preceding knowledge and the field work in the interpretation of the multiple perceptions the present day inhabitants of the Aspre hold of the physical environment that surrounds them, and the meaning they are drawing from it. It is here that we get to the root of perceptions of land degradation in the Aspre.

It is in the landscape that nature and culture fuse. Some writers refer to the landscape as a 'cultural image', or the projection of human internal symbolism and order onto their surroundings (cf. Daniel & Cosgrove 1988; Tuan 1979). We do not deny the

symbolic aspects of the cultural landscape, but it would be wrong to imply that the physical environment is a 'tabula rasa' onto which society draws its design. As argued in chapter 1, the natural environment is not passive, which does not preclude societies attempts to 'decorate' it, but one must not forget that the 'decor' is alive. The mutualistic and intersubjective relationship between environment and society remains. In terms of people's perception of their world, separating the 'natural' from the 'social' is therefore an intellectual device rather than an objective distinction³. As eloquently captured in the extract from Berry's, 'Unsettling of America', through dwelling in the landscape it becomes part of us just as we are part of it.

8.2 Environmental Perceptions and 'Pledges of Consensus' in the Aspre.

Due to the physical and socio-cultural variety contained within the boundary of the Aspre, it is not possible to talk about some unified anthropocentric perception of that environment; they are multiple and frequently contradictory. Neither would it be valuable to simply describe the response of the seventy people interviewed. There are commonalities and issues that transcend the necessarily individual, private world view and perceptual experience, and it is those broad categories, which generally corresponds with the social categories outlined in the previous chapter, that we are interested in. We have tried to resist segmentation and polarization, but inevitably the perceptual division between the Haute and Basse Aspre, insiders and outsiders, emerge or fall out of the field work. In what follows particular attention will be paid to the Haute Aspre, because it represents an environment and society in transition and thus the perceptual pickings are particularly illuminating there.

8.2.1 Perceptual Engagement of the Indigenous Population with the Environment of the Haute Aspre.

The relationships between the people and the environment of the Aspre is relative to the purpose they imbue it with, and our historical discussion indicates that that purpose has

³For a discussion of this long standing debate, see, for example Ingold (1986); Latour (1993); Strathern (1992); Croll & Parkin (1992); MacCormach & Strathern (1980).

changed over time. The traditional human relationship with the environment of the Haute Aspre was mediated via agriculture, and thus its production capacity was linked with a way of life, providing both a livelihood and dwelling place. When the production capacity of the land was no longer sufficient to make a 'viable' living from, its people maintain they had no choice but to abandon it. *"Ils ont vendu la terre en haut parce que ça ne leur servent plus"* (R). Today the soil of the Haute Aspre symbolises a link with the past and the ancestors; but images of 'bondage, 'slavery' and 'misery' are equally prevalent. *"To work that land one has to be a slave, and even at that it does not provide one with enough to live from "* (P).

Nowadays working that land is frowned upon, it is considered degrading to be a peasant or small farmer in the 'arrière pays'. A Catalan, 'Jeune Agriculture' who moved into one of the villages of the Haute Aspre with his herd of sheep described his reception as follows; - *"They can't understand how somebody young like me could choose this profession, they think that I must be mad. They consider it degrading to be a peasant, they equate the land with misery and that phenomenon is very strong. They would prefer to die of hunger than work that land now"* (LL). Even though they express great nostalgia for their agrarian past, the remaining indigenous, generally elderly population are extremely hostile to anyone (local or foreign) who tries to work that land today. Many obstacles are put in their way and their efforts ridiculed; *"His plastic 'bergerie' will fall under the snow and give bronchitis to the sheep"* (AB). A neo-ruraux on a rented mas in Saint Marsal who tried to experiment with an underground peach and grass silage, found that the owner of the mas was promptly notified; he came out from Perpignan warning him that if he did not close the pit at once he would be evicted. Similarly the Mayor of the village came around, expressing concern about the possible 'pollution' risk.

The message is clear, 'leave things as they are agriculture is finished here, let the land hibernate in peace until needed again'. Those who try to break the secret pledge of consensus, 'l'esprit du cloche', by returning to work the land, kindling a possible sense of shame or guilt are deemed mad ('dérangé') and dismissed as hippies and dreamers

who will eventually fail and move on. Once more the operative words are time and patience. 'Rente' and land speculation are all that are left, sell it to the highest bidder. *"To work and care for the land it must give one a living, it must be useful and that's what's missing now" (Y). "If one cannot live from the land they are obliged to sell it" (BB).* Thus for the indigenous inhabitants of the Haute Aspre the environment has effectively moved from being a worked agrarian landscape, 'un utile de travail' to 'un instrument de rente', whereby its usefulness is now defined in terms of land speculation. Tied to its new 'function', the field work provides one with the distinct impression that they would prefer to see the land in the hands of the tourists, who represent the fulfilment of their prediction, rather than having to watch the pitiable efforts of the 'dreamers', i.e the Neo-Ruraux. *"People are not interested in maintaining the environment of the Haute Aspre, because they gain nothing from it, it is no longer seen to serve a purpose. Everybody is selfish, why maintain a functionless environment?" (P)*

Above is the logical explanation, then the schizophrenia sets in. Now that they have severed the chains of bondage, the umbilical cord that tied them to this 'rude' landscape, one would expect then to be liberated and triumphant, but instead what the field work unearths is the nostalgia and rootlessness of an evicted, itinerant people. As highlighted in the previous chapter, one of the most striking characteristic of the remaining indigenous population of the Haute Aspre is nostalgia for the past, where they are obviously seeking refuge from the present and an uncertain future. *"When my Uncle looks at the scrub (la brousse) that surrounds us, every inch of which was once cultivated by himself and his family, he is really sad and depressed. He lives completely in the past" (CC).* Typically the same Uncle would not give his neo-ruraux nice a written lease on that scrub, incase he got an irresistible sales offer. These are closed and suspicious mountain villages, early on I learnt that the present was barred from conversation, but that it was almost therapeutic for them to have somebody interested and prepared to listen to them talk about the past. Alas, as Cohen (1995) reminds us, history is wonderfully malleable, whether in the hands of academic historians or of laymen. Surely they have not forgotten how difficult it was to eke out

a living from those acid rocks and thin arid soil, which they frequently had to complement with gruelling outside work? One old man proudly described his weakly trek to the iron ore mine in La Bastide; "*where we were half submerged in water and had only a crow bar to work with*", with a glint of the good old days in his eyes, obviously heightened by nostalgia.

On logical socio-economic grounds this land was condemned, but the jury overlooked the fact that the production capacity of the land was synonymous with its character as a 'homeland'. Their life history and that of their predecessors was as embedded in that landscape as the rocks and trees. To sever the links that bind any people to their environment is to cut them off from the historical past that has made them who they are. As stated by Ingold (1993), "enfolded within persons are the histories of their environmental relations; enfolded within the environment are the histories of the activities of persons". When the indigenous population of the Haute Aspre severed their ties with their agrarian past they unwittingly lost a large part of their own identity, and purpose in life, marking the point of a disrupted evolution. They shifted from being participants in its daily and seasonal rhythms to evicted spectators, ideally standing by watching the landscape they had constructed crumbling around them; "*Before everywhere was cultivated, the landscape has changed. The lovely terraces are disappearing, sometimes I can't even recognise the outline of the old fields*" (MM). It is the closing in or overgrowth of the previously intensely cultivated hillsides, coupled with depopulation⁴ that they perceive as degradation, rather than some physical measure of soil loss or diminishing production capacity.

One must not forget it was the people, not the land who gave up the struggle here. All their lives the environment was something more or less taken for granted in the daily struggle for existence. Social needs, natural reality, meanings and purpose in life were all un-selfconsciously blended together in the seamless web of the lived landscape and

⁴Whenever I used the word 'desertification', it was automatically interpreted in demographic rather than physical terms. Demography and the order of the physical environment were always closely linked in the Aspre.

reflected in the 'portrait' of the social community. Individuals need not be aware of the world of meanings in their everyday lives, because it is through the practice of their lives that the continued existence of those meanings are ensured (Cohen 1982). Using Relph's (1976) classification the indigenous population of the Aspre were the 'existential insiders', the most fundamental form of insider, by which a place is experienced without deliberation and self-conscious reflection, and is yet full of significance. In short it was their taken for granted homeland.

It was only when the place changed, when culture and agriculture were split apart, that they became aware of it, because it is at that point that one consciously begins to adapt. All of a sudden the un self-conscious mutualism was gone, where were they going to get their sense of place and of self from now that they were severed from their task master? On ecological grounds it would appear that the environment of the Haute Aspre is improving, when humans retreat the forest, the metronome of this society, advances binding the soil and acting as a watershed, fire being the greatest short term risk. But, they are used to seeing the other 'paysage', within which they dwelt and worked and it is the visual impact within living memory that shocks, and is designated as 'degraded' - wasted potential. This perception of degradation is in keeping with the research findings of Green & Lemon (1995), whose work on environmental perception in Epirus, north-western Greece, found that reforestation and overgrowth in this mountainous region formally associated with pastoralism, is perceived by the local population to represent 'decay' and 'degradation'.

Not only was the landscape of the Aspre testimony to the indigenous populations lives work, but the entwined changing social and physical landscape mirrored the intransigence of their own lives. The external physical environment plays an important role in building and supporting ones image of time (cf. Lynch 1972). The changing environmental symbols in the landscape of the Aspre reinforce the social stress of transformation. A heightened sense of tradition and wanting a familiar past is a widespread response to such stress (cf. Siegel 1970; Rowntree 1980). The fact that the Poles rebuilt central Warsaw after World War One to replicate the Medieval city,

illustrates this point; as does the twentieth century growth in the English Heritage 'industry'. So too in the Aspre, as the sands of change are shifting under their feet the indigenous population want an anchorage point in the landscape, something familiar and predictable, like the prairies, the green oak tree, the 'potager', the goat, mountain springs and 'the lovely terraces'. It is forgotten that the terraces and prairies were 'artificial' in the first place. What they perceive as degradation today is really lack of maintenance, which in effect was a transfer of their order and identity onto the landscape. The nostalgia they express for the past is not really for the environment, one is frequently told how; "*la nature reprend toujours ces droits*" (nature can take care of itself); rather it is the loss of their own identity and way of life, which was more tied up with that landscape than they care to admit. They were the sculptors whose lives were spent chipping away at a self portrait; when the chisel was removed from them and the hard cold rock (or rather the forest) mockingly reemerged, they were left with the frustration of a job unfinished, the losers in the battle for order, coupled with the indignation of watching strangers encroaching on their territory, remoulding their work of art. A stark reminder that the landscape and the society linked to it are perpetually under construction. Or as Lowith (1966) concluded, with changes in our understanding of the world goes a change in our understanding of ourselves, of the 'human condition', the 'nature of man'.

Just as nature abhors a vacuum, the human observer abhors the randomness and chaos of a 'wild' and 'functionless' environment. Without the imprint of the human hand the interior of the Haute Aspre is perceived by the indigenous population as having gone 'wild'. It is depicted as a sort of monster lying in wait for the Basse Aspre, to whom every so often it sends down rumbling signals of its state of readiness. The lowland floods and the sweeping away of the bridge in Fourques in the Spring of my field work was attributed to upland disorder. In short the 'friche' of the Haute Aspre is perceived by the 'insiders' as not only an environment out of control, but it also symbolises anthropogenic failure, a devitalized and depopulated place. Throughout France the 'friche' stands as an antidote to culture and progress in both economic and aesthetic terms, as Luginbuhl (1989) put it, it is synonymous with 'shame on the Nation'. Such

an anti-social, marginal landscape could only be the homeland of 'marginals'. Thus the self-perception of social marginalization outlined in the previous chapter is reinforced by the 'friche' landscape of the Haute Aspre. The older population that once fashioned and worked it, want to hold on to the belief that they are the only ones capable of enduring and taming their 'cantankerous child', and take pride in the fact that they even managed to steal a living from it⁵.

The tourists do not challenge the above consensus, but the neo-ruraux are considered to be meddling in things best left alone, thus the defensive ridicule. The 'insiders' bemoan the fact that the foreigners own over half the land of the Haute Aspre, but at the same time one is given the impression that it was they who tricked the Belgians. *"People are not eternal, 90% of the good land in the Department still belongs to locals"* (U). For them the land was not perceived as a commodity, the foreigners could not take it with them, it was only waste land, besides they believed they would not be able to survive for long in this harsh environment ("ils ne tiennent pas le cou"), in time they will realise their mistake and either be assimilated or move on like all the invaders before them. *"There is no future for either agriculture or tourism in the 'arrière pays', there is nothing to do there, eventually they all move on"* (EE).

The sale of the 'non-functional' land once more highlights the importance of the production criteria of the worked landscape, but there is another factor at play here. The commercialization of the soil is something new to them, they cannot really understand how the foreigners could own it. As outlined in chapter 4, it was the common property laws, 'La loi Strate', which traditionally secured the livelihood of the majority of the inhabitants of the Haute Aspre, and guaranteed that communal access and usage rights remained with the village. In these mountain villages there is still the confused belief that the land and the houses around the village always belong to the village. Unlike on the plain the concept of individual land ownership is relatively new

⁵The sense of pride in being able to survive in a harsh and difficult environment was also highlighted by Saarinen's (1966) work on the environmental perceptions of the farmers of the American Great Plains.

here. Even when they sell the land to outsiders they still consider it theirs, and one frequently hears of the former owners or their children regularly going back to inspect it. A sad mis-comprehension between the traditional and the modern. The 'insiders' are now dismay to find that the foreigners are altering the lay of the land by erecting fences and private property signs, putting locks on gates barring the communal rights of way, access to water sources and hunting rights⁶.

The physical environmental symbols of possession not only highlight the difference between North and South property owners, but as with the involvement in local politics in the previous chapter, they challenge the 'insiders' assumption that the 'outsiders' are only passing through. In the South physical barriers delineating space and ownership are not appreciated, besides communal access and grazing rights existed until recent times⁷. *By law some of those paths are automatically public, if used for more than thirty years. We must not allow them to walk all over us, we must fight for our rights" (AB)*. In the Aspre and in the South in general, the spatial barriers are far more subtle and intimate, the placement of a stone or a bamboo stick could be full of significance. For example, fences are never placed around vineyards, but everyone knows that once the first fruits appear on the vines they are firmly closed to man and beast until after the harvest. After the harvest one is free to pick the remaining resins, known as 'les souvenirs', unless the owner places a bamboo stick at the entrance to the field, signifying that he or she wants the resins for their own wine. The symbolism of the 'fence' is recurrently associated with the 'outsiders', and the electronic fences guarding the residence of many of the newcomers is seen as a continuation of the social boundaries reflected in the rearrangement of place and the redrawing of the landscape.

Neither society or the environment can stand still, all landscapes are but moments in

⁶The strong hunting clubs of the Aspre take great delight in cutting those fences. There are several on going legal disputes over land, water and access rights in the supposed wasteland of the Haute Aspre.

⁷For a discussion on the difference in structure between Northern and Mediterranean agrarian landscapes, refer to Dion (1992) and Bloch (1966).

human-ecological history. As Heraclitus observed, *"you cannot step twice into the same river for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you"* (cited in Lowenthal 1961). Neither does anybody look at the river again in the same way, not only because reality changes, but human preoccupations vary. The remaining indigenous population of the Haute Aspre are caught up in a transition they don't really understand, they no longer feel on solid ground, all the old land marks are changing. As with social change, the way the older generation cope with the changing landscape is once more a form of passive acceptance, and a reversal to nostalgia. They accept the inevitability of the present situation, after all they brought it on themselves, and would still today encourage the young to look for a better life in urban areas. When they had to choose between survival, 'progress' and sentiment, there was never any serious doubt as to what they should do, even if they have to suffer for their sanity today. John Berger (1979), reminds us that the overwhelming characteristic of 'peasants' world wide is their ability to survive, they can't afford to be left behind in one of the worlds backwaters.

In summary, the indigenous population of the Haute Aspre traditionally did not distinguish between the productive capacity of their land and its character as 'homeland'. Logic tells them they were right to abandon and sell their 'non functional' land to the highest bidder, but the unconscious, their irksome rootlessness and the emerging alien symbols in the landscape and society, hints at the fact that they might have committed a crime. Their conspiracy to cover up their crimes of consciousness is being hampered by 'skeletons' in the form of the neo-ruraux, emerging from the cupboards. In the final analysis their environmental perception is far more than functional. In defining their environment they were in effect co-defining themselves. The seeds of a changing social identity (bourgeois aspirations), provoked the present changing environmental identity, whose feedback is once more provoking a renewed changing social identity and sense of place. It is within the context of this socio-natural web that their perceptions of land degradation must be placed.

8.2.2 The Perceptual Engagement of the Neo-Ruraux with the Land of the Haute Aspre.

The neo-ruraux, especially those who originate from the Aspre, fiercely resist both the agricultural and demographic abandonment of the of the Haute Aspre. As argued in chapter seven, the very act of remaining in these communities is in itself an important expression of their commitment. They share the indigenous population's sentiment that degradation is about de-population and the overgrowth of the previously cultivated hillsides, and not the creeping soil loss and gaping ravines that the experts make such a fuss about. The present, anaesthetic induced deep sleep that is blanketing the whole region is perceived as far more 'unnatural' than the former 'natural' wear and tear of the environment. They talk about the absolute necessity of maintaining an active presence - 'un tissue social vivant' - in the 'arrière pays'. *"It is utopian to want to live like our grand parents, to survive one must adapt but guarding our identity. We must not sell ourselves completely to Brussels and tourism. We must battle against the life of a caged animal, to be stared at by the tourists, definitely not. One must live here"* (CC).

The neo-ruraux openly recognise the connection between production, identity and dwelling. Their vision of maintaining their adopted or inherited homeland is invariably linked to the old relationship with the environment, agricultural and artisan production with perhaps a little tourism as a complement, (which none of them happen to be involved in). In effect their objective is to put culture and agriculture back together again. However the environmental relations of the neo-ruraux are not just about imitating the perceived agrarian subsistence of the past, some of its members today are more like entrepreneurs, but neither are they driven solely by the economic returns of the wine growers, above all else the environment for them signifies a quality of life, lived close to nature and in the case of the Catalan neo-ruraux to their ancestral heritage. They tend to philosophise a lot about the environment and speak as if they were very environmentally conscious. But, in the fulfilment of their daily lives their environmental behaviour is very similar to that of the locals, centred around finding grazing for their animals and a market for their produce. They too throw their dead

(biodegradable) sheep into the ravines, and try to get away with the minimum 'gardien de l'environnement' work. Like their mentors, the neo-ruraux who manage to survive in the Aspre for the most part end up with a functional lived relationship with the environment, as is apparent from chapter six, it is something they take care of 'unknowingly'.

In keeping with the indigenous population, the 'neo-ruraux' also believe that dwelling is tantamount to production and here in lies the philosophical difficulty of both groups with the 'gardien de l'environnement' scheme which directly contradicts both their own self image and that of the worked environment (refer to chapter 6). As one Catalan neo-ruraux put it: *"Farmers want to live from the force of their work and not be assisted to maintain the landscape for the tourists"* (CC). Consequently the agro-environmental policies are seen to be creating an environment for the tourists and not the local population, who cannot identify with the 'frozen', sterile, decor it aims to produce or conserve. Furthermore, the separation of the workers from the means of production reduces them to wage-labourers. *"The farmers will never accept to become 'fonctionnaires' of the EEC, they want to be their own bosses and not EEC labourers"* (NN). Within a Marxist perspective this could be interpreted as Capitalists interests governing the appropriation of nature. As remarked by Sayer (1980), there is a necessary relation between the form of the appropriation of nature and the social relations of production. The removal of the means of production shifts dwelling from a process of 'incorporation' in the landscape to that of 'inscription'. This transition demands major perceptual readjustment with profound human environmental consequences. Contrary to what one hears in the academic circles, - *"The provision of a service is the same as the production of a product"* (Y), - for those involved in the transition it is far more painful and complex than that. However unlike the indigenous population, who no longer see an agricultural future for the 'arrière pays', the neo-ruraux are far more prepared to go along with agro-environmental initiatives, because in their commitment to maintaining an active presence in the landscape they believe they can find ways to turn such schemes to their advantage.

In spite of appearances, in the final analysis the neo-ruraux relationship with and perception of the land and landscape of the Aspre is fundamentally different to that of the former indigenous population. Theirs is not an 'existential', un-selfconscious relationship with place; they made a conscious, deliberate decision to live in some way connected with the land of the Aspre. They have experienced the 'outside' world and were presented with a choice, for the most part the indigenous population were not. Using Relph's (1976) classification, the neo-ruraux correspond to the 'emphatic insiders', that is, those who display a willingness to be open to the significance of place and respect its symbols, but it is not the taken for granted commitment of the 'existential insiders'. Theirs is goal orientated, and besides their aspirations are now out of step with the one time 'existential insiders'.

8.2.3 Perceptual Engagement Between the People and the Land of the Basse Aspre.

The perception of the environment as a unit of production, which provides one with the means to make a viable living, is dominant among the viticulteurs of the Basse Aspre. Here economics strongly colour their relationship with the environment, in effect it is the link between the productive capacity of the land and its nature as a 'homeland'. There may be differences in opinion regarding the merits of bulldozed or stone built terraces, but they unanimously agree that a hectare of vines on the side of a mountain is more pleasing to the eye than a hectare of garrigue, which is equated with waste and poor land management. Order and production are invariably seen in positive terms, the 'friche' is negative, disharmonious and threatening. The uprooted vines are referred to as eye sores, leaving 'holes' in the vineyard symmetry. The reason one Vigneron gave for renting rather than uprooting her vines on retirement was because she could not "*bare to live in the middle of a wilderness,*" (AA). Nature without the mark of the human hand is no more socially acceptable here than in the Haute Aspre.

The tool of mechanization acts as an intermediary between the wine growers economic aspirations and the worked environment. Technical expertise, such as bulldozed terraces without support walls or a drainage system are not considered an erosion

hazard by those who participate in the practice, due to 'le savoir faire'. Erosion is seen to be caused by those 'mis-informed'. The same people may express great concern about the long term effects of using chemical sprays or herbicides. On the whole the viticulteurs tend to use technology and economics as a means of justifying their own actions. The majority of farmers spoken to would readily admit that bulldozed terraces on mountain slopes are an erosion risk; stone built terraces may be preferable but they are no longer 'practical', because of the required investment in time, labour and money. Similarly many believe that the herbicides and insecticides they use are 'poisons' with unknown long term affects on the soil and vines, but they invariably justify their use on economic grounds. They perceive themselves as caught up in short term thinking, and in this harsh economic climate anything they do to the environment is justified on economic terms⁸.

"I will do whatever is necessary to survive economically in the present, realizing that the long term consequences may not be good" (G).

"People here are not too sensitive to the environment, one cannot live from that" (S).

Or as one environmentally sensitive farm labourer remarked;

"Now they flatten everything, including drains with bulldozers They use no terracing and the whole thing quickly erodes and gullies. They say they have no time to rectify it, actually they couldn't give a damn. They say it does not affect the vines because they are 'costaud' " (J).

The results from the EEC MEDALUS (1993) research programme on desertification and land degradation in the Mediterranean, indicate that there is severe soil erosion in the vineyards of the Basse Aspre. But the viticulteurs do not perceive physical erosion

⁸Work on environmental perception in the Argolid Valley, an intensive citrus growing area in the north-east of Greece, exposed a similar perception of the land as a 'production unit', in this case buttressed by high dependency on irrigation technology to manage and alter the course of nature in order to maintain an economic income for its farmers (Lemon 1994; Green & Lemon 1985).

as a problem in their vineyards. *"There is no problem with the environment here, perhaps on the coast yes with all those ugly buildings. I see no change in the condition of the soil over the years, if anything it has improved. I use herbicides on the vines, but water infiltrates in the ploughed zones between the furrows, the herbicides have no apparent impact, but in the long term who knows!"* (R). As argued in chapter six the farmers of the Aspre mistrust the opinion of the experts, and hold a particular dislike of the ecologists. They like to think of themselves as the poets of the landscape who take care of it unknowingly; *"like the Gentilhomme who was speaking in prose without knowing it"* (WW). They resent the outside urban experts with their abstract environmental theories, but no practical experience, analysing their environment and telling them how to conduct their affairs. They are invariably depicted as 'townies', a mixture of a nuisance and comical figures, with the ecologists frequently believed to hold hidden political agendas:

"The ecologists are comical. They are townies who never cultivated a head of lettuce in their lives, what do they know, how could they give advice to farmers who are in close daily contact with nature and know it best?" (U).

" They are urban people with nice sounding phrases in their mouth, but they don't really understand the countryside" (AA).

They are linked with idealism and are commonly perceived as against farming, - 'a marche arrière'; *"Without fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides we would have no harvest and then how would we live"* (R).

Accompanying the mechanization and modernization of wine growing in the Basse Aspre has been a general speed up of time, which in turn has had a direct impact on human-environmental relations. One is frequently told stories about before during slack periods ravines were filled in, river banks cleaned, terraces and drainage systems repaired, cork removed from the cork oak trees and controlled burning of the forest carried out; but in these harsh economic times it is not possible to waste time or energy

on such care of the environment. Accompanying the monoculture of vines appears to be a corresponding simplification of environmental relations, which become reduced to 'economic monoculture'. *"Monoculture is an economic necessity, but it has an adverse affect on the environment. Now the environment is only a unit of production, there is no maintenance like before"* (D).

In the past they argue one could live from 5 ha of vines and one had plenty of labour and time for the above maintenance work. Now one needs a minimum of 25 ha to survive and both time and labour are scarce. But, this is not the full story, judging from the amount of time they spend gossiping around the village square they still have time and there are slack periods, but they would not dream of manually doing the above environmental maintenance work. Working by hand is frowned upon, it is seen as yet another 'marche arrière'; *"The future is with the machine, men are tired of physical work and avoid it if possible"* (S). However, the mechanical maintenance of the environment is frequently inappropriate in this topography and costs a lot more than the cheap labour of the past. There is another factor in the equation, the value system has changed. Before society looked badly on poorly kept vineyards and falling terraces. The societal pressures exerted on 'lazy farmers' was linked to a concept of the worked environment as patrimony, to be handed on intact to the next generation. Today the patrimony of the past is replaced by an image of the environment solely as a unit of production, which is what allows them and their families to live here in the immediate present. Time and money spent as caretakers of the environment is placed on the deficit side of the equation, it carries no immediate rewards and the future of agriculture is too uncertain to invest in.

It would be misleading to project an image of some harmonious, traditional management of the environment in the past, now disrupted by economics and industrial modernity. The preceding chapters on the historical human-ecological relationships in operation in the Aspre dispels any such sentiment. However, the mechanical power to alter the physical environment and buttress it in artificial ways has greatly increased in recent times, bringing with it the illusion of 'control' and 'separateness'. Today the

environment of the Basse Aspre is perceived as more or less under control, (except for the inevitable climatic variations eg. frost, or new diseases in vines), it is the economic environment that is seen to be out of control. It is due to economic factors rather than environmental physical parameters that the viticulteurs of the Basse Aspre believe that their environment will 'inevitably' become like the Haute Aspre, 'en friche'. With this sentence hanging over them, they are driven to reap the maximum from that soil in the shortest possible time. As in the Argolid study (cf. Lemon 1994) the viticulteurs of the Basse Aspre are dependent on science and technology to buttress the economic viability of their production system. But they are not naive to the possible long term consequences of their actions, they are simply put on the 'long finger'. This does not take from the fact that the viticulteurs are also sentimentally attached to their vineyards, and one frequently hears them admiring a well kept vineyard or a good harvest (see chapter 6). The wine growers know that the secret of being able to live 'Chez Nous', lies in economic viability and not what they perceive as the sentimental, folklore agriculture of the neo-ruraux. They consider it illogical that one should work the poor land of the Haute Aspre while there is more fertile soil idle on the plain. However, we have seen in chapter 6, that when the tables are turned on them so to speak, and their 'place' is threatened by the 'friche', reflected in EEC subsidies for uprooting vines, they too react in an emotional and psychological way. Nevertheless the concept of environmental aesthetics, the designer orientation of a detached appreciation of various aspects of the environment is as alien to them as to their cousins in the Haute Aspre.

8.2.4 Outsiders Perceptual Engagement with the Aspre Environment.

In contrast to the indigenous functional and hidden emotional perception of the natural environment of the Aspre, the rich outsiders are not interested in its tangible products, they hold what is most aptly described as an aesthetic appreciation of this landscape. For them the natural environment of the Aspre essentially constitute a backcloth against which they live their lives, retirement or holidays, and thus the landscape of the Aspre is renegotiated to a form of decorum. The indigenous population may perceive the regenerating forest of the Haute Aspre as degradation, but the rich outsiders, who are generally of urban origin, perceive it as exotic decor, and to the annoyance of the

foresters like to build their villas amongst it. The contrast in rural - urban mind sets which permeate the human relations of the Aspre is no where more manifest than in their respective perception of the environment. For the outsiders who made a conscious decision to live in the Aspre for at least part of the year, the environment signifies space, tranquillity, warm climate, 'beau paysage', rural ambience, proximity to the mountains, the coast, Spain and the motorway. It forms a combination of a pleasant background and a launching pad to other desirable environs and places. Access is important and the fact that the 'place' is only a quarter of an hour from the motorway was frequently commented on. These are a mobile cosmopolitan people, with anchorage points in a number of different places, and many of them maintain a second residence in the Northern cities they come from. One gets the impression that for them the Aspre is not so much a place as part of a network. It was due to a combination of catalogues, chance and a process of elimination that they find themselves there. One couple admitted that the reason they are in the Aspre is because at the time they could not afford the Cote d'Azur.

They neither have nor need an intimate working knowledge of the local environment. The locals are often shocked by their naivety of things they take for granted, like knowing which mushrooms to pick, or not building a house in the flood plain or in the path of the tramontane. *"Holiday home owners have a different concept of the environment. They do stupid things like putting cement over the rare fertile soil of the Aspre, or constructing lawns and swimming pools even though there is a water shortage here"* (A).

They bring with them an urban order, translated into such things as putting a refuse collection system in place, cleaning up the appearance of the villages, moving agricultural installations outside the village, ostensibly for hygiene purposes, widening and tarmacking roads, improving services such as telecommunication and water pressure (for swimming pools and gardens). One woman summed up the local sentiment when she declared; *"A lot of the outsiders who come here want both the advantages of the country and the city without the inconveniences"* (AB). They are

mapping the perceived advantages of the urban life they have temporarily left on to what they perceive as the advantages of country life. By so doing they too are clinging to a familiar past, the thought of burying their tin cans in the back garden (the traditional solution), is perceived as primitive and absurd. Because they are so mobile their definition of space is different to that of the locals. They do not need the local services, such as shops, pharmacies and banks. They prefer the choice, variety and competitive prices offered in Perpignan, thirty to forty minutes away. Many of them by passing the local bakery in Fourques every morning to buy their bread in a supermarket in Thuir, a town approximately ten kilometres away. For the majority of the rich outsiders the environment of the Aspre represents a residential and leisure zone.

In the village where I lived, there were several attempts made to remove the one remaining 'bergerie' (sheepfold) from the middle of the village, on the 'logical' grounds that it was a health hazard and attracting flies. Logic and nature are once more employed to dominate the 'other'. Interestingly the most adamant campaigners were not even living in the village, but in 'fortresses' in the surrounding wooded hills. As previously commented on their urban obsession with hygiene and security is striking and invariably gets mapped onto the landscape. Their villas are frequently guarded by close circuit cameras, electronic 'fences' and guard dogs, in contrast to the village houses which up until recently did not lock their doors at night. They appear insecure in their new 'homeland', and one can't help feeling that many of the ex-colonials brought the 'fear of Africa' with them. One evening the teenage daughter of one of the Calcina dwellers, was found hysterical in the village of Llauro, she had missed the school bus and was afraid to walk the one kilometre to her home in the 'Calcina', because night was falling and her own dogs would be loose.

These are the new definers of space, and they want the stage set cleared and a new one constructed before the next act can begin. There is a latent tension between action and inaction, one trying to hold the work men back and the other pushing them forward; epitomised in the statement, "*Si les chose sont laissent aux gens du village rien bouge*" (II). The new inhabitants do not acknowledge that the locals created and are part of the

present order, and see no need to change it. For the native dweller the landscape tells a story that the newcomer cannot read, for them that landscape is too heavily pregnant with the past to interfere with. Alter their landscape and you will alter themselves and the saga of their life history; proof of which is the bewildering alienation of the remaining indigenous population in the Haute Aspre, who find themselves surrounded by an alien landscape of 'friche' and 'fences'. The rich outsiders also perceive the 'friche' as anti-aesthetic. As many landscape studies have shown, a socially acceptable 'beau paysage' is a harmonious cultivated paysage of vineyards, prairies with grazing sheep or even forest, but not the dull brown colours of abandoned scrubland (cf. Luginbuhl 1989; Vincent 1979; Fottorino 1989). The 'gardien de l'environnement' scheme in effect means that the marginals of the Haute Aspre are paid to keep the visual 'marginality' of the landscape in check, in order to conform to the aesthetic values of those new residents rich enough to afford to visit or live there.

Whereas the former environmental relationship of the indigenous population with their environment (and which the neo-ruraux are trying to imitate) was that of embodiment and incorporation, in general that of the rich outsiders is one of inscription, the designer perspective, by which they see themselves as separate from nature, in a position to control and manipulate it in the delivery of their designer aesthetic decor. Granted the former peasants also tried to control and manipulate the environment in the delivery of their produce, but there is a difference they were a part of the landscape and directly affected by its 'feedbacks', such as climatic extremes or failed harvests. The new residential population perceive themselves as 'buffered' from its rhythms, and thus their interaction with the environment is to a large extent self-referentially constituted. They represent what Relph (1976) referred to as the 'Behavioural Insiders', concerned largely with the visual and other sensual stimuli afforded by physical settings. It is for these reasons the telephone and electricity wires in many of the villages of the Haute Aspre, are being put under ground with the help of EEC aid. At a more personal level this point was forcefully brought home, when one of the newcomers informed me about his annoyance over the belfry in the tenth century church in Tordères, which had only one bell instead of the prescribed two. He went to see the Mayor and offered to pay for

a 'wooden' imitation bell just to put things 'in order'. The missing bell was actually taken by the Spanish during their 1789 invasion, and smelted down to make cannon balls. Of course that history and its symbolic significance did not mean anything to him. However the Mayor succeeded in placating his desire for order by explaining to him that a missing bell is a sacred tradition in all the churches of the Aspre. Although obviously not true, the newcomer was satisfied because for him the saga of the missing bell was elevated to the lofty heights of heritage. George Orwell's (1949) remark that, "he who controls the present controls the past", comes to mind. The newcomers quest for meaning is at least partly focused in the past and thus the attraction of the historical landscape of the Aspre, its bells and terraces. But theirs is a selective adoption of that history, the fly infested 'bergerie' must be sanitized. Consideration of the meaning of a landscape demands consideration of the history of that landscape. Knowledge and personal experience of that history is also important when it comes to perceptions of environmental hazards.

8.3 The Perception of Environment as Hazard.

There is an influential tradition in hazard research, much influenced by the work of such people as Kates (1971), White (1974), Burton (1979), Hewitt (1970), which invoked purposeful rationality as the peculiar optic through which individuals and social behaviour are brought into focus. Individual behaviour is seen as boundedly rational, in which human agents circumscribed by imperfect knowledge perceive and act upon the world. Faulty perceptions and irrational behaviour were given analytical priority in the explanation of ineffective hazard response. The implication always seems to be that disaster occurs because of the chance occurrence of 'unscheduled' natural extremes. The disaster itself being attributed to nature and the impact was on an unprepared social milieu, perpetuating the equilibrium centred view of controlled nature (cf. Watts 1983). If we believe nature is manageable, it will appear to be so. Within this highly rational and technological orientation to hazards only improved knowledge of when natural extremes occur and the chipping away at the degrees of uncertainty, are offered as a rational solution. Kewitt (1983), provides a good critique of this 'dominant view', the end result being that "hazards are not viewed as an integral

part of the spectrum of man-environment relations, or as directly dependent upon them".

What emerges from the pattern of natural hazard in the Aspre is that its current vulnerability can only be understood in the light of a socio-natural partnership, presently in transition. Part of that transition involves defining new social relations with the environment, and incorporating the arrival of a new 'outsider' population, with limited knowledge of the natural environment they now find themselves in. The natural hazards of the Aspre cannot be explained solely by calamitous natural events, the extremes of nature always formed part of the rhythms of the Aspre. The hazards of today, such as fire, floods and soil loss, result from the ongoing social order, the everyday relations to the habitat and the larger historical socio-natural circumstances that shape and frustrate these events. The 'normal' everyday life of places like the Aspre has changed dramatically within the last fifty years, as have perceptions of environmental risk and ways of coping with them.

We have seen how the viticulteurs in the Basse Aspre, do not perceive soil erosion as a problem in their vineyards, and thus contrary to the findings of the soil scientists it is not considered to constitute a risk. Soil loss is generally a hidden, gradual process with less immediate impact than episodes of fire or floods, and besides for the vine growers economic uncertainty overshadows all other risks. Due to this combination of factors the viticulteurs choose to 'turn a blind eye' to what they perceive as possible medium or long term environmental risks. Similarly, one is invariably told that the visual tears (ravines) in the pliocene landscape have 'always existed', due to the torrential rain of the Mediterranean, and far from being perceived as symbols of degradation or environmental risk they are seen to form a natural part of the landscape. What has always existed is not commented on.

The indigenous population of the Aspre are far less complacent about the hazards of fire and floods. The field work detects a noticeable difference in the attitude of locals and newcomers to these tangible environmental occurrences. Experience and memory

emerge as key factors in the perception of environmental risks in the Aspre, which is in keeping with general research findings in the hazard field (see Saarinen 1966; Sonnerfeld 1967; Taylor 1988; Lowenthal 1967; Heathcote 1969). Those who have experienced one of the big fires of the Aspre, the last being in 1976 when over 7,000 ha were burnt and some inhabitants had to be evacuated by helicopter, fear and respect its devastating potential. It is described in terms of the coming of the end of the world; *"A black cloud of ashes covered the Aspre and there was a smell of burning everywhere for days after"* (AA). The indigenous population are aware of the unpredictability of the Aspre environment, either from direct experience or from knowledge handed down from one generation to the next. The devastating flood of 1940 is fresh in their minds, even among those too young to have experienced it. *"The family house and all our savings were swept away in the flood of 1940. After that my mother could not cope and had to leave the place. They moved to Paris and that is where I was born and brought up"* (WW).

Traditionally the local population learnt how to 'water down' the natural forces of nature when possible (eg. terracing, coppicing, controlled burning etc), and endure them when impossible, (reconstruct their homes and fields). Today they make a strong connection between the perceived present environmental risks and the lack of maintenance of the environment in the Haute Aspre, resulting in the accumulation of the forest undergrowth, the blockage of the rivers and the crumbling of the terraces, which in turn pose a hazard for lower altitudes. In short the break down of their own order, the fact that this environment is said to have gone 'wild', is seen to exasperate the latent natural potential of the Aspre for destruction. That order is still maintained to a large extent in the vineyards of the Basse Aspre, and is thus not perceived to be an environment at risk, except from the economically induced encroaching 'friche', and the non maintenance of the Haute Aspre.

Some of the newcomers have also experienced the 'natural hazards' of the Aspre. A Belgian couple who arrived from Brussels on the day of the 1976 fire described a general state of fear and helplessness, combined with the following observation; *"All*

they had to fight the fire was a little fire engine of 200 litres, with a ding a ling bell, it was comical really. The fire came to our house from all sides, we think somebody deliberately set fire to the vineyards down the road, settling a feud or something. All the trees around here were burnt, but a few years after the cork and green oak regenerated. You would never think it had happened." (II). The belief that fire has only a temporary impact, which is fast covered up is a common perception among the new arrivals, in contrast to the more involved knowledge of those who work the land.

"Fire is a problem here and definitely degrades the vegetation. There is an obvious difference in the vegetation on the hillside that was burnt in 1976 and that which was not. Fire impoverishes the soil and removes the organic matter" (Y).

"If the forest is burnt more than twice, I notice it does not regenerate the third time, the soil becomes acid and the garrigue takes over" (T).

As a result of the fire of 1976, a fire prevention system, SIP (Secteur d'Intervention Prioritaire) was established in the Aspre. In effect it is a surveillance and early warning system, composed of the putting in place of fire breaks (upon which is grown the subterranean clover), access roads, water reservoirs, and a surveillance look out system that mobilises the fire fighters and if necessary the air power of the 'canadair'. The reaction to this system is very interesting, and displays an obvious difference of opinion between the locals who possess a natural scepticism and mistrust of outside technical solutions - *"essai technique sans consequence"* - and the newcomers technological receptivity. Both parties generally agree that the surveillance system is 'a good thing', but the newcomers also see it as a fire prevention system and tend to believe that the fire of 1976 (even among those who experienced it) could never again happen due to improved technology, the ding a ling bell is replaced by the hum of the aeroplane. *"Due to SIP intervention, fire is no longer a problem here. It is now under control" (HI).* This notion of control is a manifestation of what Holling (1994) referred to as, "a view of engineered nature", whereby the temporary disruption of 'stability', is perceived as an unexpected event, the causality lying with nature and the solution with

technological expertise, which restores 'normality'. The locals are far more cynical of technological prowess, and point out that if the tramontane is blowing at 120 km/h (as it always is when there is a fire), the fire would jump the fire breaks, and all the aeroplane and fire brigades would be completely ineffective once the fire takes hold. Its effectiveness is seen to be in quickly isolating fires, but if they take hold it is rendered ineffective. *"The forces of nature are far stronger than token human attempts of empty water cisterns and toy aeroplane"* (H). The only long term solution the locals see to the fire problem is once more to return to productive agriculture, which is perceived as automatically keeps the environment under control. By emphasising the lack of maintenance of the old order they are in effect connecting changing socio-economic conditions with environmental impacts. They may be aware of the connection but as previously noted, they are not going to do anything about it, because there is perceived to be no point in caring for an environment that gives nothing in return.

Changing socio-natural relations, perceptions of economic pressure, the naivety of the newcomers, combined with the separation of hazards from every day life and the reliance on technical fixes, has undermined the sense of personal responsibility towards the environment of the Aspre. A typical example being the difficulty of enforcing the Forestry Law (L 322-4 Code Forestiere), obliging all dispersed house owners in fire sensitive areas like the Aspre to clear the undergrowth in a radius of 50 meters around their houses. The local Mayors have great difficulty enforcing this law. If not voluntarily done the Mayor has the right to hire a contractor to do the work and send the bill to the house owner. The Mayor of Montauriol did just that one year, but alas he could not recuperate the money and the municipality ended up paying for the work. The reasons given for not doing it were; (a) the cost and (b) if mechanically done it is perceived as ugly and taking from the appearance of the house. The aesthetics take precedent over the fire risk, which in effect is seen to be 'under control'.

"A lot of the tourists did not experience the last big fire of 1976, and they have no fear of fire, they think they can just spray a little water on it. For example my cork oak plantation is only 35 meters from a holiday home, I put a lot of work into clearing the

undergrowth as a fire prevention. When I was finished the owner of the house came over complaining that what I did 'n'etait pas joli', and took from the appearance of his house. I was furious, the outsiders do not understand the environment here and have no fear of fire" (S).

It is not just the 'outsiders' who refused to clear the scrub around their houses, some insiders are equally complacent, or rather they claim to know the direction the fire always comes from and just clear that section. However, the majority of the 'insiders' live in villages, and the above law does not really apply to them. According to an official of the Forestry Department, the greatest risk to the environment of the Aspre is fire due to the dispersed habitation of the new population, with short environmental memories. *"With the arrival of holiday homes and dispersed habitation, the price of land went up as did the fire risk. The new inhabitants have short memories, they think fire is no longer a risk due to SIP, which is not true. For me the point of no return for the Aspre is when there will be secondary holiday homes dispersed throughout the forest" (UU).* The fire risk is a good example of the changes in the everyday mental and physical relations to the habitat. Traditionally habitation in the Aspre was grouped in villages or hamlets, except for the mas of the Haute Aspre, which lie above the major fire zone (100-300m). Not only does the dispersed habitation of today increase the fire risk, but it also means that if there is a fire most of the fire fighting effort goes into saving lives rather than containing the fire.

On the whole the rich 'outsiders' have a 'demand and supply' perception of the environment. These differences in the perception of the natural environment constitute yet another social boundary marker, reflected in the landscape. Along with the outsiders dispersed habitation and fences are the swimming pools, lawn sprinklers and exotic shrubs. Rapoport (1978), believed that complexity and ambiguity are necessary in human-environmental relations, and when those elements are lacking one tend to project their own meaning onto the landscape. Too much convenience may well contribute to ones alienation from a given environment, making it difficult to involve oneself in it in a meaningful way. Just as the hunters of the Aspre claim that the farm

bred boars they have introduced into the environment have ruined the sport, because of their 'mild' nature, they are too easy to catch.

How people come to know and interpret their world is fundamental to an understanding of their behaviour in a particular environment. Perception is never unalloyed, sensing, thinking, feeling and believing are simultaneous interdependent processes. The Aspre is proof that human preoccupations vary, as does their perceptions of environmental risk. In many respects the new population of the Aspre may turn out to be its greatest environmental risk, because of their combined naivety, consumer demand and supply logic and their reliance on outside control mechanisms. However one must acknowledge that the indigenous population were also active transformers of their milieu, and their actions were at times far from environmentally friendly. In the eighteenth century fire was not a major hazard in the Aspre, because the hills were virtually denuded, the so called natural hazards of that epoch were "les inondations de pierres et de sable" (Abbé Marcé 1784). In the twentieth century the forest of the Haute Aspre returned, agrarian man retreated and in his place residential and leisure oriented society is emerging with no use for the bounty of the forest except for its aesthetic beauty. The newcomers have a different relationship with the surrounding environment and consequently a different perception of it. Are they any greater threat to the natural environment than its own children, whose 'functional' slash and burn tactics reduced it to a skeleton rock? Both behaviours would appear 'irrational' from a sustainability view point, but when seen within the context of their time and the needs of the actors they are rational. One driven by survival needs and the other by consumerism and quality of life. A 'purposeful rational' approach to environmental hazards in the Aspre would appear to be of limited usefulness, given that there is no consensus on the underlying rationality. One outsider who had lived in the Aspre for over fifteen years, thought that the best solution to the fire risk was to put in prison the shepherds whom he believed intentionally start the fires in the first place. This is a commonly held belief, the controlled burning tactics of the past are now depicted as crimes. In the final analysis Lowenthal's (1961) observation that "we see the world the way we see it because it pays us and has paid us to see it that way", rings true.

8.4 Redefining Land Degradation.

The field work indicates that the local understanding of land degradation in the Aspre is not defined in physical terms. Rather perceptions of degradation are to be found in the variation in meanings which are attributed to the physical landscape by the people who live within it. The traditional relationship of the indigenous inhabitants of the Aspre with their surrounding environment was defined in terms of a prereflective 'taken for granted world', of unquestioned meanings and routinized determinants of daily behaviour. The Aspre was the womb that nurtured them for better or for worse. Or as the 1890 Catalan "Hymn to Cerdanga" (cited in Sahlins 1989) put it: "Here is our cradle and our tombstone". The daily routine of the Haute Aspre has however been disrupted, and its remaining indigenous inhabitants are forced to acknowledge both the social and physical boundaries of a world that was once invisible to them. They can no longer ignore the encroaching 'otherness' in the form of the 'friche' and the 'foreigners'. It is this twinned socio-natural transformation reflected in the environment and society that they perceive as 'degradation'. They may not want to return to the old back breaking agrarian order, but they miss the taken for granted 'belonging' in their place. The infamous peasant 'rootedness' has come into doubt and their world has turned self-reflexive. The sights, the sounds, the smells of everyday life are changing along with their own identity and purpose in life. This lies at the root of their perceived degradation.

The neo-ruraux want to reinstate the former agrarian relationship with place and the landscape. They also perceive depopulation and the blanketing 'friche' as degradation. They may be trying to imitate the former lifestyle of the indigenous population, but the meaning they are drawing from the 'place' is different. Theirs is not a taken for granted relationship with the land, rather in their search for quality of life they made a conscious decision to live in the Aspre, and in the maintenance of their worked presence in the landscape they are experimenting with new ideas.

The viticulteurs of the Basse Aspre, having expanded and modernised, are still able to maintain the former worked relationship with the landscape; but due to economic

pressure the way they perceive that environment has changed from that of patrimony to a unit of production. Degradation for them is not the ravines, gulling and considerable soil loss which the soil scientists have measured in their vineyards (MEDALUS 1993); rather it is anything that prevents them from maintaining an economically productive environment, the source of their livelihood at least within the short term. They see no point in working the environment of the Haute Aspre, while there is more productive land available on the plain. But, alas they have not suffered the trauma of being uprooted from their 'place'.

The new inhabitants of the Aspre in the form of the 'rich outsiders' are looking at the same landscape in terms of its aesthetic properties. In their eyes the regenerating forest of the Haute Aspre does not represent degradation, to the annoyance of the foresters, they consider it desirable decor to build their villas amongst. For them degradation is that which upsets what they perceive as the aesthetic properties of the landscape. Included among such 'eye sores' are poor village hygiene, houses and farm buildings either not in the right place or not properly maintained, overhead telegraph wires, and the lack of symmetry among church bells. In effect these financially secure 'moderns' are the first to attempt to separate nature from culture in the Aspre. They are the designers who perceive themselves as outside nature, whose risks can be controlled by technology or any damages incurred reimbursed by insurance policies. They are also concerned with meaning, but instead of drawing it from the landscape in an agrarian involved relationship, they want to inscribe meaning onto the landscape. Their villas and swimming pools may be modern, but they don't want the bucolic landscape to evolve into an anti-social 'friche', rather it is to be frozen in time, or reconstructed as a souvenir of a place that was not allowed to evolve 'naturally'.

The resultant baroque comedy of electronic fortresses, perched on an archaic mound of earth next to Arab graveyards, Roman churches, Megalithic tombs, and ruined Roi de Majorque castles, set against a background of picturesque terraces and anachronistic sheep and shepherds, is reminiscent of what Nietzsche referred to as the 'illusion of historicism'. Lowenthal (1985) reminds us that; "every trace of the past is testament

not only to its initiators but to its inheritors, not only to the spirit of the past but to the perspective of the present". If the hall mark of modernity is its notion of progress and linear time, one cannot help remarking that in the Aspre time is going around in circles, rather than following the arrow head of progress. The 'insiders' are leaving the land in the name of progress, the void created is immediately filled by those returning to it either as a post-modern reaction (neo-ruraux), or as proof of their progress (holiday and retirement home owners). As Richard Rorty (1979) suggests, cultural change is a matter of changing vocabularies, which challenge our habitual language and thus our common sense, rather than unearthing truths.

It is within these social meanings of place and space that lies the perceptual roots of land degradation in the Aspre today. But as stated from the outset this social dialogue cannot ignore the dominant 'personality' of the Aspre, which guarantees that it too must have its say. Our findings indicate that the variation in meaning lie behind the variation in perception. The different perceptions of its environment are neither more or less 'rational'. They merely reflect different ways of looking at the world and expectations of the land, which in turn reflect the different preoccupations of the observer. The Aspre is a good example of what Thompson (1986) referred to as, "plural rationalities each using impeccable logic to derive different conclusions from different premises". Our environmental perception research in the Aspre, in keeping with the metaphoric depiction of nature over time outlined in chapter 1, demonstrates that the concept of environment or rather nature, is in the final analysis a construction of the mind. There exists technical and symbolic mental constructs of nature, each peppered with a liberal sprinkling of the imagination, depending on the line of reasoning. This realization explains the fragmented and multiple perceptions of the environment and of human-environmental interaction.

Just as academic disciplines reduce nature into mutually exclusive fragments, so too the people of the Aspre cling to their own personal phenomenological experience of place and the landscape they live with. Each in their own way are clinging to their 'measure of reality'; a measure that satisfies their vision of objectivity based on social, natural

or experiential 'facts'. Each in their pedological, ecological, sociological, anthropological, agricultural, or aesthetic niche want to convince the other to come around to seeing not only the environment but the world from their particular window onto it⁹. But alas, "la vérité ne se dit jamais toute, parce qu'elle n'est jamais toute là, comme voudraient nous le faire croire" (Delbos 1989). The multiple perceptions of the environment of the Aspre are inseparable from social identities and world visions, which in combination provide its human holders with temporary anchorage points in an ultimately unknowable reality. Or as Habermas (1978) aptly put it, it provides them with "the objectivity of a destiny within a blind context".

The intangibility of the concept of nature and environment combined with the subjectivity of human perceptions, points towards the necessity of first trying to understand a society and 'l'air du temps', before interpreting its representation of nature. In keeping with work by Bertrand (1978; 1984), Delbos (1989; 1982), and Mathieu (1989), among others, our research in the Aspre demonstrates that human relations with the environment are never solely objective or 'boundedly rational', rather the key lies with the cognitive habits which form the interpretation. The socio-natural history of the Aspre stands as proof of the changing social representation and interpretation of nature. In the final analysis there is no rationality without its context. Within this context, no wonder we find land degradation in the Aspre defined in multiple terms, ranging from soil erosion to reforestation and above ground telegraph poles. The 'plural rationalities' which govern the environmental thinking of the inhabitants of the Aspre are of particular significance when drawing conclusions from this work.

⁹The question of nature in Western society has always been inseparable from the question of the 'reality of the world'.

CHAPTER 9: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS: TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE HUMAN ECOLOGY FOR THE ASPRE.

Having taken a transdisciplinary approach to the question of 'land degradation' in the Aspre, we have arrived at a redefinition of the concept. Central to this redefinition is the role of environmental perception, and the acknowledgement of the plural rationalities that impact on socio-natural thinking. Throughout the thesis we have consistently argued that nature and culture cannot be studied apart, and consequently any consideration of the physical environment, such as issues of land degradation, must be placed within its social matrix. This has necessitated a methodology capable of embedding seemingly technical issues within a broader framework of understanding. Having achieved this for the issue of land degradation in the Aspre, this concluding chapter aims to summarise our findings and relate them back to the initial objectives set out in chapter one, which can be reiterated here:.

- a) The methodological problem of socio-natural enquiry.*
- b) Conceptualising human-environmental interaction.*
- c) The creation and maintenance of the social boundaries of the Aspre.*
- d) The role of environmental perception in readings of land degradation.*
- e) Anthropogenic meaning and identity within the landscape.*
- f) Positioning the Aspre within the larger European socio-economic context.*
- g) Policy implications for a sustainable human ecology for the Aspre.*

a) How are we to undertake research that spans both the social and natural sciences?
The complexity and co-evolutionary nature of human-environmental interaction militates against studying the relationship in a traditional reductionist manner, which artificially carves up the system into mutually exclusive categories upon which disciplinary 'torch lights' are shone. Nor is the relationship capable of being understood in terms of the systemic listing of interactions in the style of systems theory, because there are no easy causal links. In this post-monodisciplinary, post-systems, post-multidisciplinary era there is a need for a new approach to the study of human-environmental interaction that

can capture the webs of interlinkages and the multiplicity of facets that characterise the relationship. To this end we developed a holistic transdisciplinary framework, within which natural phenomena are situated within their historical and socio-cultural context and vice versa. The transdisciplinary methodology, outlined in chapter 2, has allowed us to conduct a dialogue between history, ecology, psychology, pedology, geology, climate, demography, politics, economics, agriculture and ethnography. It is thus we have been able to integrate both qualitative and quantitative data sets, and to build a holistic picture from microscopic clippings. We do not deny the difficulty of weaving the multiple strands of complexity that we find embedded in the human land relations of the Aspre. Nevertheless, denying their existence or simplifying the problem, which in effect is what the present general primacy of practice does, with its emphasis on quantification and operationalism, is not the answer and neither is it working. Certain parameters can be quantified, others including perception and meaning are not conducive to mathematical abstraction. Complexity and holism must be understood qualitatively not just exclusively quantitatively. What we end up with is a form of Geertzian 'thick description', which is not easily packaged, and neither does it offer any 'pragmatic solutions to the problem', the hallmark of a positivist stance. As stated at the outset the aim of this study was not to reduce complexity, but rather to contribute a more mature holistic reflection on the nature of complexity at work in a human modified Mediterranean space. We would argue that there is a need for more studies in this vein, because the normative methods we are presently applying to studies of socio-natural interaction, be they from a natural or social sciences perspective, are providing us with only a partial view which can lead to inappropriate conclusions. Within this research the transdisciplinary approach provides the enabling platform from which all else emerged.

b) How should we conceptualise human-environmental interaction in the Aspre within 'la longue durée'; and to what extent does the historical structuring of its landscape and society inform us on processes operating there today?

We argued in the introductory chapter that it is necessary to place the question of land degradation within the broader framework of human-environmental interaction, and how

one conceptualises that relationship is of prime importance. In this respect our findings in the Aspre highlight the necessity of taking a long term perspective. Had we taken a short or even medium term view on socio-natural interaction in the Aspre, say going back a hundred years to the late nineteenth century, we would perceive a landscape and society struggling to adjust to the free market demands of a Capitalist economy, with the Haute Aspre effectively giving up the struggle. Its inability to 'adapt' being to a large extent a condition of its environmental limitations of climate, elevation, slope, thin soil etc., all of which would be in keeping with the environmental determinist and cultural adaptation mode of relating humans to their environment. Concurrently an ecosystems approach would tend to emphasise the functional imbalance between population and resources in the Haute Aspre, with emigration towards the plain being the regulatory release valve. While some elements of the above scenario are certainly true when viewed from short term time scales, a long term perspective paints a very different picture and exposes the systems non linear bifurcation dynamics.

In relation to environmental adaptation it is clear that over the long term the inhabitants of the Aspre have been far from adapting to a given physical niche. The metronomic advance and retreat of the forest, the geomorphological influences of terracing, drainage, irrigation, mining, all testify to the fact that these people have over time been active transformers of their physical milieu. The socio-biophysical system demonstrates that what is considered 'adapted' at one moment in time, may well be perceived as 'unadapted' in the next. This realization highlights the perceptual nature of adaptation, its dependence on human perceived needs and wants and their abilities in league with the environment to satisfy those expectations. A good example of this being the mountain-plain relationship and the fact that up until the thirteenth century the hills and mountains of the Pyrenees and the Alps experienced in-migration from the lowlands. As discussed in chapters 4 & 5 it was only following political stability, and a combination of medical discoveries, technical innovations and new macro socio-economic structures that places like the Haute Aspre lost their perceived advantages over the plain and assumed their 'unadapted' label, something they retain to this day. However, these cultural forces were not acting on a benign nature, because if they were

the anthropogenic categories of, 'adapted' - 'unadapted', 'advantaged'- 'disadvantages', would be redundant since all environments should be equally neutral. The point we are making is that the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the physical environment are not definitive, rather like the perception of land degradation, such labels co-evolve with socio-natural processes, perceived needs and wants. Similarly, the ecosystems model of closure and cybernetic negative feedbacks does not fit with the human ecology of the Aspre over the long term. The evidence provided in chapters 4 and 5 does not support notions of an equilibrium centred autarchic society prior to its twentieth century awakening. The over exploitation of the forest, the array of cottage industries and outside contacts that we find in Saint Marsal dispels notions of both homeostatic regulation and closure. A long term socio-natural perspective on the Aspre, indicates that at any point in time the system may appear to be at or seeking equilibrium, whereas over time it appears to be undergoing continuous and cumulative change; leading to the realization that over time change is the norm and stability the exception. The question of temporal and spatial scales are critical.

The long term socio-biophysical system operating in the Aspre points towards a co-evolutionary, non-linear relationship between people and their biophysical environment, which is driven by positive as well as negative feedbacks, and within whose web of complexity one cannot easily disentangle causal links capable of being understood apart from the whole. Not only is a long term perspective essential in relation to a more correct conceptualization of human-environmental relations, but, as this research has shown it is also necessary in order to understand and interpret the present. Without a historical knowledge of the physical and social environment of the Aspre, how could we attempt to interpret the environment, society and world vision of the present day actors on this stage? In contrast current emphasis on the short term fits with present day illusions of progress and modernity and the belief that we have broken from the past, and thus the irreversibility of time. Such a view is not tenable, the arrow of time has hit many a bend on the winding roads of the Aspre, giving it more of a 'boomerang' rather than linear orbit. Over time we observe change, which does not necessarily correspond with the culturally loaded term 'progress'.

The historical structuring of the landscape and society of the Aspre informs us on the origin of the present day processes in operation there. The agrarian land tenure structure in operation on the eve of the Revolution reflected the urban bourgeois and industrialists vested interests in the Vallespir, which worked to the detriment of the small or landless peasant farmers. Land use conflict and the socio-ecological impoverishment reflected in the peasant's slash and burn (*tallat i sembrat*) tactics leave no doubt about the entanglement of politics, demography and nature. However, it is not just the political, geographical and physical structure of the landscape and society that has its roots in the past, just as important is the psychological heritage of that history, which continues to incubate in the 'mentalité' of its present day children, and colour their perceptual hue. It is from this synthesis of the past and present that we have been able to track the 'mentalité' of a people endowed with a rather ambiguous political history, rooted in a peripheral frontier province, which in turn reinforces self-perceptions of marginalization and powerlessness. Accompanying their perceived mistreatment in the past and their present sense of abandonment and alienation from the urban centres of power is a healthy disrespect for statutory law and order - 'le goût de transgression' -, the desire to pass 'hors de circuit' (reflected in their preference for 'rente'), and mistrust of outsiders with the 'Doryphores' of today being equated with the invaders of yesterday. This contextual historical knowledge is highly relevant to the present structuring of the local and its response to macro external forces, such as attitudes to an agricultural agenda split between entrepreneurial viticulteurs, and custodians of space. Our research has shown that the barriers to change in the Aspre are not all physical or economic; the mental obstacles are equally strong. Feeding into the 'mentalité' is the two way dialogue between past and present, whose semantics are far from the monologue of discreet time.

c) How are the social boundaries of the Aspre created and maintained?

Nature is a social construct, from which it follows that perceptions of the natural environment can only be arrived at by first understanding the society that holds them. In chapter 7 we exposed the complexity of the contemporary Aspre society, and its boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. The adoption of an ethnographic field

methodology, meant that we did not set out with an 'a priori' classification of the social groups in the Aspre. As a consequence of this approach and the vital participant observation knowledge that comes only from having lived for an extended period in an area, can one demask the simplistic binary opposition between the 'insiders' and 'outsiders', and discover the diversity contained within these two categories. We also come to see that it was frequently in the interest of the players to maintain these masks.

Within the dramaturgical model of the Aspre are to be found the power struggles which underlie both the society and the lay of the land. Thus we come to recognise the attempts of the indigenous population to erase the presence of all outsiders by insisting on labelling them as 'passing tourists' who will in time move on, even though some of them have lived in their midst for over twenty years. In addition to this temporal classification the neo-ruraux are also labelled as 'marginals', and are effectively doubly silenced. The outsiders perception of the apparent inactivity of the indigenous insiders, their infamous lack of dynamism, belies their masked latent activity. The viticulteurs of the Basse Aspre are still the dominant social group in the viticole villages, and well represented in the Municipal Council. The mix of population and the demographic structure of the Haute Aspre means that the struggle for power is far more pronounced here. The rich outsiders, having bought up a lot of the land are certainly in a strong economic position, but alas many of them, including the large Belgian population cannot vote in the local elections. Even those outsiders with the vote often have their ambitions squashed by 'irregularities' further up the administrative scale, which is said to be perforated by the 'Catalan Mafia's' hidden network, which is especially active in the land speculation sector. Besides, the outsiders lack of faith in the Departmental law enforcing body, means that the fear of reprisal is a constant threat. Their frequently empty villas can easily be put to the torch, as they were in the tense climate of the 1970s. The neo-ruraux, who are effectively the only active group in the 'arrière pays' fare badly in the local power struggle. They are generally in a financially weak position, they do not own the land they work and are dependent on verbal leases which can be easily revoked. Despite their outward passivity the Catalan's are still 'Chez eux' in the Aspre. Yet by living in the past, remaining rooted in the old social order,

reflected in their refusal to adapt to the 'new agriculture', and to the 'doryphore' industry (the major growth sector), coupled with their lack of successors, means that they are in the long term condemned to becoming estranged in their own villages, which is already true in places. Yet without their authentic presence and historical artifacts, the rich outsiders illusion of bucolic stable permanence (which they have paid well for), is squashed. The neo-ruraux are called in to reconstruct the myth, along with the terraces, irrigation canals, and the heavily subsidised rustic flocks of sheep and goats. In the final analysis the boundaries of the various social groups in the Aspre are not as mutually exclusive as they would have us believe, in a strange way they are linked in a symbiotic embrace. In turn the social boundaries in operation in the Aspre get mapped onto the physical environment.

d) How does environmental perception condition readings of land degradation in the Aspre?

Explaining the present human land relations we find in the Aspre solely in terms of 'political ecology', albeit at the root of its present day economic difficulties, does not provide us with the full picture. How can we explain the anomalies, such as the nostalgia of the old people having sold their 'functionless' land, the fierce resistance of the neo-ruraux against all economic odds to move off the land, the viticulteurs who are abandoning their potentially economically viable vineyards, and the outsiders no longer content with simply a place in the sun, who are now chasing after 'the vote'? Our research has shown that seven primary 'perceptual filters' characterise anthropogenic attitudes to the environment of the study area. In relation to the Basse Aspre;-

1. The soil scientists perceive the gaping ravines, creeping soil loss, and poor water infiltration in the vineyards of the Basse Aspre as environmental degradation.
2. Both the indigenous population and the 'outsiders' perceive the same vineyards in positive terms, linked with a worked, orderly and productive landscape. The viticulteurs do not perceive soil erosion as a major problem, the ravines are said to have always existed, an inherent consequence of a Mediterranean climate and natural wear

and tear. Soil loss linked to agricultural practices such as the use of herbicides and lack of terracing and drainage, if acknowledged at all, is sacrificed in the name of short term economic viability, and as yet is not perceived as having an adverse affect on yields or quality of the vines, their central concern.

3. There is a general agreement (with the exception of the ecologists) that the dull brown patches of 'friche' making their appearance among the symmetry and order of the vineyards are negative, being associated with disrepair and anthropogenic failure.

In relation to the environment of the Haute Aspre:-

4. The foresters perceive the regenerating maquis and forest on the abandoned agricultural land of the Haute Aspre as on its way to some desirable climax state, provided the naive environmental perceptions of the new inhabitants do not disrupt its evolution.

5. The newcomers in the form of holiday home owners and retired outsiders perceive the same forest as exotic decor.

6. The indigenous population perceive the forest as a symbol of degradation, blanketing over their life's work and calling their own identity into question.

7. In keeping with the indigenous population the neo-ruraux also perceive degradation as the breakdown in the former agrarian order and its replacement with an urban designer aesthetic order. But unlike them they still perceive this environment as workable patrimony capable of providing one with an agrarian livelihood and identity, and thus their insistence on maintaining an active presence in the landscape. Their efforts are generally ridiculed by both the indigenous population and the newcomers alike, who perceive them as a vain attempt to defy the tide of progress by attempting to turn the clocks back.

From these multiple and conflicting perceptions of the same environment, one can

detect a close correlation between perceptions of degradation and the groups social interest, or disciplinary training in the case of the soil scientists and foresters. We argued in chapter one, that central to the idea of land degradation is an 'a priori' expectation of the land with respect to its use value. The results of the field work support this supposition, the inhabitants of the Aspre perceive degradation when the land fails to meet their anthropogenic criteria. Our emphasis on the people's perception of degradation goes beyond the 'political ecology' model raising vital questions about identity and meaning in the landscape.

e) How do the people of the Aspre identify with its landscape, and what meaning are they drawing from it?

Thus we came to understand the meaning behind the perceptual filter. We have seen in chapter 8, that the indigenous population of the Haute Aspre assumed that their relationship with their rocks and soil was functional, for the most part entailing an embondaged and difficult livelihood, and they did not hesitate to encourage their children to seek a better life in the city, away from its grip. But in fact it was much more than that, their social identity, heritage and self-worth was tied up with the landscape they had for generations fashioned, the 'order' of which was testimony to their lives work and that of their ancestors. Their present day nostalgia for the past (but not wishing to return there) and feelings of alienation living in the midst of the 'friche' and the foreigners, is linked to their abrupt rupture from a past that was intimately related to their unselfconscious sense of 'dwelling' in this agrarian landscape. In short their identity was entwined with that of the landscape. Today the fraying tapestry of the unmanaged landscape, following the removal of the human hand is what they perceive as 'degradation'. These findings are in keeping with Ingold's (1993) concepts of incorporation and 'dwelling' in the landscape.

However, our research indicates that 'incorporation' within the landscape is not the only means by which people relate to their physical environment. The perceptual agenda in the Haute Aspre is further complicated by the arrival of other actors on its stage. The new arrivals be they neo-ruraux, retired and holiday home owners, or just passing

tourists, are also trying to carve out meaning and identity for themselves in this landscape and are in the process equally active transformers of its space as the peasants which preceded them. However, with the exclusion of the neo-ruraux their mode of transformation is different; rather than drawing an un-selfconscious meaning from the landscape in the former involved agrarian 'dwelling' relationship, they are actively trying to 'inscribe' meaning onto the landscape in a more detached way. This does not take from the fact that some of these people may also feel deeply 'involved' with this landscape, but it is a different type of involvement. On the whole they represent a shift from a participant to an observer mode of relating to the environment. Theirs is the aesthetic perspective, and frequently the meaning they are imposing on the landscape, such as wider roads, fire control, swimming pools and village hygiene is self-referentially constituted. In effect they are responding to their own hidden attractors rather than to those of the environment (cf. van der Leeuw 1993). The urban postmoderns of the Aspre would appear to be still perpetuating Durkheim's (1967 [1903]), famous observation that "the tribe projects its own social categories onto nature", and like the former they appear to be equally unaware of their actions. They claim to be driven by 'logic' and 'objectivity', and who could disagree with raising health standards, improving communications, and placing telephone wires underground? In this highly technological and 'sophisticated' age it would appear that we are still not able to separate nature or land degradation, from the social representation we have formed of it.

Unlike the tribes of the past the socialization of the Aspre landscape is today essentially driven by urban values and urban finance, the 'tool' which allows them to transform the environment in such a way as to reflect the accepted social meanings of that powerful group. Again history indicates that this is not a radically new phenomenon, the aristocracy have throughout history constructed gardens and conservation parks to reflect their own value system, and as noted by Robic (1990) these initial aesthetics were mingled with notions of moral hygiene; "*Le beau paysage est le plus souvent un paysage propre et ordonné, qui suppose une société à son image*". What is different

today is the scale of the landscape gardening¹. With over 50% of European territory classified as 'disadvantaged', the role of the 'guardians of the environment', the new farmers who double as museum conservators, is basically to deliver the above designer landscape. Samuels (1979) reminds us that all gardens are testimony of their epoch and reflect the societies social and ideological critique. The 'garden of the Aspre' represent the affluence of a twentieth century leisure society.

The new designers with their 'towny' ideas, altering the decor and busily looking for meaning and identity in the tapestry of the Aspre are in turn upsetting the identity and sense of belonging of the indigenous population, which one suspects is at the root of their reluctance to participate in the 'Gardien de l'Environnement' schemes. As farmers they were always active transformers of 'space' in the creation of their lived 'place'. However the 'new farming' ideology demands the holding still of space which is perturbing their sense of place, and thus their feelings of being anachronisms, along with the plants and terraces, in the new 'modern art' museum under construction. It is this conflict in expectations that they perceive as degradation, because they cannot relate to a world which is transforming their 'place' into 'space'. In the Cévennes, a comparable depopulated Mediterranean hinterland we find its farmers also expressing fears of becoming "Indians on a reserve" (cf. Mousset 1992).

The connection between place, meaning and identity is further exemplified by the insistence of some of the young second generation Catalans (in combination with some 'emphatic outsiders'), generally classified as neo-ruraux, that one must maintain a presence in this landscape. Their barnacle like attachment to their ancestral schist rocks, constitutes to a large extent the statement of their lives work. Their very presence is a note of resistance, offered towards the maintenance of what they perceive

¹Most of the abandoned agrarian land in the past was allowed to revert back to an unmanaged 'natural' state, as indeed it did following the demographic collapse of the Black Death and during the Hundred Years War. Nor is it the first time that the terraced hills of the Pyrenees were abandoned. In the eighteenth century, when the Catalan people took possession of the high rocky regions, they were astonished to find stone wall terraces and olive trees still growing in the tangled undergrowth, proof that it was not the first time it had been claimed (Braudel 1975).

as a truly lived patrimony within the landscape, in opposition to the urbanists models of suburban space. It is interesting to note that research in the Cévennes by Mathieu (1985;1989) and Jollivet (1989), also shows the importance the local people placed on maintaining an agrarian presence in the landscape as a statement of solidarity linked with identity and a 'way of life'. Ironically the remaining 'éleveurs' in the Cévennes, as in the Aspre and Pyrenees in general are dependant on external subsidies for approximately half their income; highlighting the limitations on local self-determination within what is increasingly a Global system.

Concurrently in the vineyards of the Basse Aspre the environment is firmly in the hands of market economics, whose extreme uncertainty has prompted a radical change in how this land is perceived. Here we are witnessing a significant shift from viewing the land as a dwelling place and lived patrimony to be handed on intact to the next generation towards perceiving it as a commodity. In effect what we are witnessing here is the separation of culture and agriculture. Those who could not make that mental transition abandoned farming, even though theoretically it was still economically viable. For those who remain it becomes socially acceptable to bulldoze terraces on hillsides without support walls or along ravine beds, not to mention the liberal application of herbicides and pesticides; a vivid example of how technology mediates our relationship with the environment. The preoccupation with economic survival is having the same impact on the environment as industrial and population pressure had in the mid nineteenth century, i.e. an obsession with the short term. This short term focus is in direct opposition to the concern for ecological sustainability that we find in the agro-environmental policies in operation in the Haute Aspre, just a few yards up the road, pointing towards extreme policy incongruence. One is left with the impression that we can continue with intensive agri-business in optimal high potential areas while our biodiversity insurance policy is maturing in places like the Haute Aspre, just in case of the proverbial 'rainy day'. If extensification and bio-diversity is being presented as the new 'gospel', why is it not applied everywhere? Once more the dominant urban model, containing 80% of Europe's population, demands large reliable quantities of cheap food, and thus urban needs and consumption patterns have a major influence on the use of

rural space, not to mention the vested interests in agri-industry.

We have consistently maintained that the physical environment cannot be defined in isolation of the society within which it is embedded, but our findings in the Aspre also suggest that neither can we define society in isolation of its natural milieu. The boundary between self and environment is far from distinct. In defining their environment the people of the Aspre are in effect co-defining themselves, and it is when the 'image' does not correspond with their own self-perceptions and aspirations that degradation is perceived. If there is any discernable direction in human land relationships in the Aspre over time it is a move from a physical to a more aesthetic relationship with the land. Because of the natural beauty of places like the Haute Aspre and its peri-urban, peri-Mediterranean position it may well be on the crest of another transition, whereby its space shall once more be perceived as 'adapted', and the uprooted vine stumps of the Basse Aspre and Plain of Roussillon may return to their former 'unadapted' position. The postmodern world impacting on the Aspre indicates a rejection of naturalism and a return to symbolism, but in contrast with medieval symbolism it is mixed with an obsession with the essential self and an uneasiness towards the future, not allowing the past to evolve. The former destruction of nature by the machine is in places like the Haute Aspre overshadowed by the power of the psyche. Within the emerging new world order the rural world is undergoing a profound change and with it societies perception of and relationship with nature and the land. The resurfacing of issues about identity and meaning represent the confusion surrounding a shift in paradigms, the birth pangs of a new mythology. Rappaport (1984), aptly sums up the eternal friction between nature and culture which we have been describing in the Aspre as a consequence of; - "A species that can only live in terms of meanings itself must construct, surrounded by a nature whose operations it perceives only darkly and through the distorting lenses of its own hopes and ends". Inevitably what we know is largely a function of our own symbolic representations.

f) Where does the Aspre sit within the larger socio-economic context of the EU?

Our findings in chapters six indicate that a large question mark hangs over the future

of agriculture in the Aspre. For the moment it is held in a sort of 'no mans land', trapped in a time warp, not knowing whether to go backwards or forwards. In the Basse Aspre the environment, society and technology are for the moment still in tune for the viticulteurs prepared to take on board the logic of capitalist enterprise, and work towards meeting market demands in the wine sector. However the environment of the Haute Aspre is out of step with contemporary agrarian needs, and its foreseeable fate lies in conserving its landscape patrimony with a view to tourism or abandonment.

We must try to think of the society of tomorrow from the point of view of the consumer rather than the producer, as we have been accustomed to do. The new consumers and definers of rural space will in the foreseeable future be urban. But as the farmers of the Aspre are desperately trying to tell us it is not their job to entertain urban dwellers. There are other factors in the equation: the unwillingness of many of the viticulteurs to make the transition to economies of scale, the un-acceptability of the 'gardien de l'environnement' option to the traditional mixed farmers of the Haute Aspre, the neo-ruraux acceptance of semi-subsistence lives, all heighten the importance of context and in so doing are telling us that farming is not only linked to economics and environmental enabling and constraining factors, but is also about a way of life, which in turn is tied up with social identities. If Pearce's (1991), theory of the 'substitutability of assets' were acceptable, the people of the Aspre and other upland Mediterranean areas should be replacing agriculture with tourist opportunities, and the transition from farming to custodians of space should be a trouble free logical step, provided the revenue from both occupations was compatible. But we know that in the Aspre this is not happening, except for selling the occasional plot of land, the vast majority of people involved in tourism in the Aspre and along Roussillon's Mediterranean coast are 'outsiders', and the vast majority of those participating in 'gardien de l'environnement' programmes are outside neo-ruraux. This in turn employs that neither can we define degradation solely in socio-economic terms. The old people who 'profited' from the sale of their land to the Belgians in the 1960s still perceive the 'friche' that surrounds them as degradation. Neither is the difference between the insiders and outsiders simply a question of money, many of the locals have their 'argent

cache' placed in real estate or under the mattress, rather than in swimming pools. One must not underestimate the clash in 'mentalités' and cultural expectations, which in effect means they are dancing to different tunes, one perceiving the other *"like something out of a mental asylum"* (QQ). Meaning is nowhere monolithic, and neither nature or society are universal, or readily substitutable. The question of maintaining diversity within an increasingly homogenising global system remains.

A by-product of agricultural intensification is a reduction in the surface area required to meet the communities nutritional needs. Social pressure presently dictates that the superfluous land cannot be totally abandoned. Current agricultural policies reflect this dilemma, and thus we find within our little study area a schizophrenic split between intensification and extensification policies, without having really worked out how one can exist along side the other. Is it really feasible within a single world market oriented agriculture to sustain a system within a system? The marketing difficulties of the 'Agneau Catalan', the hygiene laws relating to artisan cheese making, and the industrialization of successful artisan products are a reflection of this incongruence. Even closer to home what about the shepherd from Tordères who does not have the technology to handle the large bales of hay he finds on the market, or the traditional shepherdess in Saint Marsal who had to stop growing her own cereal because there was no thrasher left in those hills? Can we have the authentic and artificial all rolled up in one? What is authentic? Just because somebody depends on the produce of the land for their livelihood does that make them 'genuine', even if they arrived a few years ago from Paris and are heavily dependent on subsidies from Brussels? For the moment there are more questions than answers. All transitions are painful and myths die hard. Society is in the process of defining a new myth for the tired soil of the Aspre.

On the other hand one must also question the reason for conserving the agrarian patrimony of places like the Aspre. If one carried that argument to its logical conclusion we should also be pulling ice bergs up those hills, because it was once a Tundra landscape, is that not a patrimony worth conserving? One is reminded of Latour's (1993) comment that the maniacal destruction of the modern epoch is

counterbalanced only be an equally maniacal conservation. Landscapes are not static, they co-evolve with the societies that are embedded in them. Or as Whitehead observed, 'there is no holding nature still and looking at it'. Is the 'friche' of the Aspre challenging the society or the environment? What lost innocence are we looking for - 'la nostalgie du temps perdu'? Whose identity are we trying to preserve anyway?

g) What are the policy implications for sustainable futures for places like the Aspre?

The Aspre is a complex system and has a number of evolutionary pathways open to it, however its precise future trajectory is inherently unpredictable. Thinking about the future is embedded within the concept of sustainability. Our inability to separate nature from social perceptions and categorization employs that ultimately sustainability is a value judgement, and is only meaningful when clearly defined within spatial and temporal scales. We cannot guarantee that any society or landscape is eternally sustainable, besides our research indicates that the socio-natural history of the Aspre is defined in motion. There is a tendency to equate conservation with sustainability. Conservation, nature management, wise stewardship and notions of sustainable development are in the final analysis platitudes used to cloak human intentions to control and predict nature, in the delivery of predefined goals. Within this context to conserve means little more than what Evernden (1992) described as a desire to "stack canned goods on a pantry shelf; neatly labelled 'preserved for future generations'". Nature that other, 'other' is thus conceptually pasteurised and contained. Anthropogenic notions of somehow holding the landscape of places like the Haute Aspre as a 'hostage of time' is in the long term a fallacy: a reflection of our own illusions of disembodiment. Place and the ecology contained within it are not static concepts. Such views of stability not only deny evolution but also the present, and are created whenever long term dynamics are viewed from a short-term perspective. Neither the people or the vegetation we find in the Aspre today are necessarily 'native'. Besides, anthropogenic sustainability cannot be engineered apart from ecological sustainability. Much of the preceding argument on anthropogenic disembodiment erroneously assumes that humans are outside the ecology for which they plan.

The fact remains that the future is unknowable. Our research portrays humans as an intrinsic element in the process of landscape evolution, rather than as externalities. This requires that any future policies take into account not only the sensitivity and resilience of the land but also the social perceptions of and meanings attached to that land. Since we do not have access to 'clairvoyant models' of the future it would seem prudent that future policies should centre around maintaining options, diversity, creativity, the ability to live with change and uncertainty rather than trying to prevent it, and steering the system away from major disasters such as building a future on non renewable resources, or on notions of substitutability between economic, cultural and ecological assets (see Daly & Cobb 1989 on new thinking in 'Green Economics'). This is in keeping with Holling's (1976) concept of 'safe fails' rather than 'fail safe' systems. Our research has also highlights the danger of models or policies which project from the present into the future in ignorance of the long term dynamics of the system.

Policy makers must recognise that there can be no single solution as long as multiple rationalities exist. The future of the Aspre landscape and society depends on its ability to accommodate the co-existence of what may seem like mutually exclusive options, reflecting different vested interests, conflicting world visions and interpretations of 'quality of life'. However, it must be recognised that the strengths of the different positions are closely related to the economic and political power of the holder. Diversity can only exist within an enabling power structure. What we are dealing with are complex issues, and there are no simple solutions to the human ecology dilemma of the Aspre. In fact, as McGlade (1995b) concluded, it is not the resolution of conflict that we must seek, but the establishment of structures that can accommodate a plurality of land use types. In the past the diversity of the Aspre rested on its agrarian polyculture, today its agriculture is defined in terms of vine monoculture and its diversity is to be found within its cosmopolitan society.

Our research indicated that the 'facts' alone do not suffice, and that policy makers need to find a way of incorporating the human being, not as a 'statistical shadow' but as an active, feeling, goal orientated, meaningful and symbol manipulating creatures into any

land use models. We acknowledge the need to generalise, one cannot work solely with a series of fragmented case studies, but due to the overwhelming importance of context highlighted in this research, and the multiple hypotheses and perceptions operating within it, generalizations can only ever be valid to a limited extent. As Blaikie (1987) reminds us, the quest for universal policy solutions to 'land degradation' risk serious distortions. The difficult problem of creating a more workable dialogue between macro theory and micro reality remains. A given level of analysis may influence ones interpretation of the problem, since each hierarchical level obscures relationships observable at other levels, as one moves from the local to the regional, national, European Union and global level. Similarly, processes occurring at different spatial levels operate at distinct rates, and current policy mechanisms are unable to recognise these spatial and temporal incongruities.

Relating the Global to the local remains problematic in the Aspre. We have highlighted the farmers difficulties in coping with the perpetual change and uncertainty linked to market flux, (hardly unique to the farmers of the Aspre), which in turn is reflected in a commodity approach to the soil, and the un-acceptability of what is perceived as dehumanizing options, such as custodians of space. The micro and even the meso Departmental level reflects a strong sense of alienation from such macro policy institutes as the EU and the Parisian Government, whose inappropriate policies are perceived as being imposed on the 'victims' on the ground. The top down approach is alienating and autocratic, but neither is it effective, the farmers of the Aspre being proof of the 'bouleversements' those heavily subsidised but perceived inappropriate policies undergo on the ground. In reality the 'guardians of the environment' in the Aspre are stacking up on chain saws and modernizing their farm buildings rather than entertaining the tourists or maintaining the fire breaks. If we continue to allow the market to be the only arbiter of truth, it is difficult to see how policies could set long term agendas or incorporate long term ecological sustainability. There is a definite need for macro policies to reflect a more holistic, long term 'rural development' approach, rather than dividing space and peoples lives into 'optimal' and 'disadvantaged' categories.

The importance of context and the concern for micro level aspirations, would tend towards advocating decentralization of decision making and more participatory policy making, and these were the sentiments I left the field with. However, the Aspre was once more to place another counter intuitive 'reality' in my path; when I returned for a short visit to the village of Tordères, almost two years after completing the field work, I found the whole village 'up in arms' essentially because of decentralization. Following French decentralization in 1982, the village Mayors have much increased powers and autonomy, and the Mayor of Tordères had taken it upon himself to commission the construction of a road through the little narrow walkways of the interior of the village, in fierce opposition to all the inhabitants of the village. Because of decentralization he has the power to impose this and confiscate any land he needs for such work, and due to the voting system and his support from the large 'outsider' (he himself being an outsider) population in the surrounding woodland, his political powers are secure. The main purpose of the exercise would appear to be a show of power on the part of the 'outsiders' who feel excluded from the cliquish village. The fact that the Mayor also works for the 'Travaux Publique' and tends to equate large earth works with progress and modernity, is no doubt another factor. Even though the inhabitants of the village were passionately concerned about this issue, they had trouble organizing themselves into an 'Association', due to a combination of individualism and the surfacing of likes and dislikes going back over the years. This is the micro 'pot pourri' world of power politics, feuds, patronage, individualism and corruption which is far from untypical in the area. The moral being that local empowerment and autonomy is also problematic.

It has recently been argued that the real issue is that decision and policy makers need to be able to integrate multiple models focused at different levels of detail (cf. Moran 1990; McGlade 1995). In this way local site specific models could take into account the contextual socio-natural milieu. Meso and macro levels being more appropriate for dealing with long term and structural change. The changes afoot in the Aspre are the result of a complex interplay of historical, economic, political, social and cultural processes, onto which are projected Regional, National, European and Global dynamics.

Our analysis shows that this is nothing new, except that the rate of change is accelerating and the time for the global to impact on the local is shrinking. The external dynamics dictate to a large extent the options available at the local level, however as we have seen in the Aspre and in the Cévennes the local level decides what is and what is not acceptable and adjusts accordingly, which may well be escape, adaptation or an existence outside the dominant system, the latter, 'hors de circuit' option being the Catalan preference. What we end up with is indeed a complex system and there are no easy solutions. We do not envisage the 'solution' as a retreat from technological civilization, we cannot turn the clocks back or prevent them from ticking, rather what we have to confront are ethical choices based on ecological and human understanding, rather than reducing all externalities to 'technical fixes' and market forces. As Rene Dubos (1976) remarked; "the world we are designing is correspondingly concerned with the avoidance of dangers, taking shelter behind an endless succession of protective devices and rules, each more complex and less dependable than its predecessor". It would appear that society is trying to incubate itself from its biophysical environment, rather than developing environmental and human potentialities. In effect this is the critical question, how do we find a way of harmonising internal and external ecology?

In terms of the future and in the light of the preceding discussion one could speculate on some of the likely evolutionary paths open to the Aspre?

Industrial Agriculture;- Provided there are no major changes in the orientation of current agricultural policies, the future of 'productive' agriculture in the Aspre does not look very promising. The Haute Aspre can be expected to remain in its semi-abandoned state; a revival in its extensive sheep rearing system, the most compatible farming system with this terrain, would not appear eminent as long as cheap imports of lowland mutton are readily available from elsewhere. In the Basse Aspre we envisage a continuation in the present trend towards land consolidation; the dying out of small producers without successors, more uprooting of vines and the consolidation of the remaining vineyards in the hands of a reduced number of large, efficient, mechanized producers, whose future will be closely linked to consumer demands.

Artisnal Option; - With increasing health awareness and concerns about artificial chemicals and hormones used in industrially produced and processed foodstuffs, the present local market for 'quality foods' (not necessarily biological or organic), grown essentially by the neo-ruraux in the Haute Aspre, could be expected to maintain their niche in the market and perhaps even expand. It was a neo-ruraux from the Aspre who won first prize for her duck pâté in Paris in the 1994. The French passion for 'le goût de terroir' should guarantee a market place for garrigue and mountain honey, goats cheese, farm eggs, duck pâté, fresh vegetables etc, whatever about the 'Catalan lamb'! Similarly some of the viticulteurs in the Basse Aspre may turn towards biological wine, in fact one vigneron is already in the process of doing so. At the moment the above quality produce are not well enumerated, they may never be able to compete financially with industrial products, their future depends on more educated consumers. There is also the possibility that the wood and cork of the Aspre may one day be economically viable again, and provide the raw material for local small scale workshops. Perhaps we should also take note of Mayumi's (1991) claims that the industrial and technological revolution can only provide us with a temporary emancipation from the land, since present day agro-farming business is still heavily dependent upon land based resources, especially a finite supply of fossil fuels. We cannot escape from our biophysical envelopment and the 'lopin de terre' in the Aspre could one day be of productive use again.

Back to Nature; - Future options for the Haute Aspre might include the possibility of allowing it to return to its own eco-dynamic condition, and let fire and water shape its destiny. Alas, 'wilderness' is also becoming a highly marketable commodity. There is no functional reason as to why humans should remain in this landscape. The call for a return to nature is strongest among the hunting clubs of the Aspre, who would stand to benefit most from such an option. However, for the moment total anthropogenic abandonment is not socially acceptable. There is a strong core of indigenous and outsider neo-ruraux who strongly identify with the place, and some of them have turned maintaining an active presence in this landscape as their life's ambition. With the growing problems and decreasing appeal of urban areas, it is reasonable to expect that

these people and their successors will continue to maintain a spartan presence in the Aspre's landscape, provided they can get access to the land and find a market for their produce, or find some other acceptable means of making a living there. In terms of social pressure the tourist lobby is far more powerful than the neo-ruraux.

Tourism: (a) Mass Tourism; - The peri-urban position of the Aspre endows it with a strong tourist and leisure potential. The large quantity of holiday and retirement homes in the area is proof that this pathway is already well established. As long as the tourist vocation continues, the infrastructure of roads, water, electricity, and fire control will have to be maintained. However, the character of the Aspre does not render it suitable for mass tourism, with communications, fire and lack of water posing serious obstacles. Besides, unless it can attract some 'disneyland' theme park type development, it does not hold an attraction for the mass tourists of today, who can be expected to continue using it as a rainy day detour, or a transitional zone between the mountain ski resorts and the mediterranean coast. One should also note that mass tourism is no longer considered an economic miracle and its destructive aspects are more readily acknowledged (cf. Glass 1993, Bramwell 1993). The large 'outsider' retired population are presently concentrated around its periphery, but as noted in chapter 7 they do not generate much local income. Besides it would be rather sad if the whole place turned into an old peoples reserve, in fact they themselves would probably be the first to desert the place should that happen. Like the tourists they require an active presence in the landscape.

(b) Conservation and Green Tourism: - One could also make the case for turning the place into a nature reserve, well placed to serve the Perpignan inhabitants, and the growing 'Green Tourism' market, which at the moment is not well established in the area. But with an estimated 52% of EU territory already in a similar semi-deserted position, it is difficult to envisage the financing of such vast 'frozen space capsules'. As previously argued the dominant conservation philosophy is based on myths of equilibrium and sustainability, the role of the conservator being there to dampen out any 'surprises' or 'threats' in the delivery of the perceived biodiversity and landscapes of

yesterday. As long as the 'curators' of this museum continue to place their animals rather than the decor at the centre of their enterprise, and as long as those animals continue to be subsidised, one can predict that the place will not be placed 'sous cloche'. The Aspre, with its Mediterranean forest and natural beauty certainly does hold potential for well 'managed' green tourism. But the idea that one could shift from mass tourism to Green eco-tourism is not realistic. The transition from living eleven months of the year in highly organised, animated urban environments to an appreciation of the quietude of nature is not trivial. The majority of European citizens are far better acquainted with the surrealistic world of computer and video technology than with the 'nature' of nature. The supposed anti-stress appeal of nature, may for some people be highly stressful. One can drive through the Aspre in the space of an hour, and to the casual observer all oak trees look the same, and the perpetual problem of what to do next re-emerges. Besides if everybody started admiring the same tree at the same time we would be back to mass tourism. The appeal of Green tourism will for the foreseeable future remain selective, and cannot hope to be the economic miracle of mass tourism.

Alternating Work Patterns; - At present the holiday homes of the Haute Aspre are vacant for several months of the year. With the 'revolution' in communication systems, the possibility of working from home would appear to be a realistic future option. Already in the nearby town of Céret an international music composer and a number of British stock brokers are among its permanent residents. Should this trend continue one could envisage that the 'holiday homes' of the Aspre will be occupied for more than a few weeks over the summer. Working from home may well bring about a re-definition of rural-urban relationships.

The above options are not mutually exclusive and neither are they equally compatible. A combination of farming, well managed agro-tourism and working from home appear like a good mix, and would conform to the desires of many of the Aspre's present day inhabitants. It is imperative that the local people believe they can maintain some control over their destiny, and not as they fear be colonised by the economically

powerful outsiders, or be forced to sacrifice their soul and identity at the altar of short term Theme Park Tourism. The essential point we wish to make is that monoculture in any form, agriculture, forestry, tourism, retirement homes, is unthinkable here. The future of the Aspre, like its past, lies with the optimisation of its diversity, and not just its environmental diversity but also its social diversity. It is this mix and tension that is the life line of the place, and is precisely what future policy needs to promote.

In the final analysis before making any attempt to reduce the complexity of places like the Aspre, it is essential that we first try to understand them. A prerequisite for such understanding is a recognition of the embeddedness of socio-natural dynamics within a broader historical and contemporary transdisciplinary context. That larger picture inevitably brings us back to questions of scale, how can the local persist within a tightly connected global system, and what are the consequences for the socio-natural world if we fail to maintain local diversity? Such questions are the subject matter for further studies, the book of which we leave wide open and the pages blank.

In conclusion, we should remind ourselves that the 'land degradation' crisis in the Aspre is not really a crisis of the environment *per se*, but a human crisis: a crisis of personal identities. The human perceptions of degradation centre around the multiple uses of its peri-urban, hitherto rural spaces. In fact it is the inability of the land to satisfy the conflicting expectations of its various co-habitants that is at the root of its perceived degradation. True to the mutualistic nature of human environmental interaction, by redefining environmental space the societies own identity is also drawn into question. In the end definitions of nature and ecology are probably far less important than what they are perceived to be. It has taken a transdisciplinary approach - one capable of accommodating a view of complexity, history and subjectivity - to discover the complex interdependencies underpinning the relationship between people and the land they inhabit. Without such an approach we are destined to perpetuate misunderstandings and to construct spurious models of land degradation and human-environmental relations.

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CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

EILEEN O'ROURKE

**CHANGING IDENTITIES, CHANGING LANDSCAPES: THE LONG TERM
DYNAMICS OF HUMAN - LAND RELATIONS IN THE ASPRE, ROUSSILLON**

**INTERNATIONAL ECOTECHNOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE
(IERC)**

VOLUME II (Appendices)

Ph.D THESIS

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**CONTAINS
PULLOUTS**

APPENDIX A: THE SOCIO-BIOPHYSICAL SYSTEM OF THE ASPRE.

TIME	INSTITUTIONAL	CULTURAL	DEMOGRAPHIC	ECONOMIC	BIOLOGICAL	PHYSICAL
1.8M - 10,000 B.C		Palaeolithic: Arrival of Homo Erectus on Roussillon soil over 1 million years ago. Domestication of fire 350,000 BC	- Homo Erectus (1.5m-120,000 BC) - Homo Sapiens Neandertalensis. L'Homme de Tautavel (120,000- 35,000 B.C) - - Homo Sapiens Sapiens (Gro-Magnon - 120,000 B.C).	Hunting and Gathering Nomadism	Rhinoceros (<i>dicerorhinus etruscus</i>) Huge Herd. Herds of Bison & 'Aurochs' Horses., & Elephants roaming the grassy Steppes of Roussillon.	Quaternary Geological Period, Pleistocene glaciations of Gunz, Riss, Wurm. Cold dry tundra climatic conditions except for interglacial periods -(120,000-100,000 BC 350,000-300,000 BC, 1.5M - 1.3 M BC) . At start of Gunz glaciation, sea level in Roussillon was 100 meters inferior to today's level, and 20 M inferior at end of the glaciation. The seasonal melting of ice and retreat of the glaciers was characterised by torrents of rocks, gravel, sand and earth being swept down from the mountains and carried out to sea, parts of the load was deposited as alluvium in the valleys. This is how the pliocene plain of Roussillon was created.
10,000 B.C - 500 B.C	Appearance of first settled villages and towns in Roussillon. Social organisation based on land & animal ownership.	Neolithic. The dawn of a new era, the appearance of agriculture and domestication of animals. The Neolithic revolution brought about major psychological changes in human-environmental relationships. Here lies the start of the move from dependence on nature to mastery of it. - Megalithic tombs and dolmens dating from 4,000 B.C - Bronze Age in Roussillon 1,800 B.C. - First Iron Age in Roussillon 700 B.C.	Gradual increase in population	Move from an economy of 'Predation' to an economy of 'Production'.	Spontaneous proliferation of wild wheat. Human cultivation of cereals in Roussillon dates from 5,000 B.C, - marking the start of agriculture, which was combined with the raising of sheep, goats, pigs & beef. Extension of forest: Pubescent and Rouvre Oak in the Plain, Cork Oak on acid silica terrain of the Aspre, and Pine forest in limestone areas e.g. Corbiere. The Green Oak (Symbol of the Aspre), developed at end of the Neolithic.	Holocene Post Glacial Period. Humid Temperate Climate. 'Climate Atlantique' warmer and more humid than present climate. Gradual transformation and humanisation of the environment. Slow conquest of the forest with axe and fire and the appearance of cultivated fields.
500 B.C.	Gaul, Iberian and Celtic invasions of Roussillon.	Mediterranean world dominated by Roman Carthaginian conflict. Hannibal crossed the Pyrenees into Roussillon via the 'Col de Pertus'.				Dryer climatic conditions.
150 B.C - 450 A.D.	Roman colonisation Roussillon becomes part of 'Gaule Narbonnaise' Province.	The Romans left behind them the basis of the Catalan language, the religion of Rome and the trappings of a classical civilisation.		Construction of a Roman 'way' for the transport of iron ore from the Canigou to the plain. The route crossed the Aspre at l'Oratori in the commune of Saint Marsal.	Soil of the Aspre more profound than today (this can be deduced from the Roman record of deciduous forest).	Roman records describe the Aspre as being covered in an extensive Deciduous Temperate forest, extending from the Canigou to the sea. First attempt at irrigation on the plain.
450 - 700 A.D	Roussillon was over ran by Vandals, followed by the Wisigoths, whose reign lasted for over two centuries, during which time Roussillon formed part of the Province of Septimanie, later known as Basse Languedoc.	Wave of Barbarian invasions. The lowlands found themselves in the grip of violent invasions, political unrest and virulent diseases which were to last throughout the middle ages. The Aspre takes on a 'Refuge' role.	Higher population density in the hills rather than on the plain	The Aspre not only served as a safe haven but was economically more prosperous than the arid, flood prone and malaria infested plain.	Political unrest and Nomadic influence of the new conquerors favoured pastoralism and the keeping of wealth on the hoof.	More intense exploitation of the uplands. Geographically the ideal zone for settlement lay above the reach of malaria and below the timber line.
700 - 800	Roussillon under Arab (Saracens & Maures) control.	The religious fervour of the Arabs was equalled only by their desire for pillage. The remains of an Arab graveyard still to be found in Boule d'Amont.		The spread of Islam provoked an economic disintegration in the Mediterranean		The Arabs advanced irrigation on the plain . fashioning it on a system they had installed in Andalusi.

TIME	INSTITUTIONAL	CULTURAL	DEMOGRAPHIC	ECONOMIC	BIOLOGICAL	PHYSICAL
800 - 1000	<p>Under Carolingian reign Roussillon was administratively aligned with Catalonia, prompting a shift in the political, economic & cultural centre from Narbonne to Barcelona.</p> <p>The feudal system was established in Roussillon. By the XIII century each little village of the Aups formed part of a feudal parish, (whose outline remains unchanged to this day), under the control of a Seigneur.</p>	<p>Carolingian epoch strongly influenced the cultural, political and agrarian structure of Roussillon.</p> <p>Roussillon forms a frontier between Islam and Christianity.</p> <p>Founding of Benedictine Abby of Arles sur Tech, and the Augustine Priory of Serrabonne in the Aups, which exerted a strong cultural and institutional influence over the surrounding area.</p>	<p>Strong demographic growth and need for new land. By the end of the X century the hills of the Aups and Pyrenees were unworked, prompting a descent towards the unoccupied lowlands.</p>	<p>Development of large feudal estates, frequently linked with the church. The remaining land was repopulated by Charles le Chauve under the name of "le vito cultivé de la land ovede".</p> <p>The "vito" was the cell of rural life in the Aups.</p>	<p>Era of large scale land clearance (linked with population pressure) throughout Roussillon.</p>	<p>Dispersion of the Aups land in large domains prior to the X century, and the construction of feudal parishes between the XI and XIII centuries.</p>
1050 - 1250	<p>"Comtes de Barcelona" reinforced their authority over the Region, and in 1068 introduced important legislation known as "Usages de Barcelona". Article 72, "La loi Serrate" set the basis for access to communal property.</p>	<p>The heretic Cathar religious fervour which overran much of the Midi was never as strong in Roussillon. The Inquisition which arrived in Roussillon in 1243 was highly effective.</p>	<p>By the end of the XIII century the mountains of the Aups population was established, which corresponded with maximum forest clearance and the removal population surplus of the first half of the thirteenth century.</p>	<p>Essentially an agrarian exchange economy, with mining and textile industry also important. Due to political instability agriculture on the plain was impoverished.</p>	<p>During the middle ages market gardening and orchards were to be found around Perpignan. Barley, wheat and Indian maize was incorporated with vines and olives on the slopes of the Aups and Altous. Byes dominated cultivation in the mountainous mountains of the Haute Aups. Pastoralism and mountain - plain transhumance formed an integral part of the agrarian system.</p>	<p>First mention of Catalan Forges in the XII century, which were used to treat the iron ore from the Canigou. The charcoal needs of the forges were to place a continued demand on the forests of the Aups and Vallage.</p>
1276 - 1344	<p>Roussillon enjoyed a brief period of independence under the reign of the "Roi de Majorque".</p>	<p>Roussillon's culture and commerce flourished under the "Roi de Majorque" period.</p>		<p>Thirteenth economic period for Roussillon (and Catalonia), who had established commercial links throughout the Mediterranean, the Orient and North Africa. Their economic "empire" was built around the textile industry.</p>	<p>Initially the canals of the lowlands were used as first water for transport, irrigation, and especially to power water mills. Widespread agricultural use of the canals for irrigation purposes came much later.</p>	<p>Construction of 15 Km "Rayol de Tour", irrigation canal.</p>
1350 - 1600	<p>Roussillon returns to the Aragon confederation, but was annexed by the Castilian monarchy in 1493, what followed was a period of renewed instability and political unrest associated with Castilian imperialism, resulting in frequent conflicts between France and Spain.</p> <p>Huguenots arrived in Roussillon in 1570.</p> <p>French Hundred Years War.</p>	<p>Roussillon becomes a Frontier between Gaul's and Iberians. The Aups once more assumes its role of "Château fort de Roussillon".</p> <p>Roussillon once more takes on a fortified appearance.</p>	<p>Demographic structure had collapsed at the end of the medieval period, due to Black Death of the end XIV century, which halved the population almost every where in the Midi.</p> <p>Plagues were also frequent in the XVI and XVII centuries. In 1611 Perpignan lost 1/3 of its population (4,000 people) due to plague.</p>	<p>Slugs made the connection with the Americas in the 16th. New networks of transatlantic and North-South trade routes moved the world's centre of economic life away from the Mediterranean.</p> <p>During the Hundred Year War bandits ravaged the country side of Roussillon, commerce and agriculture seriously suffered. People were afraid to leave their fortified villages and towns. Cultivation of land on the plain was once more impoverished.</p>	<p>In the aftermath of the Black Death (1348) there was an abundance of land and not enough peasants to exploit it. Forest cover spread.</p> <p>Food was plentiful, people better nourished and healthier after a hundred years of intensive slaughter.</p> <p>Cholera and typhoid remained endemic in the Aups and well into the twentieth century.</p>	<p>Construction of the Spanish Armada's ships held responsible for destruction of the limestone hills of the Canigou, whose lower landscape remains as testimony to the power of human transformation of the physical environment to this day.</p> <p>Catalan forges were in full swing in the XVI and XVII centuries. Serious forest depletion in the Aups and Vallage disrupted the hydrology of the plain, prompting the construction of protection canals around some of the towns of the plain, such as Thuir, Millas & Illas sur Tet.</p>
1600 - 1700	<p>Roussillon returns to France under 1659 Treaty of the Pyrenees. Closure of the frontier with Southern Catalonia prompted the emergence of thriving contraband activities.</p> <p>Roussillon exempt from paying the "Taille" (tax on property), one of the privileges granted by Louis XIV at the time of annexation of the province.</p>	<p>Identity crisis following rupture of long standing cultural and economic ties with Barcelona, reflected in the explosion of Baroque Art in the churches of Roussillon (esp. Aups & Cardener). Art used as a sign of non-submission.</p> <p>Parts perceived as an alien and distant capital.</p>	<p>Late seventeenth century demographic slow down.</p> <p>New poles of urban growth.</p>	<p>Economic stagnation for Roussillon. Squares of economic ties with Barcelona seriously affected textile and metallurgical industries. Crisis hampered smuggling because big business for some and a necessary means of survival for others.</p> <p>The opening of the Canal de Midi in 1681, allowed easier export of wine to Northern Europe.</p>	<p>Roussillon seriously deficient in wood, its forges were over regulated by both agriculture and especially the Catalan forges.</p>	<p>After the Treaty of the Pyrenees the people of the Vallage got special permission to trade with Barcelona, on the basis that otherwise they would have to close down due to the lack of factories in Roussillon.</p>

TIME	INSTITUTIONAL	CULTURAL	DEMOGRAPHIC	ECONOMIC	BIOLOGICAL	PHYSICAL
1700 - 1799	<p>A series of edicts between 1769 & 1780 abolished communal grazing rights and granted freedom of enclosure, however such laws were slow to appear on the ground.</p> <p>The Royal decree of 1764 gave important tax exemptions to those who cleared land for the cultivation of cereals, as a response to population pressure in a country where bread formed the staple food.</p>	<p>Roussillon continues to cling to its Catalan culture and identity, with traditional Catalan dress being frequently found among consubstanced heirs from Southern Catalonia.</p>	<p>Reversed demographic pressure.</p> <p>From 1770 to 1790 the population density of the Haute Aups rose from 12 to 20 people per Km².</p>	<p>Much of the reclaimed slopes & pastures woodland was planted with more profitable trees rather than with the mandated cereals, of the 1764 Royal Decree.</p> <p>Start of gradual decline in economy of the Haute Aups. It's advantages over the plain were weakening with the onset of political security and drainage of the flood prone plain, whose flat and irrigated surface was now in a far stronger position to reap the rewards of the 'agricultural revolution' than the Aups. The introduction of the plough in the late eighteenth century overcame the obstacle of the heather, but more slowly and of the plain. However the Aups continued to prosper until the second half of the nineteenth century.</p>	<p>Paternalism and conservatism opposed each other at the end of the 'Ancien Régime'. The administration gave priority to cultivation in an attempt to achieve security in grain in line with increasing population pressure.</p> <p>By 1790 Roussillon was still deficient in grain, which had to be imported from Languedoc, or at the best from North Africa and Italy via the port of Marseilles.</p> <p>The first agricultural revolution - marked by the introduction of the plough and potato and maize crops from the Americas in the late eighteenth century, which in combination with fodder crops such as clover & Lucerne, prompted a new crop rotation and reduction of the fallow period, resulting in an overall intensification of agriculture.</p>	<p>The Royal land clearance decree prompted removal of deforestation of the uplands, which was followed by various erosion and once more the Department was inundated with a series of floods from 1716 to 1781.</p> <p>By 1780 there was so much 'defrichement' that the herds of the Vallées were obliged to import wood by sea from Languedoc, or export the untreated ore to Southern Catalonia.</p> <p>By the end of the eighteenth century the dangers of 'defrichement' were acknowledged and came to a halt. Increased food production was to be achieved by more intensive agriculture rather than increasing the surface area under cultivation.</p> <p>The drainage and expansion of the irrigation network on the plain.</p>
1799	<p>French Revolution.</p> <p>The Revolution in Roussillon brought about a change in personnel rather than in structure. The bourgeoisie continued to be the dominant class.</p> <p>Roussillon conserved the essentials of Catalan Law and a sort of bi-nationality up until 1789, both of which became more difficult to uphold after the Revolution. From 1790 on the Province of Roussillon became the Department of the Pyrénées Orientales.</p> <p>Fierce resistance to conscription.</p>	<p>Roussillon did not support the French Revolution, in particular it objected to the secularisation of religion, conscription and conscription.</p> <p>The Province was plunged into general chaos. Temporary military crisis when Spain recaptured a large part of the region between April and September 1793. The Spanish received full collaboration from the Vallées and Carcassonne.</p> <p>Revolutionary powers looked badly on Roussillon's attempts to preserve its separate Catalan economy & identity.</p>	<p>Immediately after the Revolution, large scale emigration across the Pyrenees impacted on the fabric of village life in many border areas.</p> <p>Demographic recovery as the political situation settled down.</p> <p>From 1799 to 1844 the population density of the Haute Aups rose from 20 to 33 people per Km².</p>	<p>After the revolution Roussillon was economically in ruins. The Jacobin administration looked badly on the political aspirations of the Region and effectively dismantled the Department, removing the Lyons, University, Court, Bishops etc., which were relocated either to Montpellier or Toulouse.</p> <p>The revolution had no impact on the 'latifundium' Agrarian structure, which continued to operate in the Aups & Vallées, where 30% of the surface area was owned by 4% of the population. The large land owners frequently decided to large owners with vested interests in the forest.</p>	<p>Continued tension in mountain-plain relationship. The newly drained and well irrigated plain turned more towards agricultural specialisation, in wheat and market gardening, where as the environmental constraints of the Aups and other upland areas favoured agriculture - personal activities, collective rights and communal ownership. Seasonal inward transhumance to the plain was an important part of that system.</p>	<p>The French Revolution promoted private property ownership over communal rights. This suited the vintners and market gardeners of the Haute Aups and Plain, but was to have serious consequences for hill and upland areas.</p>
1800's	<p>The 1827 'Code Forestier', which tried to control and regulate the use of the forest, including the exclusion of goats, was fiercely resisted by the local population, who defended their communal rights under the ancient 'Loi Servage'.</p>	<p>Big shift from Royalist to Socialism throughout the Midi, including the Pyrénées Orientales.</p>	<p>Mid-century demographic watershed, with peak population throughout the Region. Haute Aups reached its maximum population density of 33 people per Km² in 1846.</p>	<p>The New Régime abolished wine export taxes between Departments, which encouraged an increase in area under vines on the plain.</p> <p>From the nineteenth century on the Aups and Montagne in general was feeling the effects of almost total integration, which in time was to prove disastrous for the Haute Aups which lacked a comparative advantage.</p> <p>Research in Saint Hilaire in the mid-nineteenth century, indicates that the economy of the Haute Aups was based on exchange and the transformation of agro-pastoral products to particular markets. Mining and wool were also important. It was an open system, refusing any notions of autarky.</p>	<p>Between 1816-1817 severe grain deficiency in the Vallées, spurred up the trade in commuted grain from across the Pyrenees.</p> <p>A combination of population pressure and agrarian structures led to an increase in the stock and here tactics (Talus à ombres) of the high 'Basses' in order to temporarily gain a good yielding harvest.</p> <p>Land use in the Haute Aups in 1825, consisted of 30% Pastureland, 27% Forest and 27% Cultivation, of which 18% was classified as ploughed land. The Aups is testimony to human effort in the face of difficult environmental conditions.</p>	<p>Ecno-ecological impoverishment combined with the political marginalisation of the 'code forestier' prompted continued use and abuse of the commons, with the forest turning into the ultimate site of transgression.</p>

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1700 - 1789	<p>A series of edicts between 1769 & 1780 abolished communal grazing rights and granted freedom of enclosure, however such laws were slow to appear on the ground.</p> <p>The Royal decree of 1766 gave important tax exemptions to those who cleared land for the cultivation of cereals, as a response to population pressure in a country where bread formed the staple food.</p>	<p>Roussillon continues to cling to its Catalan culture and identity, with traditional Catalan dress being frequently found among contraband items from Southern Catalonia.</p>	<p>Renewed demographic pressure.</p> <p>From 1730 to 1790 the population density of the Haute Aspre rose from 12 to 20 people per Km².</p>	<p>Much of the reclaimed maquis & garrigue wasteland was planted with more profitable vines rather than with the intended cereals, of the 1766 Royal Decree. Start of gradual decline in economy of the Haute Aspre. It's advantages over the plain were weakening with the onset of political security and drainage of the flood prone plain, whose flat and irrigated surface was now in a far stronger position to reap the rewards of the 'agricultural revolution' than the Aspre. The introduction of the plough in the late eighteenth century overcame the obstacle of the heavier, but more fertile soil of the plain. However the Aspre continued to prosper until the second half of the nineteenth century.</p>	<p>Pastoralists and cultivators opposed each other at the end of the 'Ancien Régime'. The administration gave priority to cultivators in an attempt to achieve security in grain in line with increasing population pressure.</p> <p>By 1790 Roussillon was still deficient in grain, which had to be imported from Languedoc, or at the limit from North Africa and Italy via the port of Marseilles.</p> <p>The first agricultural revolution - marked by the introduction of the plough and potato and maize crops from the Americas in the late eighteenth century, which in combination with fodder crops such as clover & Lucerne, prompted a new crop rotation and reduction of the fallow period, resulting in an overall intensification of agriculture.</p>	<p>The Royal land clearance decree prompted renewed deforestation of the uplands, which was followed by serious erosion and once more the Department was inundated with a series of floods from 1716 to 1783. By 1780 there was so much 'defrichement' that the forges of the Vallespir were obliged to import wood by sea from Languedoc, or export the untreated ore to Southern Catalonia.</p> <p>By the end of the eighteenth century the dangers of 'defrichement' were acknowledged and came to a halt. Increased food production was to be achieved by more intensive agriculture rather than increasing the surface area under cultivation. The drainage and expansion of the irrigation network on the plain</p>
1789	<p>French Revolution.</p> <p>The Revolution in Roussillon brought about a change in personnel rather than in structures. The bourgeois continued to be the dominant class.</p> <p>Roussillon conserved the essentials of Catalan Law and a sort of bi-nationality up until 1789, both of which became more difficult to uphold after the Revolution. From 1790 on the Province of Roussillon became the Department of the Pyrénées Orientales.</p> <p>Fierce resistance to conscription.</p>	<p>Roussillon did not support the French Revolution, in particular it objected to the secularisation of religion, centralisation and conscription.</p> <p>The Province was plunged into general chaos. Temporary identity crisis when Spain reoccupied a large part of the region between April and September 1793. The Spanish received full collaboration from the Vallespir and Cerdagne.</p> <p>Revolutionary powers looked badly on Roussillon's attempts to preserve its separatist Catalan autonomy & identity.</p>	<p>Immediately after the Revolution, large scale emigration across the Pyrenees impacted on the fabric of village life in many boarder areas. Demographic recovery as the political situation settled down.</p> <p>From 1790 to 1846 the population density of the Haute Aspre rose from 20 to 32 people per Km²</p>	<p>After the revolution Roussillon was economically in ruins. The Jacobean administration looked badly on the political amphibians of the Region and effectively decapitated the Department, removing the Lycée, University, Court, Bishopric etc., which were relocated either in Montpellier or Toulouse.</p> <p>The revolution had no impact on the 'latifundiaire' Agrarian structure, which continued to operate in the Aspre & Vallespir, where 56% of the surface area was owned by 6% of the population. The large land owners frequently doubled as forge owners with vested interests in the forest.</p>	<p>Continual tension in mountain-plain relationship. The newly drained and well irrigated plain turned more towards agricultural specialisation, in vines and market gardening, where as the environmental constraints of the Aspre and other upland areas favoured agro-silvo- pastoral activities, collective rights and communal ownership. Seasonal inverse transhumance to the plain was an important part of that system.</p>	<p>The French Revolution promoted private property ownership over communal rights. This suited the viticulture's and market gardeners of the Basse Aspre and Plain, but was to have serious consequences for hill and upland areas.</p>
1800's	<p>The 1827 'Code Forestier', which tried to control and regulate the use of the forest, including the exclusion of goats, was fiercely resented by the local population, who defended their communal rights under the ancient 'Loi Stratae'.</p>	<p>Big shift from Royalist to Socialism throughout the Midi, including the Pyrénées Orientales.</p>	<p>Mid-century demographic watershed, with peak population throughout the Region. Haute Aspre reached its maximum population density of 32 people per Km² in 1846.</p>	<p>The New Regime abolished wine export taxes between Departments, which encouraged an increase in area under vines on the plain.</p> <p>From the nineteenth century on the Aspre and Mediterranean in general was feeling the effects of closer market integration, which in time was to prove disastrous for the Haute Aspre which lacked a competitive advantage.</p> <p>Research in Saint Marsal in the mid-nineteenth century, indicate that the economy of the Haute Aspre was based on exchange and the transformation of agro-pastoral products in particular textiles. Mining and wood work was also important. It was an open system, refuting any notions of autarchy.</p>	<p>Between 1816-1817 severe grain deficiency in the Vallespir, stepped up the trade in contraband grain from across the Pyrenees.</p> <p>A combination of population pressure and agrarian structures lead to an increase in the slash and burn tactics (Tallat i sembrat) of the high 'Saltus' in order to temporarily gain a poor yielding harvest.</p> <p>Land use in the Haute Aspre in 1825, consisted of 50% Pastureland, 25% Forest and 25% Cultivation, of which 18 % was classified as ploughed land. This figure is testimony to human effort in the face of difficult environmental conditions.</p>	<p>Socio-ecological impoverishment combined with the political antagonism of the 'code forestiere' prompted continual use and abuse of the commons, with the forest turning into the ultimate site of transgression.</p>

TIME	INSTITUTIONAL	CULTURAL	DEMOGRAPHIC	ECONOMIC	BIOLOGICAL	PHYSICAL
1850	The Second Republic (1845-1852)	The severe economic difficulties under the Second Republic (1845-1852), provided the raw material for radicalism, which gave increased impetus to the mas movement to the communist left, within the Department.	Peak Population in the Aspre.	Improved communication and market integration from the mid-nineteenth century meant that American and Russian wheat could compete with that of the Mediterranean plain. Free trade and tighter market integration is held responsible for the 'Mévent' (1848-1851), an economic depression reflected in falling prices for Roussillon's agricultural produce, including cereals & wine.	With improved communication and market integration, the abolition of communal grazing rights and the introduction of fertilisers (in the 1850's), the plain turned more towards vines and market gardening. The transhumance sheep were no longer needed for their manure, and their welcome on their former summer grazing grounds grew cooler, disrupting the agro-pastoral system of the uplands. By the mid-nineteenth century the Basse Aspre and Plain of Roussillon was progressively turning to the monocropping of vines. The discovery of Quinine towards the end of the nineteenth century, reduced lowland mortality from malaria on the plain, thus rendering it habitable all year round. The Aspre lost yet another of its former advantages over the plain.	Change in the Aspres micro climate between 1800-1850, was reflected in decreasing precipitation in line with Maximum forest clearance. When torrential rain did arrive the denuded slopes offered no resistance to hydraulic erosion.
1850 - 1900	The Third Republic (1870-1914) favoured free trade improved road & rail networks, education and overall closer National integration The 1881 'Lois de Jules Ferry' made primary school education in France obligatory and free for every one, with French being the sole language allowed in school. The 1882 'Restauration des Terrains en Montagne' (R.T.M.) legislation was an effort to control erosion in the upland and flooding on the plain.	The Industrial Revolution changed economic and social life in all corners of the globe. The Third Republic greatly improved road and rail networks, introduced compulsory primary education, these occurrences combined with compulsory conscription during the 1870 Franco-Prussian war and World War One is held responsible for turning provincial 'peasants into Frenchmen'. Catalan language debased and abolished from schools. The literary renaissance of Catalan language and culture between 1880-1890 was confined to an intellectual circle. In contrast to Southern Catalonia the Catalan language did not assume a political meaning in Roussillon.	The 1850s marks the start of a massif exodus from the Haute Aspre to the Plain and Valley of the Tet for work. From 1846 to 1896 the population of the Haute Aspre fell from 32 to 20 inhabitants per Km ² . In half a century, 1850 - 1900, the Haute Aspre lost a quarter of its population. This was not an isolated case, in the same period the near by Cevennes lost one third of its population. Schooling exasperated rural exodus.	Opening of the railway line between Narbonne and Perpignan in 1858, provided access to National and International markets for Roussillon wine. From then on the plain was given over to the monoculture of vines. Phylloxera invasion wiped out one of the principal resources of the Aspre, which at the same time strengthened the market position of the plain. Industrial Revolution and tighter market integration increased the pressure on the cottage industries of the Aspre. The long term problem of the forges was due to the scarcity of fuelwood, but more severe problems arose when competition from Northern Europe and Spain threatened the industry after 1840. By the end of the nineteenth century ore from the Canigou was no longer treated locally, but transported by train to the Middle of France. Most of the mines of the Canigou closed soon after World War One. The importation of British coal, eventually brought to an end charcoal making from the forest of the Aspre In 1880 the Third Republic allowed the importation of wool from Australia, which provoked a serious drop in the price of wool in Roussillon from 200 F /100 Kg in 1860 to 76 F/100 Kg in 1880. This had serious consequences for 'elevate' and cottage textile industry of the Aspre. Opening of the first cork workshop in Llauro in 1874, which became the centre of a short lived thriving cottage industry in the Aspre.	The Phylloxera invasion of Languedoc-Roussillon in the 1870s wiped out the vineyards of the Aspre. The plain was less affected, thus allowing it to exploit a lucrative niche in the wine market. The communes of the Aspre did not have the means to reconstitute their vineyards except for the more favourable ones bordering the plain. Cork trees were planted on the phylloxered terraces of Llauro, Camelas and Oms. Drop in wool prices forced the pastoralists of the Haute Aspre to make the difficult transition from wool to meat production, necessitating the introduction of new breeds. Endemic 'fièvre de Malta' (brucellosis) in the goat and human population of the Aspre. Tuberculosis was also rampant.	1892 Big flood in the Tech. 1894 Local drought conditions. Over exploitation of cork oak lead to the importation of cork from Spain in order to meet the needs of the cork making workshops of the Aspre. Arrival of the train in Perpignan in 1858, in the valley of the Tet in 1865 and to the Spanish frontier in 1878.
1900 - 1940	Separation of Church from State in 1905. 1914- First World War, - there was widespread resistance to conscription in Roussillon with many deserters crossing the boarder into Spain. 1907- Languedoc-Roussillon's wine growers revolt. 1907- Establishment of the first wine co-operative in the Pyrénées Orientales at Bompas.	Schools reinforced urban ideology of progress, mobility, comfort, consumerism & leisure. The mental opening up to the outside world contributed to the psychological awakening in the people of the Aspre to the 'backwardness' of their lives on the world stage. The de-valuation of peasant status rendered emigration to urban industrial centres more attractive.	Population density of the Haute Aspre fell from 20 people per Km ² in 1900 to 8 people /Km ² by 1950. Education and World War One aggravated rural exodus. A lot of the men did not return from the war, forcing the women who could not work the small holdings on their own to move out.	Tighter market integration and the use of new technologies provoked a disequilibrium in the secondary resources of the Aspre. The cork industry succumbed to competition from Spain and Algeria and eventually to plastics by the early twentieth century. Similarly the demand for Tannin dried up. In effect the wine, wool-textile, charcoal, metallurgic and cork industries of the Haute Aspre succumbed to either economic or ecological pressure by the early twentieth century. The societies respons: was emigration.	The dehumanisation of the Haute Aspre was directly linked to the transformation of the environment. The 'friche'/ scrubland rose in inverse proportion to the falling population level. From 1882 to 1913 wasteland in the Haute Aspre rose from 43% to 60%; arable land fell from 15% to 9% and down to 5% by 1950 in the Haute Aspre.	1907 - Large flood on the Tech. 1920 - Second largest flood of the twentieth century. 1926-1929, Drought years in Roussillon. The closure of the Catalan forges, the importation of British coal and the disappearance of the 'charbonniere' soon after world war one signalled good news for the forest which gained ground.

TIME	INSTITUTIONAL	CULTURAL	DEMOGRAPHIC	ECONOMIC	BIOLOGICAL	PHYSICAL
1940-1960	<p>World War Two.</p> <p>Spanish Civil War (1936 -1939), closure of the frontier with Spain. Spanish refugees crossed the boarder into Roussillon, where many of them settled permanently.</p> <p>1954- War in Algeria, many of the repatriated French-Algerians settled in the South of France, including Roussillon, where a 'quartier' of Perpignan was built specifically for them.</p> <p>France signed The Treaty of Rome in 1957.</p>	<p>World War Two and the catastrophic flood of 1940 marked the end of the economic, social and cultural life of the Haute Aspre, after which fatalism and pacifism set in . The social cohesion of the villages fell apart when the schools, shops, post offices, churches etc. closed down . Only the old people were left behind. The 1940 flood marked the symbolic end of an era.</p> <p>Children in depopulated rural areas were bussed to schools at a distance.</p>	<p>Continual demographic decline and rural exodus.</p> <p>The population density of the Haute Aspre fell from 8 people per Km 2 in 1950 to 4 people by 1984.</p>	<p>Abandonment of secondary resources of the Haute Aspre such as Hazelnuts and Chestnuts.</p> <p>The economic crisis of the thirties combined with the shortage of labour after two world wars, marked the end of the Mas system in the Haute Aspre.</p>	<p>Large scale land abandonment.</p> <p>After World War Two , agriculture in Europe passed into a new phase of mechanisation and tighter international market competition. The Haute Aspre had no part to play in this 'revolution', it's elevated terrain being an effective obstacle to the machine. In contrast the viticole villages of the Basse-Aspre continued to prosper and in time adjusted to the machine and to chemical herbicides and pest control.</p>	<p>The 1940 catastrophic flood in the Vallespir killed over 40 people and swept away 2,000 ha of land. Since it occurred during the war there was a shortage of labour to rebuild the damaged roads, houses, terraces, fields etc.</p> <p>Following the flood the R.T.M reforestation programme began in earnest. By 1980 they had reforested 11,000 ha of the Tech and 9,000 ha of the Tet, including 100 ha of the Réat forest in Torderes.</p> <p>It was mostly commercial wood, such as Pine, Fir & Eucalyptus that was planted. However the commercialisation of the forest of Aspre-Vallespir was never a success, they proved to be ill suited to the Mediterranean, and many plantations, including the Réat forest burnt down.</p>
1960 - 1970	<p>The Political thrust of the Department was towards mass tourism along the coast, reflected in the compulsory sale of land for large scale high-rise holiday construction projects.</p> <p>De-colonisation of the Congo Belge in 1964, and land speculation takes off in the Aspre.</p>	<p>The arrival of ex-colonial Belgian property speculators in the Aspre in the early sixties is followed by the Neo-Ruraux, children of '68, and 'congé payée' mass tourism in the coastal resorts of Roussillon, was to have a profound influence on the culture, economy and lay of the land.</p> <p>From here springs the insider - outsider conflict which continues to dominate community life in the Aspre, especially the Haute Aspre, with its large 'outsider' population.</p> <p>Tourism was perceived as having been forced on the local population.</p>	<p>Population move from Urban to Rural areas, mostly consisting of holiday home owners who only lived in the Aspre for a number of weeks in the year, and do not appear in the population census. Some urban retired and Neo-Ruraux lived there all year round, and constituted the principal inhabitants of some of the former semi-deserted villages of the Haute Aspre.</p> <p>Between its peak population in 1845 and its lowest demographic ebb in 1975, the Haute Aspre lost 82% of its population. For the same period the Basse Aspre lost 23% of its population. Perpignan grew by five fold.</p>	<p>Upsurge in holiday and retirement homes prompted a boom in the construction industry, with much of the demand being meet by outside construction firms and labourers. Similarly property speculation in the Aspre becomes big business, with prices jumping from 500-1000 F/Ha in the early sixties to 10,000 F/Ha by 1980.</p> <p>The old people 'left behind' in the Aspre sold their patrimony for what seemed like a fortune at the time. Apart from the sale of land the local people did not profit much from the tourist industry, which was essentially owned and run by outsiders.</p>	<p>The Neo-Ruraux in the Haute Aspre made an attempt to work some of the land and return to a subsistence form of agriculture. Overall their impact was minor, the majority failed and moved on, but some did succeed in making a living from small herds of sheep and goats.</p>	<p>The forest continued to gain ground, and agriculture to decline in the Haute Aspre.</p>
1970 - 1980	<p>Resentment of outsiders involvement in local politics.</p> <p>The SAFER was established in 1973 to organise land sales and give priority to local agriculturists.</p> <p>The 1972 'Special Mountain Compensation scheme' and the EEC Directive 75/268, drawn up in 1975 , was among the first legislation to recognise the agricultural and social difficulties of 'disadvantaged' upland areas like the Aspre, and to address the problem of Regional inequality. Under this EEC directive 45% of French Territory and 52% of Agricultural land in the EEC was classified as 'disadvantaged'.</p>	<p>Due to its peri-urban position the Basse Aspre became commuter land and the Haute Aspre turns towards holiday, retirement and weekend homes.</p>	<p>Population density in Haute Aspre fell to 4 people per Km2.</p>	<p>The sheep farmers of the Haute Aspre received another setback with the closure of the abattoirs in Amelie les Bains and Ceret, placing them at the mercy of rare negociants who passed from mas to mas.</p> <p>The high interest rates of the 1980's had an adverse affect on the farmers, especially viticultures who had borrowed heavily in order to modernise their farms.</p>	<p>First signs of a move towards agricultural extensification in the Haute Aspre, made possible by outside subsidies, designed to stem rural depopulation.</p>	<p>1976, big forest fire in the Aspre, which burnt over 7,000 Ha along its Eastern slopes.</p>

TIME	INSTITUTIONAL	CULTURAL	DEMOGRAPHIC	ECONOMIC	BIOLOGICAL	PHYSICAL
1980 - 1990	<p>In 1981 the Socialists come to power in France.</p> <p>A series of agro-environmental policies, including 'Article 19' of the EEC Directive 797/85, are implemented in the Aspre, in combination with the National</p> <p>1985, 'Loi de Montagne'.</p> <p>1986 Spain enters the EEC.</p> <p>1990 P.I.L (Plan d'Initiative Local), French Government subsidy for regrouping small vineyards.</p> <p>1993 Dublin Accord, incentives to reduce wine production in the community, including subsidies for uprooting vines.</p> <p>The 1992 McSherry reforms to the CAP shift subsidies from produce to acreage in an attempt to curtail over production</p> <p>The EEC open frontier policy of 1993 meant that the produce of Roussillon were in stiff competition from other Mediterranean countries with lower wages and overheads and producing similar produce.</p>	<p>The Tourist industry continued to grow and agriculture to decline. The major tourist attraction in the Department remained the Mediterranean coast, in comparison to which the 'Green Tourism' of the 'arrière pays' increased only slightly.</p> <p>The number of secondary holiday homes in the Haute Aspre almost equals that of permanent residents.</p>	<p>The 1982 and 1990 demographic census show the first signs of an increase in the rural population of the Aspre (in keeping with National demographic trends) for the first time in over a hundred years.</p>	<p>The CAP promoted intensive agriculture in optimal areas and extensification subsidies for farmers in disadvantaged areas such as the Aspre in order to maintain a social presence and to attract tourism.</p> <p>The quality agricultural produce of the Haute Aspre, such as goats cheese, honey, organic vegetables, lamb etc., cannot compete on the open market, they invariably end up serving an easily saturated local market.</p> <p>Problems in viticulture due to excess production and falling consumption. The Dublin Accord tried to curtail over production by offering subsidies for uprooting vineyards. In contrast the P.I.L a French. In effect the future of viticulture in the Department is seen to be with the 'Chef d'Entreprise'</p> <p>The T.G.V by-passed Perpignan and Marseilles.</p>	<p>The EEC agro-environmental policies promoted extensification, biological and environmentally friendly agriculture in 'disadvantaged' areas, with tourism being the bottom line. The agricultural statistics of the Haute Aspre correspond to the extensification model with falling number of sheep and an increase in grassland</p>	<p>By 1980 almost 90% of the Haute Aspre was covered in 'Friche', - scrub, maquis and regenerating forest.</p> <p>By 1992 35% of the Aspre was owned by people not originating from the Department. In the Haute Aspre that figure reached 45%.</p> <p>1991 - 1993 over average precipitation in the Aspre</p>

Appendix B: Agro-Environmental Meeting between Eleveurs and Elevage Technician.

The dialogue which follows is an excerpt from a meeting between seven animal husbandry farmers (Eleveurs) of mixed Catalan and neo-ruraux origin, from the Aspre-Vallespir, and the local Elevage Technician, based in Céret. The objective of the meeting, which lasted from 8.30 pm to 1.30 am, was to discuss their experience of the Article 19 programme, which they all participate in, and to inform them about the forthcoming experimental 'Plan de Development Durable' (PDD) and 'Prime a l'Herb', agro-environmental extensification subsidies.

Technician: As you know Article 19 of the EEC Directive 797/85 is in this Department basically about getting éleveurs to create and maintain firebreaks, the objective being to prevent forest fires. The subsidies for the forested foothills of the Pyrénées Orientales amounts to 1,200,000 F over a five year period, with individual farmers receiving between 200 F to 1,100 F/ha, depending on the level of constraints. It is a contract between the éleveur and the State for five years, this being the first year of its implementation in the Pyrenees Orientales. On the fire breaks we have set perennial subterranean clover which controls the scrub and provides rich grazing for your animals.

Eleveur 1: What are we supposed to be protecting, the village, the forest, the firebreaks or just feeding our animals? I think a lot of the firebreaks are positioned in the wrong place, if there was a fire accompanied by the tramontane at 100 km/h they would be totally ineffective.

Technician: It is not the éleveur who decides the placement of the firebreaks.

Eleveur 1: I think the method used for maintaining the fire breaks is all wrong, it has no effect on the 'ciste de montpellier', besides there are certain species the animals will not eat, like g net. In Portugal they have a system of deep ploughing for three

consecutive years followed by the setting of robust seeds like oats.

Technician: You are not obliged to follow any fixed rules for maintaining the firebreaks, you are free to take the initiative. All you must do is pass the annual inspection from the forestry technician.

Eleveur 2: Nobody seems to know what his criteria are. I have had three or four visits from him over the last year and have not yet been paid for my work. I insist we must not look upon this as a subsidy, it is no free gift or hand out but enumeration for work done. Neither must they think that an éleveur with a herd can maintain the firebreaks cheaper than a mechanical enterprise. Our animals cannot keep up with the 'brousse'. The EEC must guarantee us payment, I cannot possibly do the work for next year if I am not payed for this one.

Technician: The delay in payment is due to the fact that it is the first year, they want to see the results first. There is no point in I asking the administration, I already know their response, they are waiting for payment from the Public Treasury.

Eleveur 2: They are dreaming in their offices. Brussels says subsidies for the environment and they are one year behind in payment. The accord is really made to suit the administration, the éleveurs have no voice.

Technician: I want to introduce the new 'Plan de Development Durable', for which 37 experimental sites have been selected in France, with twenty participants per site. Conflent, Fenouillede and Vallespir constitutes one of the sites and you are among the éleveurs invited to join the programme. The principle is that the éleveurs will be compensated for reducing their production, or rather they are encouraged to produce differently with emphasis on quality and environment. The idea arises from the new CAP, in an effort to create a better equilibrium and integration between farming, the natural environment and the local economy. It is envisaged as a ten year contract to be signed between the farmer and the State. The idea behind it is to promote

extensification, bio-diversity, optimal occupation of space, using abandoned land, promoting biological production, and maintaining the original character of the landscape. The bottom line is environment and landscape with a view to tourism.

Eleveur 1: I consider it very stupid maintaining the environment for the privileged.

Technician: We must not look upon them as the privileged, but as our paying clients.

Eleveur 3: We are tired of producing the environment for others. It is a pretty landscape that is behind all these policies. Our products are only a nuisance to them in Brussels, they say that they don't need them, they are too expensive and that we are inefficient. We have no choice but to work for them. They are imposing on us what we can produce here, but there is a big difference between here and Brussels. On top of all that we are only given fifteen days to decide whether to join or not. More forms all asking the same questions, do they ever communicate between themselves in Brussels? We will end up by becoming full time bureaucrats.

Technician: I encourage you to join all these schemes, because in the future I envisage all aid going through Development projects. Even if it is only to sign your names to the end of the forms and send them off without filling in the details, at least that way you are in with a chance. It is best to be part of these programmes from the start, that way one has some input into their development. Some of their policies are so stupid, like imposing on all éleveurs to have a slurry tank, not realizing that some éleveurs keep their herd outdoors all year round. If nobody points that out to them they will impose on everyone to build slurry tanks.

Eleveur 3: We will end up polluting just in order to get subsidies.

Eleveur 3: There are two schools of thought, maintain the environment uniquely for Brussels or unknowingly through our work like we have always done. Our motivation as farmers was always production, our pride is related to our products and the force of

our work. Be weary of these tricks....., I say we should call in the union. I started out here with the philosophy that nobody was going to tell me what to do, simply live from the sale of my produce. I am now given 15 days to say yes to this programme that could tie me up for 10 years, without knowing what it is about. This is a bomb, the Great Unknown and we are the guinea pigs.

Technician: All these agro-environmental policies are experimental, as yet we do not know the details or enumeration involved in the PDD, but it is not only applicable in tourist areas. All these policies will have to operate in rapport with your farming system and herd, you are the bosses.

Eleveur 4: Be prudent of mass tourism, I don't envisage any explosion in it here in the foreseeable future. We must not put all our effort in that direction, only 1% of farms here are involved in tourism. It will never be more than a small complement to agriculture.

Eleveur 5: I agree, and all the fire breaks do is open up the country to dogs and crazy tourists on motor bikes at 100 km/h and we hiding behind the bushes with our sheep scattered in all directions. A friend of mine lost 50 ewes due to dogs recently.

Eleveur 3: I wish Brussels forced the holiday home owners to fence off their green lawns and exotic shrubs, I have terrible trouble keeping my sheep on their garrigue diet from attacking them.

Eleveur 5: I am tired of the imbeciles wandering all over my land picking mushrooms, like headless chickens having lost their cars, then asking me if I had any idea where they might be.

Eleveur 3: The latest in my village is that they are objecting to the cocks crowing.

Technician: We did not come here to discuss the tourists. I advise you to profit from this programme, there is money in this package for constructing buildings and buying machinery. Turn it to your advantage.

Eleveur 6: The PDD talks about extensification and optimal occupation of land, but do they realize that contradicts the CAP and their system of quotas. If we are to maintain more land we will need more animals, will the Bretons give us some of their quota? It is all up in the air, and we have only 15 days to join with no idea of where it is leading to.

Technician: You must realize it is still at an experimental stage, we are a test group.

Eleveur 2: Afterwards everyone will profit from our experience.

Technician: You can get out of the contract whenever you like. The éleveur will be the patron of the project, it is centred around you and your herd, just spare a thought for the environment, especially around the villages. The interpretation of this plan is very open.

Eleveur 4: Do they realize in Brussels that it would take 100 years and not 10 days to restore this environment to that of our ancestors? Personally I would prefer to maintain a plastic pipe rather than a stone irrigation canal. It makes a lot more sense to me to concentrate on improving the quality of our products, like the co-operative they set up in Aude to sell and promote local produce. After six months this study will be finished and then what? All we are doing is giving pleasure to the technicians and tourists. Everything is vague, vague, studies and more studies. We already wasted enough time on courses in Perpignan for Article 19, with technicians who could not see further than their Australian clover.

Eleveur 2: The éleveur is the last to be consulted or informed about what is going on. What they are imposing on us now is a 'machine de guerre' in order to avail of

subsidies and give a living to the technicians.

Technician: In the future you could benefit from combining the environment with production. It could be a window to the outside world and a market for your biological produce.

Eleveur 3: We are sick of hearing about environment, environment and always for others. When the tourists come here they are lost, out of their element, they just drive through in their cars throwing litter everywhere. I say we should accept all forms of aid. We are handicapped here, we need the money, but we will never accept those stupid ideas.

Eleveur 2: Land is completely useless if it does not produce. The land is there to serve man and not the other way around.

Technician: The 'Prime a l'Herb' is envisaged as a five year programme; again it is in the domain of extensification, reducing artificial inputs and using the maximum amount of space. When the 'unite gross betail' (UGB/ha) is reduced to 0.5 units you are entitled to a subsidy.

Eleveur 3: This is a complete turn around, the exact opposite to what the CAP set out with and what we have always been encouraged to do. If it is such a good idea why don't they implement it everywhere? More bureaucracy, tests and more tests, and we are given a fifteen day ultimatum.

Last Words: C'est bizarre commem. Au café tout le monde.

The discussion reverted to their own personal problems, the lack of water, the price of day labour, the cost of transhumance, new buildings or machinery they had acquired. In their cavalier fashion they give the impression of being unruly, disorganized, acting

and joking. From speaking to them individually in their own homes at a later date, it is obvious that they do not take 'la nouvelle agriculture' seriously, rather they see it as something very vague and experimental, a fad that will pass. In the interim they are interested in getting whatever advantage they can out of it, in return for the minimum amount of work, which they consider wasted time. This attitude is typified by one of the éleveurs who also sells a lot of wood, when he exclaimed that he needs a machine for picking up the branches and if he can manage to get it out of the 'guardian de l'environnement' system 'tand mieux' (WW). On the other hand they are well aware that they cannot survive without EEC subsidies.

APPENDIX C: THE FIELD DIARIES.

What follows is a representative extract from the field diaries. It is chosen simply to demonstrate the steps of the classification method, before going on to present the classified field diaries.

(CC), Calmeilles.

Date: 29/3/1993.

Step One - Writing up the interview.

Had an interesting two hour discussion with (CC), whose father owns the a small grocery shop in Llauro. She is about thirty years old and has a young baby. Neither she nor her husband comes from the land, but they both have lots of relatives involved in agriculture. They are now living on her uncles small farm. She initially studied history at Toulouse University, but about ten years ago decided not to finish her studies. Herself and her husband made a conscious decision to return to the land. They practice policulture, and make a living from cherries, chestnuts, vines and a lot of working for others in order to make ends meet. She said they find it very difficult to make a living here, but they are not in it for the money, it is more a quality of life they are looking for. They choose to live their lives in their own 'arrière pays'. It is a battle but they have no regrets about the choice, even though it is very difficult at times. Her brother whom I later meet, also choose to live like this and is now the 'leader' of the neo-ruraux in Taillet. He also dropped out of university. I was told that their parents are quite rich and helps them out when they are in need.

She thinks that Brussels has no understanding of the problems here. She sees them as technocrats who neither understand nor want to understand the life here. She said they should come and spend some time on the ground in order to understand the areas problems. She decided to live here because she is very attached to the land and her Region, and it hurt her to see all her uncles land abandoned. The 'arrière-pays' needs people to live in it, but she added one must not think about 'rentabilité like the vine growers in Terrats and Fourques. To live here one must be prepared to diversify and

take whatever comes. She tried growing medicinal plants following the Swiss system, but it was not profitable due to competition from Africa. She receives no aid from the State or the EEC. She did not do the course to qualify for 'Jeune Agriculture' status. She started out with the idea of having cows and selling the cheese, but there were too many problems with the local people and it was too expensive to conform to the EEC cheese making laws.

In the recent European Maastricht elections she voted 'Yes' for 'l'Europe des peuples', but in her heart she felt very sad, because she believes the EEC has condemned agriculture here, and is thus preventing her living the life she wants to live. She thinks the EEC has no vision of the long term, and are sacrificing the Aspre for tourism, -"la promenade des gens du Nord". Objectively she thinks that under the present system, there is not a future for agriculture here. She considers it very sad if tourism is the only future for the Aspre. Who will maintain the environment for them? She is not assisted here and she thinks that too much assistance and subsidies are bad, it discourages one. All she wants is to have the possibility of living here, and not having to pay so much impôt tax on such poor land (others also highlighted this point).

She does not consider herself 'neo-ruraux', and said that is a pejorative term. Initially she experienced a lot of opposition from the local people, they treated her as a hippy/ecologist and frowned upon what she was trying to do. They could not accept that people like her (from a nearby village), or foreigners were capable of working the land like they did long ago. She thinks it also embarrasses them because they have a certain sense of shame for having failed. They sold their land to foreigners and deserted their Aspre because they claim they had no choice, and now they don't appreciate other people taking up the struggle and showing them they were wrong. "L'esprit Catalan est tres fermé". When she started here the people regarded her as an 'extra-terrestrial', and considered what she was trying to do was neither normal nor serious. When she started going to the cherry meetings in Ceret, they treated her as if she did not exist. For the first six years she could not even talk, now things are improving a bit. Her family are not happy about her choice either, they wanted her to continue her studies and become a teacher.

For her the most important thing is to maintain a presence in the 'arrière-pays', ("un tissu vivant"). She has nothing against the neo-ruraux who come from all over the world to settle here. Their nationality is not important, what is important is that they are serious about working the land. Like a lot of the neo-ruraux here she is interested in Steiner philosophy. She is not against tourism, provided it is a complement to agriculture. A mixture of the two is good, eg. 'ferme auberge', but tourism, holiday and retirement homes on their own are very sad and not an acceptable future for the Aspre. Besides, the tourists will not come if there is not a vibrant local presence and if the environment is unkept and degraded. She would not like it if tourism in the Aspre developed along the same lines as the coast. She said that Calmeilles is already very sad, all the houses are locked up except for a few months in the summer. That is certainly true, I was looking for directions there one day, knocked on several doors but could find nobody. She said that her child is the first to be born in the village in over fourteen years - with whom will it play?

She is not happy with the 'Plan d'Occupation du Sol' for the village, because she claims that a lot of the best agricultural land around the village is designated as constructible. As a result of that it is impossible to get a lease ("bail"), even from her own uncle, because at the back of their minds they always have the idea of selling should a good occasion arise. Because, she has no lease she can work the land, but does not have the right to plant a single tree and could be moved out at any time. She considers it sad, because it is not the retired 'qui vont faire vivre le pays, ils ne sont pas des gens dynamiques'. The price of a Mas, even in ruins has soared and is away beyond their means, (800,000 - 1500,000 FF).

She described 'l'esprit Catalan maintenant' as 'triste, desalubre et déprimé'. They live completely in the past, everything was better before, she also thinks they are very passivist. She described her uncle, whom I later meet as a typical example. He is always looking at the 'brousse' that surrounds them, throwing up his hands, and saying that before all that was cultivated by himself and his family. He perceives the present environment degraded in comparison to when it was cultivated. Now nature has taken over and humans are on the retreat. I asked him if water was ever a problem here?

He said no because they had good natural springs that flowed all year. He added that most of the springs are now overgrown, and besides the new comers do not even know where they are. The village now gets its water piped from a borehole in Fourques. He stated that water was not a constraint to agriculture in the past. The vines need very little and when the grass for the sheep was burnt up in the summer they moved the flocks into the high mountains of the Canigou. All that was irrigated were the vegetable gardens, which were generally situated on the banks of the river or near a spring. He readily admits that before they did not have the standard of living that they have today, they could live from four hectares of vines. (CC) described her uncle as a very sad person, who is lost in the present. She is also realistic and said if they were so attached to their land why did they sell so much of it to the Belgians. She feels that now they must give a chance to young people like herself, 'qui vont reprendre les choses en gardant leur patrimoine'. She went on to describe the Catalan's as very selfish, who hold no vision of the future for their children, they no longer understand the world and are lost in the present instability.

She described the relationship between the locals and the outsiders (les étrangers) as normally very difficult, both sides are incapable of understanding the others point of view. She thinks both sides are responsible for their own misconceptions. In the village there are two types of secondary house owners; (1) the strangers/foreigners (i.e. anyone not from the Aspre), who come here on holidays for 4 to 6 weeks in the year, (2) the people whose parents originally came from the village. The latter were brought up in town, generally Perpignan, but frequently return to their ancestral homes for holidays or even at weekends. Other people I meet often describe these people as the most difficult, they feel they own the place and can do whatever they like, even though they have lost the ways of the country. There are no shops, school or post office in Calmeilles, one has to go to the nearby village of Oms for everything. The outsiders tend to go to the big supermarkets in town.

She thinks that the future here is going to be very difficult. In spite of everything she is doing, she feels a certain powerlessness, in the final analysis she knows that it does not depend on her. She thinks that the future of the Aspre depends on decisions that

are made in Brussels by people removed from reality who do not understand life here, or even agriculture. She considers it utopian to want to live like our grand parents, one cannot turn back the clock, to survive one has to adapt, but 'en gardant notre identité'. One must not sell themselves completely to Brussels or tourism. One has to fight against "une vie comme un animal dans une cage, pour être regardé par les touristes". Absolutely not, here must not be allowed to become like the dreadful tourist resorts on the coast, and neither must it be allowed to become a 'ghost town' ten years from now. One commits suicide in places like that, "il faut vivre ici". Others have also spoken to me about this caged animal feeling. The shepherd in Tordères said that he had the rare 'privilege' of becoming a museum piece in his own life time. There is a picture of him and his flock of sheep in the museum in Céret.

(CC) said that Catalan culture is very important to her, and if they do not hold on to that they are left with nothing. She is not a fanatical nationalist, she describes herself as French first but with very strong and deep Catalan roots. She thinks that Roussillon would have been better attached to Barcelona rather than Paris, but there is nothing they can do about that now. She does not support Catalan independence, she is European. She said that there have been great atrocities committed against her culture. At school her parents were slapped if they spoke in Catalan, as a result her parents never spoke catalan with her at home, but she spoke it with her grandmother. She thinks that her generation are the last that can transmit the language, and if they don't it is serious. At certain special schools they may learn how to write Catalan, but it is an oral language, and if it is not lived she considers it as good as dead. She feels that the Catalan's du Sud (Spanish), reject the Catalan's du Nord, and treat them a bit like traitors. But they share the same culture and can always understand each other. In the frontier villages there is no difference between North and South.

She thinks that religion is still important here, but not like before, because the Department has been communist for a long time and thus find religion an embarrassment.

She does not support the 'Gardien de l'Environnement' system, as she sees it as a

mechanism for fossilising the environment for the tourists and not for the local people and that is unacceptable and smacks of colonisation. One must allow the local people to live here and give them the means of maintaining the environment and forest naturally with flocks of sheep etc. She said that when the forest undergrowth is cleaned mechanically the result is useless, all it does is breaks everything and leaves the environment in a dreadful state. No, the 'gardien de l'environnement' is not a solution, it is also humanely disagreeable, "ça diminue la personne". She thinks that it is normal and dignified that a farmer should want to live by his work and animals, and not to be assisted to maintain an artificial landscape for the tourists. Perhaps there are some people on the R.M.E (dole) who would accept to live like that, but never real farmers. She claims that the former do not know or understand the environment and the consequences could be very dangerous. She said the people in Brussels treat agriculture as if it were an industry, but it is not at all the same thing. The relationship between human and the land is special. She admits that it is 'un état d'esprit' that blocks 'real' farmers from accepting the 'gardien de l'environnement' scheme.

She said that the people here are very much afraid of fire, because they are surrounded by the forest. On occasions they have had to be evacuated by helicopter, she remembers scenes where everybody was crying and praying. She thinks that the S.I.P interventions, such as constructing access roads and water storage tanks, are not the solution. They may slow it down a bit, but when the tramontane is blowing, as it always is when there is a big fire, the 'pare feux' are ineffective. Thinks the increase in surveillance is good, now when there is any bit of smoke the fire brigade or Cannadair arrive immediately and prevent it spreading. She thinks prevention, in the form of cleaning the forest undergrowth is the best solution.

I asked her if she had much contact with the outsiders in the village? She said that depends, she finds that it is mostly the artists she gets on best with. Before she used to mind the keys and act as a caretaker for some of the holiday homes in order to earn some money, but often she did not feel like doing it a second time. She found the English and Dutch very difficult, "ils ne raisonnent pas comme nous". There were too many problems and eventually she decided to stop doing it altogether.

Step Two of the Classification.

31. (CC). Calmeilles.

31. Comes from the épicerie in Llauro, studied history at university in Toulouse, but decided not to finish her studies as it was not for her. Herself and her husband made a conscious decision to return to the land, for quality of life reasons, and because they are very attached to their 'arrière pays'. They practice policulture combined with a lot of working for others in order to make ends meet. Financially it is a struggle but is their choice and they have no regrets.

31. She decided to live like this because she is very attached to her 'arrière pays et la terre', and it hurt her to see all her uncles land abandoned. 'Le pays a besoin de gens pour y vivre, mais il ne faut pas penser à la rentabilité comme les vigneronns a Fourques.

31. To survive here one has to try lots of different things. She started off with medicinal plants but that did not work due to competition from Africa. Initially she wanted to keep cows and make cheese, but there were too many problems with the locals, and also she could not afford to conform to EEC cheese making laws.

31. She receives no aid from the State or EEC. She did not do the 'Jeune Agriculture' stage because she became pregnant. She is against too much assistance, ca deprime les gens, elle cherche seulement d'avoir la possibilite de vivre ici, sans paye trop de impôt'.

31. She voted 'Yes' to l'Europe de Peuple (Maastricht), mais dans sa coeur elle a senti tres mal car le CEE a condamne l'agriculture ici, and are thus preventing her leading the life she wants to lead.

31. Thinks the EEC has no long term vision, and that they are sacrificing here places like the Aspre to tourism, 'la promenade des gens du Nord'.

31. Objectively she thinks that under the present system there is no future for agriculture here. But thinks that it will be very sad if tourism is going to be the only future for the Aspre. Who will maintain the environment for them?

31. Thinks Brussels/EEC is full of technocrats who neither understand nor want to understand the problems here.

31. She does not consider herself a 'neo-ruraux', that term is a bit pejorative. When she started out here the people treated her like an extra terrestrial, a hippy ecologist, and they considered what she was doing as abnormal. Neither were her family at all happy, they wanted her to finish university and become a teacher. She was ignored at the cherry meetings in Céret for the first 6 years. The others treated her as if she did not exist.

31. L'esprit Catalan est tres ferme, must do like they do or you are not normal.

31. The people here do not want to accept that she or the other outsiders are capable of doing what they did before. She thinks there is also an element of shame and guilt, because they failed, sold their land and deserted the Aspre. They claimed they had no choice because they could not make a living here, and now they don't want others to show them they were wrong, and succeed where they have failed.

31. She described 'l'esprit Catalan maintenant' as 'triste, desalubre et déprimé'. They live completely in the past, everything was better before.

31. The nationality of the neo-ruraux is of no importance, what is important is their willingness to work the land and maintain an active presence in the 'arrière pays'.

31. She supports tourism as a complement to agriculture, but thinks that tourism on its own, maison seconder, retraite est triste et pas l'avenir pour le pays. Besides the tourists will not come here if there is no local presence and the environment is degraded. Deja le village de Calmeilles est triste, avec toutes les maisons fermes,

deserted except for one or two months of the year. Her child is the first to be born here in the last 14 years - with whom will it play?

31. It is not the retired that will 'faire vivre le pays, ce ne sont pas des gens dynamique. Does not want here to become like the tourist atrocities of the coast. It is utopian to want to live like our grand parents, to survive one must adapt, mais en gardant notre identité. We must not sell ourselves completely to Brussels or tourism, we must battle against, 'une vie comme un animal dans une cage, pour être regardé par les touristes, absolument pas. Il faut vivre ici.

31. Thinks the 'Plan d'Occupation du Sol' n'est pas bien fait, because a lot of good agricultural land is designated as constructable. As a result of which it is impossible to get a written lease ('baie'), even from her own uncle, because they always have it in mind to sell if a good occasion arose.

31. L'esprit Catalan maintenant est triste, desalubre, et déprimé. Ils vivent complètement dans le passé, c'est toujours avant, avant. They are also pacifists, they accept everything. When her uncle looks at the 'brousse' that surrounds them, every square inch of which was once cultivated by himself and his family, il est vraiment triste, et perdu dans le présent'. He said before one could live from 4 ha of vines.

31. She is realistic and said it was they who sold the land to the Belgians. They offered them money they never dreamt of, and besides they thought the land was no longer of use for agriculture.

31. Now the locals must give a chance to the young like her, qui va reprendre les choses en gardant leur patrimoine. The Catalans are also very selfish, they have no vision of the future for their children, 'ils ne comprennent plus le monde, ils sont perdus dans l'instabilité'.

31. Relations between locals and outsiders are normally difficult, 'ils sont incapable de se comprendre dans les deux cote'. Personally she finds the artists easiest to relate to. She gave up minding the keys of some of the local holiday homes, there were too many problems. After doing it once she often had no desire to do it a second time, even though she needed the money. Found the English and Dutch very difficult, 'ils ne raisonnent pas comme nous'.

31. Thinks that the future here will be very difficult, inspite of all her efforts has the feeling that it does not depend on her, feelings of powerlessness /impuissance. Thinks it will ultimately depend on decisions taken in Brussels by people who neither understand life or agriculture here.

31. She describes herself as French first, 'mais avec les racines profondement Catalan'. Catalan culture is very important to her, if we loose that we have nothing left. 'C'est tres important d'etre bien dans ton pays'. There were terrible atrocities committed against her culture in the past. At school her parents were slapped if they spoke Catalan, at home they never spoke Catalan to her, but she learnt it from her grandmother. It is an oral language, il faut le vivre, si non c'est mort.

31. Thinks the Catalans du Sud rejects the Northern Catalans and treats them a bit like traitors. But we share the same culture and can always understand each other. In the frontier villages there is no difference between north and South.

31. Religion is still important here, mais pas trop, car c'etait un Departement Rouge.

31. Is against the 'Gardien de l'Environnement' system, she sees it as a means of fossilising the environment for the tourists and not the local people, and that is unacceptable and smacks of colonialism. Must allow the local people to live here and give them the means of maintaining the environment and forest naturally with flocks of sheep and goats. Besides when the forest is cleaned mechanically the result is useless and it leaves a dreadful mess, ca casse tout.

31. The 'gardien de l'environnement' is not the solution, it is humanely disagreeable, 'ca diminue la personne'. 'L'agriculture a envie de vivre de son travail et ne pas être assister pour maintenir le paysage pour les tourists'. Perhaps they will get some of the unemployed to accept that, but they are not true farmers and they don't understand the environment or how to work. 'C'est un état d'esprit qui bloque les vrai agricultures d'accepter le gardien de l'environnement system.'

31. S.I.P is not the solution against fire, ca saute les piste, when there is a wind as there always is. They are very afraid of fire here, because they are surrounded by the forest. They had to be evacuated by helicopter once, everyone crying and praying.

31. Les gens du Bruxell ne comprend rien du Midi, pour eux l'agriculture est un industrie, mais c'est pas vrai. Le rapport entre l'homme et la terre est special. For the Catalans, here is their 'home', leur terre ancestral, le foret est leur capital.

KEY TO FIELD DIARY INFORMANTS.

Name Code	Origin	Occupation	Age	Gender
A	Paris	Neo-Ruraux Sheep Farmer	45+	Couple (M+F)
B	France	Works at Wine Co-op, Fourques.	35+	M
C	Southern Catalonia	Retired Farm Labourer	65+	M
D	Aspre Catalan	Viticulteur	45+	M
E	Aspre Catalan	Village Mayor, Viticulteur + Adjoin at Terrats Wine Co-op.	60+	M
F	French-Algerian	Viticulteur	50	M
G	Aspre Catalan	Viticulteur + President of VDN Wine Committee	40+	M
H	2nd Gen. Aspre Catalan	Neo-Ruraux Fruit Farmers	35+	F
I	Catalan	President Wine Co-op Fourques	50+	M
J	Aspre Catalan	Farm Labourer	40+	M
K	Aspre Catalan	Retired Teacher + Writer	65+	F
L	French	University Agronomy Prof.	50+	M
M	Aspre Catalan	Vigneron + Wine Shop Owner.	45+	M
N	Dutch	Aspre Curate	50+	M
O	French + Portuguese	Farm Manager	35+	Couple (M+F)
P	2nd Gen. Aspre Catalan	Neo-Ruraux Viticulteur	30	M
Q	French	Farm Extension Worker. Dir. PIL	35+	F

Name Code	Origin	Occupation	Age	Gender
R	Aspre Catalan	Viticulteur	60+	M
S	Aspre Catalan + Belgian	Viticulteur	30+	Couple (M+F)
T	Aspre Catalan	Mixed Farmer (H-Aspre)	65	M
U	Catalan	Neo-Ruraux Duck Pate Enterprise	40	M
V	Catalan	Historian	40+	M
W	French	University Lecturer	45+	M
X	German	Neo-Ruraux, works in an Office	45+	F
Y	Aspre Catalan	Village Mayor + Mixed Farmer	45	M
Z	Aspre Catalan	Village Mayor + Mixed Farmer	50+	F
AA	Aspre Catalan	Retired Viticulteur	70+	F
BB	Aspre Catalan	President Hunting Club	60+	M
CC	Aspre Catalan	Neo-Ruraux Mixed Farmer	30+	F
DD	French	Gitotel Owner	50+	M
EE	Aspre Catalan	Viticulteur	70+	F
FF	English	Neo-Ruraux Renovates Houses	40	F
GG	Scottish	Neo-Ruraux Artist	50+	M
HH	French	Agricultural Technician.	40+	M
II	Belgian	Retired Holiday Home Owners	65+	Couple (M+F)
JJ	German	Tourist	40	F
KK	Belgian	Auberge-Restaurant Owner	45+	Couple (M+F)
LL	Southern Catalan	Neo-Ruraux Sheep Farmer + Mason	35	M

Name Code	Origin	Occupation	Age	Gender
MM	Aspre Catalan	Retired Mixed Farmer	65+	F
NN	Aspre Catalan	Mixed Farmers	30+ 65+	Mother + Son
OO	Belgian	Housewife	40+	F
PP	French + Catalans	Eleveur Meeting		M+F
QQ	Aspre Catalan	Neo-Rurau Mixed Farmers	35+	Couple (M+F)
RR	Aspre Catalan	Artist- Ceramics	40	M
SS	French	Soil Scientist Dept. Agriculture	40+	M
TT	English	Retired Holiday Home Owners	65+	Couple (M+F)
UU	French	Forester, Dept. of Forestry	40+	M
VV	German	Rents Holiday Homes	50	M
WW	2nd Gen. Aspre Catalan	Neo-Rurau Mixed Farmer	50	M
XX	Mixed	Eleveur Reunion		M+F
YY	English	Neo-Rurau Goat Farmer	40+	M
ZZ	French	Retired Holiday Home Owners	70	Couple (M+F)
AB	Aspre Catalan	Traditional Sheep Farmer	60+	F
BC	French	Neo-Rurau Cow Farmer	45+	M
CD	Aspre Catalan	Retired	65+	M
DE	Catalan	President Wine Co-op, Terrats	50+	M
EF	French	Animal Husbandry Lecturer, Perp.	40+	M
FG	French	Sociologist Researcher	40+	M

Name Code	Origin	Occupation	Age	Gender
GH	Catalan	Viticole Director Dept. Agri. Perp	50+	M
HI	French Algerian	Village Mayor + Traveaux Publiq.	50+	M
XYZ	Myself- The Researcher			

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MENTALITY AND CULTURE

THEME: 'Outsiders' Perception of 'Insiders'.

Women run the home, husbands and family here, men tend to play the outside macho role, but it is only a front. (X)

Dislikes the Catalans, considers them closed, rude peasants, it is the outsiders that make this place livable. (YY)

When the French construction companies came here in the seventies to build the apartments on the coast, they were obliged to recruit even the labourers from the North. The locals did not have the training, skills or discipline. (W)

Finds the people here individualistic and aware of their separatist history, Catalan first and then French. (TT)

Drugs are a problem in Llauro, they are organised by a wealthy mafia based in Ceret. Thinks Perpignan is dangerous at night, they were there late one evening and all they could see were police and dogs, giving the impression of being in a Fascist State. (TT)

Has lived in Calcina, Llauro for 15 years and lectures at Perpignan University, but is from the North of France. He finds the Catalans "bien gentille", and said he was well received here, but not immediately, it takes time for them to get to know you. "Ils se méfient des étrangers car ils ont vu trop de gens du Nord venir ici en passage. (W)

The locals are not dynamic and it is impossible to get anything done here. They make all kinds of promises and never turn up, when they eventually start a job they may only come for a day and disappear again. It took them 3.5 months to get the phone installed. They recommend I read 'A Year in Provence'. (TT)

Often the people here do not see the value in their patrimony. For example, the Mayor of the village wanted to cement the little cobbled path in front of my house, for him that was a proper clean solution. I offered to pay personally to have the cobbling repaired. The Mayor also wants to widen the road so that cars can go faster, the new 'place du village' is really ugly. (VV)

Think the rural exodus is sad. When they came here first the villages were very poor and there was no work around. They can't understand the tremendous changes and growth since then, eg. Llupia village constantly spreading, there are new 'quartiers' in Céret and Le Boulu, and where are they getting the money for the expensive renovation of Saint Colombe? They say there is a recession, but how can one explain all this growth? (TT)

Perpignan is less prosperous than 30 years ago. Drugs are a big problem there especially among the Arabs and 'Gitons'. There is no industry of significance in this Department, it lives from agriculture. There is big money in market gardening and arboriculture on the plain. Those are the people who buy up apartments in Montpellier in order to avoid paying tax, 'l'argent caché encore'. (W)

The people of the North come here and impose their point of view, reflected in such things as the design of houses, eg. bungalow. They do not respect the local style and architecture. The Catalans watch them and say nothing. (now he contradicts himself). He believes that the locals do not have refined taste, in comparison to Provence for example, with its Italian architecture and brightly painted shutters. Here every thing is white and sever like Spain. 'C'est beaucoup plus rustique ici'. (W)

Phillip has lived and worked here for over 6 years, but claims not to know the people very well. He describes them as insular and closed, some are even 'sauvage'. (B)

It is traditional here never to cooperate with the Gendarmes, they are the enemy. This sentiment is a hang over from the days when the Department lived from illegal contraband with Spain. The tradition here is to 'laisser faire' and never denounce anyone. (W)

They find the people here 'dour', they are pleasant enough, but they have been coming here regularly for 20 years and in all that time they have not been forthcoming. They are typically closed, mountain village people, almost incestuous. 'We will always be simply les Anglais no more no less. They are not hostile just indifferent, they are more hostile nearer the sea, eg. the Corbière. (TT)

The Catalans want to concentrate the 'doryphores' on the former uninhabited salt marshes of the coast, but do not want mass tourism in the Aspre, the reserve of the ancestors. (L)

At the root of present crisis are changing values, due to advertising people want everything now. Whether right or left are in government in France makes no difference. We have been misled by false faith in future growth, encouraging people to have everything now, via higher purchase and borrowing.(L)

The Northern Catalans have lost their own identity, they don't know who they are any more. The turning point was when French was imposed on them at school. (N)

They are nostalgic about the past but they don't want to return there. They always encouraged their children 'd'alley en ville' now they are returning to the country for roots and human contact. (N)

The locals idea of progress is the American model, that is why they respect rich the tourists with holiday homes and the retired rich, because they represent economic success. There is also the Mediterranean veneration for l'homme du Nord, who represents courage, dynamic, ability to live in a cold climate,- the opposite to themselves. They also like these people because they can profit economically from them as they raise the price of land, but they don't like their colonialist ideas. They want to have their cake and to eat it. (N)

There is a conflict in mentality between the insiders and the outsiders. The locals want the outsiders money but they don't want them getting involved in local affairs, especially politics. (N)

The rich outsiders have great problems getting locals to work for them, they think the unemployed have it too good, or is it a local resistance, refusal to recognise their presence. (XYZ)

The people here are rude, they resemble their mountains. Before there were a lot of half simple people in the villages, due to intermarriage or having contacted meningitis as children. These diseases disappeared sooner on the plain than here. The people of the Aspre are closed, 'remplir sur eux meme'. (LL)

Considers the Catalans very clannish and insular, 'nos frère Catalan' get first choice in work. It is very difficult for an outsider to be accepted here. (O)

The people here are very selfish, they think only within the short term, they have no long term vision. (LL)

Children are very important in this society, foreigners who put their children in local school have the best chance of integrating. (YY)

His wife said she finds the Catalan women only superficially open, 'c'est tres difficile a rentre dans leur milieu'. They are fairly closed and conservative, 'avec une mentalité dur de la terre'. (RR)

The Sardana dance is repetitive but nothing more than the highland gig. He would describe the dance as basic and instinctive rather than primitive, the term used by FF. (GG)

In Perpignan any café or restaurant that works well invariably has a Northern owner. (GG)

One remarks that everything that works well is owned and run by Northerners, including all the good hotels, cafés, and restaurants. The locals are not dynamic, they do not like the tourists, but the young are obliged to accept them, because it is the only industry that works here. There is an economic crisis everywhere. The GAT is not logical, people are discouraged. (II)

There are drug traffickers in Llauro, there was a suicide there a few years ago, now there is a guy with aids in prison. The locals never cooperate with the police. (II)

The Catalans treat you as stupid if you are not prepared to join in their illegal doings. We were shocked when we tried to declare our plant syndicate and the 'Chambre de Métier', in Perpignan advised us against it. (FF)

Thinks the Catalans are attached to 'leur pays et leur terre', but in the final analysis it is money and rente that count most. They have closed minds, and are difficult to get to know, but that is true of all rural societies in France. (DD)

One can forget about employing Catalans in the 'arrière pays', they aspire to a bourgeois life and consider the 'arrière pays' of the Aspre low status. (She still sees them as peasants with the old aspirations for the city). Money is very important to them and are very jealous if foreigners succeed here. She thinks they have become very materialistic and have lost their sense of community. (FF)

If you do not do like them you are an enemy, one must not be different. If I came here to grow vines rather than set up a Gitotel it would be different, I would be more readily accepted. As it is I have never been invited to dinner by anybody here. (DD)

The Catalans desire to live well and simply 'Chez Eux', and not be bothered (embetêr) by strangers. They are courageous, but not dynamic. Take for example the problems in the wine industry, they do not want to make the effort to improve quality, e.g in simple things like over filling the grape bins at harvest. They do not want to change their habits and traditions, so there is no place for the young. Rather than change they prefer to uproot the vines and speculate on construction land. (DD)

If you pay them a little service they will repay you in the double. If you make the effort to get to know them they are kind and sincere. On the whole they are selfish and don't help each other much, the British have a better sense of community. (DD)

He thinks that the local Catalans are not prepared or capable of opening or running an Auberge. Ce n'est pas dans leur esprit, ils sont trop habituent á l'autarchy. If one wants to do something here they must take a long term, 10 years, perspective, but the Catalans will not accept that, they will only make short term investments, from which they want to see profits straight away, but that is not possible without having first invested. (KK)

If you were not born here they take you for an imbecile who knows nothing. It is impossible for an outsider to be accepted here, even among themselves there is a lot of racism from village to village. The other reason I am not accepted here is because they consider me crazy to be working the land of the Haute Aspre. (LL)

As a Belgian citizen he does not have the right to vote in the local elections. He hopes that Maastricht may change that; 'Si les chose sont laissent au gens du village rien bouge'. (II)

Said when they arrived here first, about 15 years ago, the village was not very welcoming, they sensed an element of Nationalism and insularity; 'trop remplir sur eux meme'. It was for the outsiders to make all the effort to go to them, but once you had conquered their sympathy they were very nice, but one needs a lot of time to establish relations here, 'ils te regardent bien d'abord'. Now its OK, they know everyone in the village and their children used to play with children from the village, now they have good friends here. (There are the people who could not find any local person to cut their lawn XYZ). (II)

The mentalité of the Southern Catalans is totally different, there everything is green and cultivated, here one can't get enough people for the 'vendage' (grape harvest). They prefer to be unemployed. (KK)

About 5 years ago they were thrown out of their house as the owner went mad, and they had no signed leas. The community came to the rescue of this Neo-Rurax family, and set up a petition etc, for them. (A)

His wife who comes from Paris found the mentality here very macho and patriarchal, the father and grandfather decided everything, especially in the viticole villages like Fourques and Terrats. They have closed minds and a restrictive attitude to women. Llauro was completely different, far more open and she was always made welcome here. She thinks the difference may be due to the cork industry and the mixing of workers from Spain and Portugal, in the past. (RR)

When they came here first the people were not interested in, or curious about their country of origin. The man they bought the land from kept calling them, 'Vous les Anglais', even when they explained to him that they were Belgian, he kept saying the same thing, 'Vous les gens du Nord, Vous les Anglais'. The man they bought the land from still comes back to visit it, they think he is still attached to his ancestral land and in a way still considers it his. (II)

She thinks the local Catalan culture is not very refined, eg the sardagne dance has only about 6 or 7 steps in it, neither are they well educated. (On the whole I think she considers them stupid and backward, and has a bit of a colonial attitude XYZ). (FF)

The locals do nothing to improve their situation, they have the 'mentalité du soleil'. The same situation prevails in the wine industry, they did not make the effort to

improve quality or marketing. There is also a living to be made from 'élevage' but they don't want to work. (KK)

They think the villagers accept the Hippies. The locals always unite against the police and they never denounce anyone, a hang over from contraband days. The people here do not like rules and regulations, but one must also admit that the Gendarmerie do not look too far. They had a house break in a few years ago and when they went to report it to the Gendarmerie they were not interested. Themselves and many other Calcina dwellers have frequently complained to the police about an alcoholic from the village who lets his five horses wander all over the place. The villagers accept this, but when they come up to the Calcina, they breaking shrubs and ruin gardens, but again the police do nothing about it. 'Laisser faire' attitude, en française on disent, - Bon enfant'. (II)

She thinks the Catalan mentalité like their environment is very hard and basic. Hard due to the life and climate, 'even their small hunched physique and hard dark faces give that impression', (- colonialism XYZ). (FF)

He thinks the notion of community is archaic, every one talks to every one else here but they have nothing to say, due to their different interests, so they tend to form groups with those they have something in common with, - village of Llauro as opposed to Calcina. He knows his neighbours in the village but not a lot more. He feels quite at ease here and was readily accepted by the Catalans, and does not feel the necessity of being part of a foreign clique. (GG)

My first impressions, people seem like their land, harsh and closed, gruff, rude, no room for finesse. (XYZ)

When they arrived the Mayor in Boule d'Amont was very good to them. She said they never really had a lot of Catalan friends, they got the impression that if it came to the crunch they would not stand up for them. thinks the Catalans would prefer if they were not there. After 15 years of smiling and greeting them in bakery etc, they still don't respond, so she is tired of the effort. Most of their friends are other outsiders, Dutch, German, English etc, who readily accepted them and they support each other. (FF)

His wife who is Flemish said that 'l'esprit ici est tres renferme'. It is very difficult to win their confidence, but if one succeeds they are 'trop amical'. Give them a present and they will return it three fold. At the start she found it very difficult to integrate, 'ils se mefient des étrangers, ils ont meme peur d'eux, ils n'ont pas l'interet de savoir autre chose, c'est la mentalité d'arrière pays'. (S)

There is very closed mentality here. The motto of the co-operatives was always to safeguard the small producer, they were very anti commercial production, thus they have not followed market demands or changed with the times. They run it as an 'economie social', rather than a business. Now the markets are gone, quality is poor and the young are not staying on the land. (FG)

They consider the Catalans as very individualistic, every one for themselves, this is why they never organize themselves in syndicates. The fruit growers are especially egotistical, they resent all laws and interference. (O)

The inability to adapt and accept or even recognise outside influences is typical of the local mentality. (FG)

It is very rare to get invited to the Catalan houses. The mediterranean gives the impression of being open and friendly, but in fact it is an extremely closed society and very difficult to get accepted here. (FG)

Thinks local 'esprit' is rather 'renferme', they are not very dynamic, rather conservative, attached to community and traditions. L'esprit du Paysan is still a bit 'l'esprit du cloche', they stick together and all do the same thing. They are born live and die here, they would not dream of retiring somewhere else. They travel very little outside the village.(F)

The Catalans have a speculative, egotistical and individualistic mentality. It is very difficult to get them to work as members of a group, thus the problems with the wine cooperatives. (FG)

Outsiders not welcome here, the locals would prefer someone with a holiday home than someone who lives here all year round, constantly under your feet and worst of all they may get involved in local politics. He thinks this is a sign of a fragile society, under threat and trying to preserve what it has, thus the rejection of change and outside influence. (FG)

We cannot go back, but we have hit an impasse, there is a limit to growth. The old standbys of birth rate, intensification, and social security are failing us. (L)

The only worry for the viticulteurs is the harvest once a year, the rest of the time they are 'tranquille', how could they be dynamic, except for the ones with their own cave, 'il faut oser'. (U).

Theme: Insiders Perception of Outsiders.

The 'Pied Noir' (expatriated French Algerians) are resented here, because they got a lot of State help to get set up after the Algerian war, where as many of the locals had to leave their elderly parents and farms to fight for them in Algeria, where they were not always well received. (P)

The majority of the houses in the village (St. Marsal) belong to the children of the village, there are also some retired Belg and Parisians who live here all year. 'Ca

passee bien avec les étrangers, ils sont calm, il n'y a pas de hippy ici. En été il y a beaucoup de tourists ici'. (MM)

He does not think Mas Cane pate enterprise will succeed in the long term. He finds their enterprise very strange, as they buy in the raw material, ie ducks and feed stuff. In part this reflecting his own mentality where everything is part of a complete cycle. His subsistence ideas are far removed from market forces. (T)

Europe is seen as 'tres loin d'ici et tres complique'. They are not really interested in it, they leave it to the Director of the Cave to respond to. The wine co-operatives insulate them, it is local and they look upon it as their employer, its certitude attracts them. (G)

He is genuinely baffled by the change in mentalité, the unemployed now don't even have a garden, they say it is not worth their while, 'pas rentable', they prefer to buy their vegetables in the supermarket. It takes an imbecile to work, when you can get as much on the dole. The unemployed may not have gardens but they all have cars. Due to the increase in our needs we cannot return to the past, because things like cars are considered essentials nowadays, and one could not have those under the old autarchy system. (T)

In the last election 10% of the Llauro electorate voted for Le Pen, Perpignan is very racist, 21% voted for him there. (P)

In Llauro 3 families on RME (dole), that is 10% of the population, c'est trop. There is also a team of 5 or 6 people trafficking in drugs here, everyone knows them, but when we go to the Gendarmes they say, 'il faut attendre avec les bras croisées'. Drugs cause social problems at school, the teacher notices disturbed children. (Z)

He thinks that a lot of unemployed people could find work in this agricultural Department. He admits there are genuine hardship cases, but they are mostly in industrial cities. (U)

He spoke about the Swedish man in Oms whom he found throwing out a chair with a broken leg, 'car ca ne function plus'. He was shocked by l'esprit d'utilite protestant'. (QQ)

The reason some functionaries dislike paysans is because of 'l'argent cachée'. He declares all his impôt ?? (Why is he targeted by the tax inspectors every year? XYZ). (M)

The interpretation of symbols delimiting space differ between North and South of Europe. The Northerners lack of respect for our symbols is a constant source of conflict between insiders and outsider, especially among the Belg who own a lot of land here. It is the difference between 'le dedans et le dehor'. The Greek temples were often nothing more than four poles holding up a roof, but every one knew that inside

those poles was sacred. The same principal applies to Catalan and Mediterranean houses, inside the home is sacred, meet strangers, fete outside. Has this implications for tourism? (V)

Thinks all Mediterranean people have a lot in common, much more so than with people from the North. The people of the Med. have a heart which is lacking in the North, there they are totally individualistic/egoist. (WW)

There is a living to be made from élevage in the arrière pays, but the young don't want to work so hard and the young from the towns do not have 'la force physique ou la connaissance' (weaklings). (NN)

The tourists and outsiders want the environment here to be like the one they left. They only come for the sun, the locals are anachronomes, picturesque but not needed any more. They imposition their urban rules, we can't keep pigs, cocks or sell local cheese any more. I was told to keep all my dogs tied up, but my dogs are friendly unlike the savage guard dogs of the outsiders/foreigners. (GG)

The people from the village do not like foreigners, but that is not uniquely a Catalan phenomena, it's universal. (WW)

One evening they found a hysterical 17 year old girl from the Calcina, returning late from school in Céret. She was afraid to walk up the hill to her home, because her own guard dogs would now be left loose and she could not get her mother on the phone. They drove her home and claims that it took a quarter of an hour for all the alarm systems to be turned off and the dogs tied up. They claim their neighbours, who are also ex-colonials are completely mad, they swim in the nude and wear leopard skins and war paint at parties. (OO)

Theme: Insiders Self Perception;

(A) Marginalization / Separatist.

There is high unemployment and no industry here and he thinks the Department in general is a bit neglected central Government. He thinks the government is pushing the tourist option here. (X)

It is very important to ask what is the function of a State service? It is essentially political, but the politicians are often corrupt ('pourri'); 'ils cherchent les avantages pour eux meme d'abord'. All emphasis should not be on profitability (rentabilité), we are living in a post industrial age, the mentalité must change. We must start talking about the quality of life and not reduce everything to 'rentabilité'. With advanced telecommunication people can work from home, surely it is more agreeable to look onto

trees or a mountain rather than being surrounded by 'le beton' (cement)? There is a limit to what man can adapt to. 'Nous sommes allée trop loin de la terre'; life in the big cities has become too artificial, for me it is like living in a big cage, a science fiction experience'. (Y)

There is no industrial production in the Pyrénées Oriental, there is a large retired population living off pensions which they reinvest here in the form of holiday homes. The administration is run with the help of National subsidies, this Department costs the State more than it gives in return ('rapports'). The tourists produce elsewhere and come here to consume. There may be no industry but there is an economy, 'c'est un économie d'échange, plus liée à l'époque et l'échelle local, mais l'Europe n'est plus local'. This Department is an appendage of the past, closed in on itself and too dependent on local markets. (V)

Poor status of small farmers, they are treated as stupid and dirty by administration, even by the college students who come to do research here. Farming is 'mal vue', they aspire to urban administration jobs. (A)

People here feel powerless and alienated from the centres of decision making. Brussels and Paris is a long way away, they neither know of or understand the problems here, besides they are not interested in us; 'ils ne veulent pas savoir', - sense of marginalization. (G)

Terrible atrocities were committed against our culture at school, especially during the time of my parents, who were slapped if they spoke Catalan. As a result of which my parents never spoke to me in Catalan at home, but I learnt the language from my grandmother. It is an oral language, 'il faut le vivre, si non c'est mort'. She thinks the Southern Catalans reject the Northern Catalans and treats them a bit like traitors. In the frontier villages there is no difference between the two, it is the same culture. (CC)

There are more men than women in this region. Women tend to get a better education and training and move to work in towns. The men stay local and work in agricultural related jobs. Most people in Perpignan are only paid the SMIG minimum wage of 4,800 F/M. There are a lot of bachelors here. (A)

People representing Mediterranean agriculture are not really listened to in Paris, partly due to the poor quality of representation; 'ils ne present pas bien les chose, aussi c'est la distance et la mentalité des gens d'ici'. They are too individualistic, they are not prepared to organise themselves in syndicates or pressure groups, especially the vegetable growers on the plain, who are extremely 'egoist'. They are also very traditional here, it is individual speculation that reigns supreme here. (Q)

Mediterranean agriculture, like its people is marginalized from the rest of Europe. The accord between France and the Magreb, allowing tomatoes to flood the market is beneficial for France as a whole, but not for this region, where tomatoes are an

important crop. They would not allow that for the products of the North. (G\$)

Education here is very academically orientated and there is not much time for cultural pursuits like music or art. At the age of 5 her son got the school bus to Ille sur Tet at 7.30 am, returning that evening at 6 pm - what a long day. When he is 16 he will have to board either to Prad or Perpignan. So children of the arrière pays are disadvantaged. In the evening most children have extra tuition. She wanted to set up a Steiner school with Mme (QQ). (FF)

People feel marginalized here, 'le fond de la France, le bout du monde'. (O)

Said there is a general antagonism between people from the North and South of France. The northerners do not understand the Mediterranean culture and way of life. They think that the people of the South are lazy, stupid and don't know how to work. (W)

Here is a pre-industrial region. The root of a lot of the impoverishment of this Department is the 1659 Treaty of the Pyrenees, and the economic and cultural rupture with Barcelona which followed. He thinks Roussillon would be better attached to Barcelona than Paris (Is he not also a passivist and backward looking in this respect? XYZ). (V)

There is a lot of unemployment here, but thinks most of that comes from outside the Department, the Northern unemployed who come here for the sun. He does not think that this Department is marginalized by the Government, true it is 'le fond de la France, le bout du monde'. The problem is this Department is very sparsely populated, 300,000 people, and there are no traditional source of energy here, neither is its labour force well qualified for the industry of today. Education is not a big tradition here. (W)

Within the Mediterranean there has always been the phenomena of respect 'pour l'homme du Nord', - cold climate dynamic etc. The Spanish are considered poor and inferior, the status of the Arabs and Africans is worse again. We are moving towards the American uni-culture model, whereby we can't accept diversity in culture any more. He had a very hard time doing his military service in Strasburg, where the Northern factory workers mocked him as 'le petit Espagnol'. (J)

When the wine growers from the Pyr. Or demonstrated about conditions over the summer in Montpellier, two 'Jeunes Agricultures' from Perpignan were arrested for ten days. That was unprecedented, nothing happened to the truck drivers or fishermen from Brittany when they demonstrated and a lot more violently. All our demonstrators did was shake up a few police cars. The symbolism of this incident was 'tres mal vue' in the Department. It is difficult to motivate the people they are becoming resigned and accept everything. (G)

The lack of dynamism here in comparison to their sisters in Southern Catalonia is due to the North South phenomena, - North of Spain and South of France. (GG)

Mass tourism de 'conge payee' was forced on us in the 1970, mostly to the benefit of outsiders, (again reinforcing a sense of powerlessness). (G)

The locals want the tourist money, but they resent their colonialist ideas. (N)

Perpignan prison was built on the black market. (L)

People in this Department feel marginalized. Corsica, Catalonia and the Pays Basque have always been marginalized within France, consequently they are all employment black spots and there is no government investment in industry. (M)

Equates the lack of dynamism here to their geographical position, South of North, here is like the South of Spain. The problem of transport and distance between here and Paris is also a factor. He is afraid that the Department will become an unemployment ghetto. (HH)

Winter in Saint Marsal can be very harsh, that is why they were refused permission to build an old peoples retirement home here. The place is considered too isolated and risked being cut off in winter. (MM)

We feel punished because we are on the periphery, extreme South. Materials in Roussillon are 30% more expensive than in North of France. (M)

Another disadvantage of living in the mountains is Vets fees, 600 F per call. (WW)

Because people here are not very proud of themselves, they try to imitate everything from the North. Their role model is the 'Conseil Technique' who comes to the wine caves with his Parisian accent and white shirt. They feel left behind in this computerized era. (J)

People feel marginalized here not because they are Catalan. but because of their position, 'le fond de la France'. (N)

Same thing with immigration laws and opening frontiers, those who will suffer most are the frontier Departments like the Pyrénées Orientales and Languedoc. The people here are now becoming resigned to this marginalization. (G)

The Pyr. Or. is not integrated economically within the rest of France or Europe, due to the economic rupture with Barcelona following the Treaty of the Pyrenees. Our industrial history was based on textiles and mining, after the Treaty it changed to market gardening and vines. (V)

She resents the unemployed who come here to live their misery in the sun. She thinks it is not fair that the Department has to pay part of their social security. She claims that unemployment in this Department rose by 20% between 1991 and 1992, because of which their income taxes are going up next year. Says she is not racist but does not

like all these foreigners, especially Arabs, coming here, it would be better to help them in their own country. She is very anti a multi racial society, that never works, look at all the blacks in the American ghettos. 'C'est mieux pour chacun de vivre chez eux'. (AA)

Before there was solidarity among the people and they paid for work by the exchange of work. Now she is surrounded by Belgian and Dutch holiday home owners, she feels isolated, there is nobody to turn to for help. She thinks the change is irreversible. she had to give up growing her own cereals, because the one remaining thrasher in Saint Laurent de Cerdagne will not come to her any more, the distance is too far and it is not worth his while. (AB)

Self Perceptions: (B) Conservatism, Traditionalism and Conformity.

If you do not do as they do you are an enemy, one must not be different. (DD)

People here are afraid to take risks, they will not invest in anything that is not 100% sure. (U)

Certain doses of non-development can conserve a richness and purity, 'puis la suite peut etre tres important'. He thinks this applies to the Aspre. (RR)

A woman in the butcher shop in Fourques today said; 'Comme De Gaulle a dit la vie est ce que nous sommes donne'. (XYZ)

Thinks most people here accept the EEC, but like in politics 'ils ont peur d'avoir tort'. They are conservative so they are afraid of it, just like they voted against Maastricht, not because they don't support it, but because they are afraid of being wrong, so they prefer to wait and see. (F)

Said the amount of debt in Fourques is frightening, there are not 10 families in the village in the green. (They don't seem to understand borrowing for investing XYZ). (EE)

True the people here do not travel much, but the farmers can't leave the land for long. Once he was on holidays when a hard frost hit the vines, and he was not there to treat them; as a result he lost 1/4 of his harvest, - punishment (R).

L'esprit Catalan is very closed, one must do like they do or you are not normal. (CC)

When we came here first the locals were not interested in our country of origin. We were referred to as 'Vous les Anglais, vous les gens du Nord'. (II\$)

Said he was never accepted here, one has to be born here to be accepted. They always

to discourage you. If you don't do like them you are considered stupid, 'c'est fini'. They tell him his plastic bergerie will fall with the snow and the silo he made with peaches in a hole in the ground is madness. They told the proprietor of the mas about it, who duly came out from Perpignan and told him to close it or he would be evicted. The Mayor came snooping around asking if it was a pollution risk, definitely not allowed to be different. (LL)

People here travel very little outside the village. (I)

There is a lot of witchcraft ('sorcellerie') here, they believe one cannot see the phantoms, but that they leave 'leur croque', so if somebody puts that in a piece of paper in front of your door, as they did to him when he first arrived in the village, it means they want you to move on. (WW)

People here are conservative by nature, a lot of which is due to the necessity of having to take a long term perspective,- it takes 5 years for a vineyard to mature, 15 years for first cork harvest. In the North there is less of a sense of continuity, because a field of wheat today can be ploughed up and turned into a field of potatoes tomorrow. Here tradition, know how, patience and frugality are the virtues that are valued most. (I)

They treat you as stupid if you are not prepared to join in their illegal doings, eg. plant syndicate. (FF)

He is involved in the Crédit Agricole in Terrats, and claims that the people with savings balance out those in debt. Those with savings tend to put it in the bank rather than in real estate, which is considered too risky and demands follow up. The people here opt for safe reliable investments, they are not entrepreneurial. (An uncertain future must be very worrying for them XYZ). (R)

This big Viticulteur set up a co-operative for agricultural material in Fourques, it works well. The people did not have the dynamism to create or run that themselves, they always wait for someone else to do it. (G)

He thinks it is a question of culture that prevents people here from changing. They believed that the future would be a continuation of the present, 'vivre bien sans faire trop d'effort'. They do not take the initiative and shy away from risks, they wait for somebody from the outside 'de faire la premier essai d'abord'. If it works perhaps they will adopt it, if it fails he will be ridiculed. In general the Catalans are too closed and insular, one must also acknowledge that the majority of them do not live uniquely from viticulture, they have other forms of patrimony, such as pensions, the rent from other houses in the village, or the sale of plots of land. Thus it is vines + rente. (HH)

'La terre faire vivre toujours', times are tough there is a lot of uncertainty and unemployment, my children or grand-children might need the land one day. (R\$)

Impossible to motivate the people here, eg in Passa only a few turn up to annual cave meeting, they show no interest, even I was discouraging. (Z)

Nostalgia is a form of slavery, too much of it is an error. One must adapt to the contemporary epoch. Our present nostalgia is not for agriculture, 'c'est la reve de paysan'. (RR)

There has been an enormous amount of change in our life time, nobody is sure of the future, initially we were all afraid of the changes. There has been so much change over the last fifty years, 'la vie est completement bouleverse'. Now people are beginning to accept it, they are less afraid of it than before, 'ils se laissent faire maintenant'.(T)

'L'esprit de base ici est base sur l'echech, la passivity et le fatalism,ce n'est pas dynamique'. He believes that all this passivity is linked to the very ancient civilization of the Mediterranean and also the influence of Islam. The older a civilization is the heavier the ancestors weigh and fatalism is dominant. Tout est grace a l'intercession de dieu'. (V)

The fragmentation (morcellement) of the land is a big problem in Terrats and Fourques, but they do not respond to the PIL or SAFER programmes. They prefer to hold on to their own plots resisting change. (F)

The Catalans encourage their children to go for a safe administration job, with the big pension of the Gendarmerie being a big attraction. (N)

The reason we do not travel is because we have everything here, - mountains, sun, sea, snow. In general peasants still don't like leaving their village, 5 km is considered a long distance. (M).

The locals are pessimistic and they themselves do not see a future for the Aspre. 'Les gens ne croient pas eux meme dans le pays'. They themselves have condemned the place. (N)

At the root of the local lack of dynamism is the mentalité (entre autre chose), it is that which holds them back. Their mentality is profoundly traditional, 'd'etre chez eux est tres important'. Even the Gendarmes sent to Paris look for the first chance to return to Pyrénées Orientales, and all its children come back to retire. The climate also plays a part, - mentalité du soleil. (N)

The reason the people here do not travel much is because, 'la vie au village est trop bien pourquoi voyage? (NN)

He relates the lack of dynamism in the agricultural sector to former trend whereby, 'le plus bete' mentally and 'le plus fort' physically was kept on the land. (G)

Every one here is related to every one else. (D)

Thinks Roussillon would be better attached to Barcelona, because it is near, heavily industrialised and with a population of three million people. The reason the people here do not travel much is due to the lack of money. (Z)

Because the locals do not travel much, they have difficulty visualising the outside world. They perceive it as stressful and noisy, like what they see in Perpignan, so they return to the shelter of the village. (J)

She thinks the ideal future option for the Aspre would be the old reliable 'double emploi'. If agriculture could work 'au moins moyennement', and have another part time job with it, eg if the wife could find administrative work, that would be the ideal. Thinks the farmers should also pay less taxes. (Wants things to carry on more or less as they are XYZ). (Z)

Since the 1940 war the young left for the urban centres. It is better to be employed and have a fixed salary every month. Two of her children are employed in the Post Office in Marseille and one has a job in Perpignan. The children return to the village at weekends and for the holidays. The majority of the houses in the village belong to the children of the village. (MM)

L'Homme du cafe is not respected, frugality is an important virtue here. (E)

Les echanges sont toujours difficile, difficile de perception et d'esprit. L'homme depuis le prehistor a transforme, aujourd'hui ca continue. (V)

The mediterranean is a closed sea, life here depends on water; 'voila l'economie d'eau a cree la mentalité de frugalité. (WW)

The locals travel very little even the young rarely leave the Department, this adds to their insularity and closed minds, but T.V helps open them up to the outside world. (D)

The cave in Terrats has a good name, but they say it has a lot of debt 'et ca c'est movais'. (Risk taking discouraged, and do not understand the concept of borrowing for investment). (NN)

Self Perceptions: (C) Mind-sets, Culture, Values.

He works on a particular type of Mediterranean pottery, totally natural. It frustrates him that his work is not appreciated locally, it is considered too expensive. The local shops or tourist board in Thuir will not let up the posters advertising his work, they replace them after a few days with football ones. He sells mostly to museums in Europe, especially in Germany. (RR)

Human relations is the big problem, it is a real jungle here now, everyone for themselves. 'Tout est allé trop vite mais leurs images ne sont pas évoluées', they reject the neo-ruraux as hippies, but we have evolved. They have closed minds, even among themselves there are lots of disputes. (QQ)

Thinks that TV and the end of the extended family has had a big impact on the culture. (GG)

She dislikes towns, cannot park or manage the one way system in Céret. She gets most of her provisions in the village and occasionally pays a trip to Amélie les Bains, where the streets are wide. (AB)

Cooperatives do not work well, the abattoir in Perpignan is on the verge of closing, as they cannot get a constant supply of animals. They will sell 'à droite à gauche' in order to get the highest price. They are totally individualistic, they have no loyalty to the cooperatives, 'chacun pour soi', and they do not see the long term consequences of their actions, neither do they understand the workings of the market. (EF)

What this Catalan neo-ruraux is really talking about is a revolution to create a different society. He believes our present values are all wrong, reflected in pollution, corruption, congested traffic in Paris. He envisages a complete break down in the system. Jack Cousteau is the hero of all the children here. (But how are they so sure that their values are right? XYZ) (QQ).

Thinks there is a strong Arab influence here, and that is where the black market and laid back attitude comes from. (GG)

It is always a struggle to maintain the village school open. It is not just the outsiders who do not send their children there, the locals are also guilty. They think the one class system in our little school is not good, also at Fourques they take children at 3 years, it is 4 in Llauro. (Z)

Community life here is finished, people don't meet any more. Television bombards them with images of success different to our own. Big houses, cars, beautiful bodies are presented as prerequisite to happiness, those are false values. They start indoctrinating the children like this at school, deceiving the children. His wife wants to open a Steiner school, all their children hate going to school, 'le plus qu'on a le plus qu'on a besoin de'. (QQ)

Society had been profoundly transformed, before there was a lot of solidarity in the village community, now we live in a very individualistic society, 'chacun pour soi'. (RR)

L'esprit Catalan maintenant est triste, désalubre, et déprime. They live completely in the past, 'c'est toujours avant, avant'. They are also pacifists, and just accept everything. When my uncle looks at the 'brousse' that surrounds us, every inch of

which was once cultivated by himself and his family, he is really sad, and lost in the present. Her Uncle told me that before one could live from 4 ha of vines. (CC)

He spoke about the stigma attached to working with goats, (poverty), also associated with sorcerie, - Pan God. Because he was working with goats, some children did not want him driving them to school, or asked to be let off before arriving at the school. (YY)

Religion is still important here, 'mais pas trop', because it was a communist Department. (CC)

Thinks unemployment is a catastrophe, it is a result of our models of progress, capitalism, industrialization, mondialization. She considers that system inhuman, everyone needs work, the future is going to be slaves and masters like before. (AA)

The only value now is pleasure, but that can never work, life is always an effort. He would like a civilization based on harmony, work should not be a task, 'c'est nécessaire pour être humain'. (RR)

The role of women here was always to help their husbands, it was a patriarchal society dominated by men, but the house was always the domain of the women. Now they are equal but there are still some infantile women who have not grown up. (AA)

Religion is not as important as before, the church must approach more the reality of life 'et ouvrir les fenêtres'. She does not want priests at her house. (AA)

The mentality of the people here is that of someone who is turned in on themselves and their problems, - selfish and always complaining, they don't care about their neighbours, rather they are jealous of their success. The former community life is finished, now everyone watches T.V and are bombarded by urban images of progress. (AA)

Thinks the major problem here is social. Believes people should work in groups, but it is extremely difficult to organize the people here, they are very individualistic. For example he had great difficulty trying to organize to protestors to the rally in Taillet. (QQ)

His mother said that before everyone was at the same social level, they all had bicycles for transport, there was a strong sense of community. Now life is better and easier, but we have lost the sense of community, everyone is 'tres egoist, chacun pour soi'. They do not help each other any more or share work, except perhaps among friend or member of the same family when asked. Everywhere it is money that counts now. (NN)

Humanity is now upside down, before we had our feet on the ground, now humanity is caught up in abstract, not real ideas, like computer simulation models. We are

creating a civilization of deception, 'un monde virtuel, il y a un rupture d'équilibre'. (RR)

Catalans are very racist, but they must understand that their economic reality no longer exists, 'il faut qu'ils ouvrent la loi de sang'. If they thought like that why did they sell their land in the first place, we live here now. (QQ)

He has no faith in the Veterinary inspection of sheep carcasses, he breaks the law by slaughtering some of his own sheep and selling them to the highest bidder. (A\$).

The locals don't take responsibility for their own destiny, they accept everything. Many are old and tend to have few children, which adds to their lack of dynamism and interest in the future. (N)

Told me he did not agree with (V's) analysis of the roots of the present situation, i.e latifundism and rupture from Barcelona. He pointed out that lots of other Regions of the Med have the same problems as here and they were not cut off from the mother country in 1659. He believes that our problems are more of a general world movement. V's ideas are those of the intellectuals who often are blind to the reality of things'. (Common mistrust of intellectuals here (XYZ). (Y)

Globally the influence of religion is important, in Protestantism and shiite Moslems the individual is what counts, with Catholicism it is more of a collective identity. In order to achieve what one wants one has to do battle with the mentality. (V)

Role of women here is changing, they are now working outside the home for economic reasons. (J)

I was told not to go to cafés, it is not right for a woman, besides interviews there would not be serious, I would become a joke. (E)

Education was not important for their parents, still most young people leave school at 15, -16, and learn a trade. (H)

Thinks the self image among the wine growers is that of 'le meilleur', they are proud of their high viticulture tradition. (F)

Thinks the most important thing in the lives of the people here is their land, family and 'bien vivre'. (F)

This Spanish worker displayed a strong negative reaction to religion, probably hang over from the Spanish civil War. (C)

Does not think working the land is 'mal vue', that stigma is only attached to small farmers and farm labourers. (F)

Religion was more important before, when there was a curate in every village. During Easter Week the priest used to visit every house and throw salt at the bergerie door, 'pour donner la bonheur'.(T)

Religion is no longer important here, before it was part of our culture. Now we only live for the present, we hide death and pretend it does not exist, we do not wake the dead in their homes any more. We need something to attach ourselves to, when one door closes another must open, but now doubt has set in. Today we only use churches for weddings, funerals and baptisms and ignore them the rest of the time. (K)

The mentalité is all important. Before life in the village was like living in one big family, every one knew every one else. We knew the hypocrites and those who stole, but they were all accepted and controlled by the community. It was rare to held each other with work, except for the big occasions like the 'vendage' and olive harvest, but those occasions were more like fetes and important for match making. (U)

The Catalans try to pretend the neo-ruraux (and tourists) do not exist, that they are only temporary and passing through, no point investing in them. (N\$)

Most young people leave school before the Baccalauréat, now they tend to stay on longer as there is no work alternative. (J)

Ici chacun vivre pour soi, everyone for themselves and they are jealous if the neighbour does well. They have a selfish and individualistic mentality. Every year the wine inspectors pick on me, people tell them I am cheating, because politically I am to the Right and most of them are Socialists. (M)

Before one could live from 3 ha of vines now one need 20 ha. One must admit that before they lived modestly, there has been a change in values, now everyone now wants to live like the retired Gendarmes. They all want cars and holidays, the benefits of progress, that creates a tension between those who have and those who have not. (Z)

People of our parents generation moved to the city for opportunities and a better life. Now the illusion of an easy city life is past and its attraction has diminished, it is better to be unemployed in the country. (H)

After the Revolution, religious processions around the village on a Sunday were forbidden. None of the communes of the Aspre put it into practice except St. Marsal, whose Mayor was very anti religion. One of these men is also very anti the church, he said it tried to 'choke' them. (CD)

She goes to mass in La Trinite sometimes. Said that before in Spain, where she was born, the priests used to fine people who did not go to mass on Sundays, but they left the bourgeois alone. That turned a lot of people off church religion. She said she had her own religion/spirituality. (AB)

She has the idea that the world is over populated. The Arabs have a right to come here as they helped us during the war, if only they could control the size of their families. She suggests the men should be sterilise. (EE)

Thinks the people here have a speculative mentality. They are not afraid to try something new, but are only prepared to invest in short term returns. (EF)

Claims the reason they did not invest in marketing their wine in the past, is because they are just small, poor producers, one needs a lot of money for that. (Their conservatism and lack of progress is not their own fault- usual denial XYZ). (EE)

The people have no long term vision for the future, everything is moving towards short term benefits. (H)

Thanks to the machine, life is very easy today in comparison to our time. But life was better before, because there was a sense of community and people helped each other out, coring, give and take. Values have changed now it is total egotism and individualism. (CD)

It is very difficult to get vineyards to rent, people prefer to uproot the vines and hold on to land. They don't want others to profit from their life's work, another form of jealousy and individualism, 'les autre ne doivent pas profiter'. (P)

The problem in viticulture here is that we are 25 years behind, because our ancestors were not dynamic,- transfer of blame (M)

For him the most important thing in life, 'est la famille et de bien vivre, apart de ca, je ne cherche pas grand chose'. (S)

Every one here pretends they are poor and that the next person is rich, eg he said (P) is said to own half of Fourques, but pretended to me that he is only struggling and trying to hold on to his workman. His family is said to have made big money in market gardening in Perpignan, 'l'argent cache' again. The others are jealous and envious of those who succeed. (P)

Big difference in the social status of viticulteurs and vigneronns (M)

There is a change in mentality, people don't want to work by hand any more, they see prestige in mechanization. (H)

He said the locals will react to me as an outsider, and that they find it strange for a woman to be on her own here. But he believes I have one thing in my favour, they admire education, they see it as a 'moyen pour quitter la terre'.(N)

Self Perceptions: (D) Identity.

Many churches were built near megalithic sites, dolmens, holy springs, or high on mountain tops, like St.Martin du Canigou, in order to be nearer to heaven when lifting up the host. (K)

He considers himself French first and then Catalan, he speaks a very poor Catalan and thinks it is normal the children do not learn it at school. He considers English, French or Spanish useful, sees the Catalan language as part of folklore and tradition, a dialect like the others in France, langue d'Oc, provençal etc. (S)

The Catalans have lost their own identity, they don't know who they are any more. The turning point was when French was imposed on them at school. (N)

Religion here is only a formality. (M)

She admits the Golden Age never existed. She is not a romantic who wants to live in the past. To survive will always be a struggle. (K)

Thinks we are presently trapped in short term thinking. She sees no future for a society solely based on consumption. (K)

At all costs the Catalans want to stay 'chez eux', the common enemy is outside. They are jealous and petty among themselves but unite against the common enemy, 'les étrangers'. Here there has been too much passage, Roman, Arab, Goth etc, now 'ils se méfient de tous'. (N)

'Sans racine on ne peut pas avoir les branches'. (K)

All Gendarmes from here are sent to Paris to prevent the Mafia effect. (M)

He believes that the average person here has no interest in the Catalan language, except for some fanatical exceptions. He considers Catalan to be an important part of his heritage, but describes himself as French first and would prefer to be attached to Paris than Barcelona. (P)

He believes that the Catalan identity is not very strong here, unlike across the border. The exception being among the Perpignan intellectuals, and a certain chic young group, where it is 'la mode'. He understands Catalan but finds it difficult to speak. He studied the Catalan of Barcelona at university, but says that dialect is very different to the oral Catalan spoken in Roussillon (P).

The Parisian Garage owners in Perpignan, from whom I bought my car, said that his children speak Catalan with their friends and go to night clubs in Spain, c'est la mode. (XYZ)

Symbolism is important. She claims that the Trinity church in Prunet et Belpuig, where the Latin mass is still said has a special appeal to her, it takes her back to roots. Similarly, her daughter is buried on their own soil. She is very attached to nature and her Mas, describes the trees as her friends they keep her company. (AA)

Sees himself as French first and then Catalan. He thinks it is not possible for every little Region to have it's independence, Brittany, Provence etc. (R)

'Les gens ici veulent etre chez eux, et ne pas avoir de contact avec les étrangers, comme partout dans le monde'. She knows nobody in Terrats, a village less than 2 km away. (AA)

The Catalans have a separatist identity, like the Languedocians they feel they have been poorly treated by the French Government. Their history, separatist ideas, perceived marginal treatment, has led to a disrespect for law and order. They view it as 'embettant'. (FG)

Said he could not live in a city, whenever he goes to Perpignan he is very glad to return home. His wife is from a city in Belgium and misses certain things about it, she knows there are other things in life, which she claims is one of the noticeable differences between them. (S)

She describes herself as French first, mais avec les racine profondement Catalan. Catalan culture is very important to her, if we loose that we have nothing left, 'c'est important d'etre bien dans ton pays'. (CC)

Their identity is Catalan first, then French and finally European. (F)

Considers himself French first. Describes himself as Catalan but not 'Catalonist', he loves this region and his mas, and claims that it is important for him to live 'chez lui'. (U)

Says he is French first, but his heart is Catalan, and he does not feel at all European. Catalan culture and customs are important to him, but he does not want independence or to be attached to Barcelona. He visited Paris 6 or 7 times (trips organised by local agricultural organizations), it was OK but said he could not live there. "J'aime trop ma mas, la terre, ma maison...je suis bien attache ici". (T)

There are three types of people in the world, Highlanders, Lowlanders, & Coastal people. The highlanders of the Aspre are 'hard, suspicious, defensive, closed and suffer from auto-betrayal, no one to blame but myself. They keep their traditions longer than those on the plain, who were more open to outside influence. Peasant nature is about survival. (GG)

If one believes in the end of the world there is no sense (either religious or political); one must believe in infinity and 'la souplesse'. The problems of the Aspre are directly

linked to those of the world in general, they cannot be understood apart. (RR)

D'être Catalan et de l'endroit est très important pour lui. He admits it is easier for him than for foreign neo-ruraux to live here because of his family backing and support in crisis. He spent a little time at the other side of the Pyrenees, but felt completely disorientated there. "Je ne me sentais pas chez moi, de voir le soleil se lever derrière le Canigou c'était drôle, je n'étais pas chez moi". (QQ)

There is a big difference in social status between big and small farmers.(A)

Very few Catalans remain here, they are either dead or in Paris. The treaty of the Pyrenees was very important, because of that the people here do not appreciate their own art and roots like they should. With Parisian centralization the wine bourgeois from here brought in architects and artists from outside to imitate the style of the Loir castles. (RR)

People here very attracted to the ritual of religion, but not the mass or church going religion. (Is this not another example of not accepting the established order XYZ). He claims that the biggest pillagers of the ancient art in the local churches are the priests. (V)

Her Catalan friend in the village who is over 80, thinks the world is gone crazy, she can't accept the rate of change. She spends her day in front of the TV like a kid, but does not really understand any of it. (X)

Our values have changed, only recently is working the land considered degrading, and of low self-image. Thinks this is due to television and the fact that small holdings are no longer economically viable. The young look for secure work in the administration. (D)

One must remember that 'l'esprit méditerranéen prevails here, geographical and historical influences also contribute to the particularity of the local mentality. Geographically we are 'renferme par la mer et les montagnes', this is reflected in the closed minds. Historically they have only been French for 300 years, there has always been an opposition to the State here, the tradition 'rouge' communist political orientation could be explained like that. Their socialism should be seen as more of a symbol of opposition to the Centre Right, who have dominated French politics, rather than the manifestation of profoundly socialist principles. (SS)

(A) who is an outsider neo-ruraux spoke about the class system, e.g (H) may be poor but she comes from a distinguished local family and will always have social standing in Llauro, unlike her family. She claims to have a lot of 'high standing' friends, like the doctor in Fourques, but is never invited to dinner by any of them, they move in a different circle. She has a lot of acquaintances but not really part of the social scene. (A)

The retired do not offer an alternative rural life. If there is no 'tissue vivant social', such as shops and schools, the villages are dead. (DE)

Considers Catalan culture very important, but he is not separatist. He is disappointed that his children can not really speak Catalan. When he goes to Barcelona he feels at home, he can communicate with every one, but when he goes to Renne or Paris on business, even when he speaks their language, they can't understand him because of his heavy accent. Naturally he is more at ease in Barcelona than in Paris. (DE)

There are a lot of Moor graves where the Arabs settled, eg Boule d'Amont. (GG)

Thinks those voting for Le Pen are just making a statement, they are disgusted with the others, but they would never allow the extreme Right in power. (GG)

We suffer from severe depopulation here, villages like Llauro and Tordères suffered less, more of their original population have remained. He considers being Catalan, Basque etc is of little importance, we are all pyrenean and have more in common among ourselves than with someone from Normandy for example, here all live from the same thing. (LL)

The young left a long time ago for easier work and the pleasures of the city. A lot of the children, originally from the village, working in Perpignan return to the village every Friday evening, all their lives. (AB)

He is not interested in boundaries, he feels neither European nor French, he is himself, an individual but not individualistic is open to help others. (A).

The problem with the mentality here is expressed in art, the locals only appreciate the folklore element, (les cruches noir et sandana dance etc), il n'y a pas un evolution vivant. They are blocked at the folklore level, but that is not where their true roots are, those should be more profound, more linked with life. This phenomenon also explains their lack of dynamism. One has to make an effort to advance beyond the folklore stage, but they don't want to, 'il faut un ouverture'. (RR)

The Catalan religion is primitive. They are very attached to some ancient cultist symbols, like celebrating Saints feast days, the priest wearing a Catalan ribbon around his neck, the 'cult du mort' is excessively strong. I am trying to get them to bury their own dead but they refuse. 'Ce sont les chose terre à terre, tres simple qu'ils apprécient le plus'. It is the ritual that interests them, they are a bit animist. They do not have a profound evangelical sense, they see the priests role as there to 'faire fonction la religion'. But religion is more than just a formality for them, the ties are stronger than that, their community is not complete without a priest, whose presence is essential at baptism, marriage, death, all very important events in their life. (N)

The people here are discouraged, things no longer make sense to them , they are loosing their identity. Unlike the people at the other side of the border they are

ashamed to be Catalan, they consider it backward. They see themselves as French first and Catalan second. They aspire towards Paris (quelque chose magnifique) rather than Barcelona. Even the accents on local radio try to imitate the Parisian one. (J)

Sees the separation of culture and agriculture today not as a rupture but a 'deplacement'. (V)

The Catalans must realise they are no longer 'chez eux'. Their terrible 'chez eux' aggressivity and insults are no longer acceptable. Even though they have sold their land the Catalans still consider the place theirs, and ignore the presence of those who are now living there and working the land. They must open their eyes and recognise our (neo-ruraux) existence, 'on vie ici'. The Taillet rally was proof of their colonial spirit. (QQ).

Says he is strongly attached to his 'pays' and to Catalonia. He has a lot of Dutch friends who travel all over the world, but he feels no desire to do that. 'Pas besoin de voyage le monde viens ici'. (QQ)

Thirty years ago 'les petites paysans' encouraged their children to leave the land and become Gendarmes, because of the job security and the good pension. But that was thirty years ago, he is proud to be a big Paysan, and unlike (A) claims to be well treated by the 'functionaries'. (M)

Second time I meet him he spoke a lot about the lack of sense in peoples lives, especially the young, money and material things are not enough. (N)

Drinking wine is considered old fashioned, by the young, they drink coca-cola or beer instead. 'Ils ne posent meme pas la question'. (J)

Does not think that the geographical position of the Department surrounded by mountains and sea is an enclosure, it could also be interpreted as an opening, people have always crossed mountains and seas, some have always travelled. (A river could be seen as a barrier or communication route etc). Proof of this is the Serrabonne Priory, it is Roman, initially people must have found it 'drole', but now it is part of their patrimony. (V)

Thinks the attachment to Folklore is a phenomenon of all people who have been cut off from their identity, 'pas d'evolution'. He considers the neo-ruraux as folklore farmers.(V)

Roots are important to them but they don't analyze themselves, they only exist. They do not have the dynamism to succeed. They travel very little. (N)

Said his roots in Casafabre go back to the middle ages. Described himself as strongly attached to his country and lives for its soul. But in order to live here love and attachment is not enough, one also has to survive economically. He was obliged to

work in the plain for sometime, and all the people he went to school with have left the valley except for one or two. (Y)

She has three children, two in Perpignan and one in P.T.T, in Marseille. They come here at weekends and for holidays. She prefers to stay here rather than in town, here every one knows you and at least says hallow, in town everyone is a stranger. Her family are very important to her and she hates to have any disputes with them. (MM)

Religion was very strong here before, don't know at what point they changed, perhaps it was incompatible with being a communist Department, man ashamed seen going to church. Thinks the fact that the church sided with Franco during the Spanish civil war may also be a factor. (N)

Thinks cultural patrimony and physical patrimony go hand in hand. Here in Fourques there is an eight century Roman church ruin behind the wine co-operative, they see no value in it. (J)

The cities will be insupportable in a few years, if society was more interesting the children would not have such problems adapting. The problems in agriculture is a problem of culture, the disappearance of culture leaves humanity less human, Culture + Agriculture are linked. La terre en friche egal l'esprit en friche. (RR)

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

Theme: Functionality & Order,- Mastery over Nature.

Mechanization is the biggest change he has experienced during his time here, but thinks it does not have an adverse affect on the soil or environment, because they have 'le savoir faire'. (F)

Peasants have difficulty seeing 'la terre' as something other than that which produces food. The new arrivals, retired or professionals working in town, perceive the environment from their point of view. For them it is not an instrument of work, but rather something aesthetic. They bring with them 'l'esprit de la ville', manifest in refuse collection systems, swimming pools and garden sprinklers. (K)

Mechanization has been the biggest change here (M).

We are just seeing the start of the uprooting of vines, in fifty years Fourques will be 'en friche'. (M)

Here was never as fertile as the plain, we always lacked water. The ravines are due to the climate and lack of walls. The people who abandoned their difficult land in the Haute Aspre have a sense of guilt, 'mais la nostalgie fait partie d'etre humain'. (RR)

We do not have too many problems with hunters cutting fences here, most of them are country people like ourselves who understand these things, but there are some hunters who come from towns, they are the ones who cut the fences. (T)

The vineyards may appear open, but every one understands that once the fruit appears on the vines they are absolutely closed until after the harvest. After harvest any one can pick the 'souvenirs' unless a bamboo stick is placed at the entrance to field. 'Notre yeux fabrique la realite'. (V)

Thinks that Terrats and Fourques will eventually become like the Haute Aspre, 'en friche', due to the uprooting of the vines. It is inevitable, (and he supports the EEC?). (G)

What we are witnessing in the 'arriere pays' is not desertification, but 'la mort total'. Before there were 200 active people in Llauro now there are less than twenty. (H)

One must always ask the function of something, 'a quoi ca serve', e.g is the paysage to become an art museum?. If something does not serve a purpose, one must discard it. Society today is faced with the function of the 'friche'. 'Le vrai n'existe pas, la réalité est tangible mais ce n'est pas la meme chose'. (V)

The interpretation of the symbols of open and closed landscapes differs between the North and South of Europe, and is a point of conflict between insiders and outsiders. In the North one uses physical barriers to delimit space, e.g fencing, gates, locks and guard dogs. Those symbols are not appreciated here, 'les règles sont plus fin, et la mentalité plus intime', something that comes from Greek civilization, like the difference between 'le dedans et le dehors', the 'profound and the sacred. Here if one wants to block a passage, they place a bamboo at the entrance of field. Here physical barriers are used only to limit, to keep the animals inside, but for people 'c'est un sign de passage'. The misunderstanding of spatial symbols has caused a lot of problems with the Belg. (V)

People here are not too sensitive to the environment, one cannot live from that.(S)

The struggle between human and physical desertification here are directly linked. The physical environment here is about the maintenance of the millions of kilometres of stone wall terraces and for that one need people and know how. It is not the secondary home owners that will do this, they will either disappear or be assimilated. (V)

Erosion is not a problem here, at least it is nothing worse than before. He uses bulldozers to create vineyards in the garrigue, without terracing, and thinks it has no effect on soil erosion because the 'conseil technique' tell them how to prevent erosion, it is all a matter of 'le savoir faire'. Erosion is caused by those misinformed. (F)

The lack of maintenance of the Haute Aspre has grave consequences for the Basse Aspre and the plain, due to hydraulic erosion. (G)

She is a retired vigneron of about 10 ha, and decided to rent her vines rather than uproot them and avail of the 'prime d'arrachage', because she could not bare to live in the middle of a wilderness, waste land, this way the land is still worked and the area around the house is still pleasant. (order). (AA)

Mechanical clearing of the scrub breaks and destroys everything, 'ce n'est pas bon. (Z)

Biggest problem in the Aspre is the intermediate zone, Llauro, Torderes. There is no tradition of élevage there. (EF)

Would prefer to see bulldozed terraces on the side of a mountain than garrigue. He obviously values production and sees garrigue as waste and poor land management. (G)

Desertification here is about rural exodus, people left because they could not make a living here. (Z)

Thinks the plain is more degraded than the Haute Aspre, because it is more intensively cultivated. He believes that the bulldozers used to create vineyards in the garrigue do cause erosion, as there is no terracing and drainage. The reason this system is no longer applied is because 'ce n'est plus rentable'. (T)

To work and care for the land it must give one a living, it must be useful and that is what is missing now. (D)

The problem with mediterranean agriculture is that it cannot be industrialized, due to the terrain and climate. What we have is a specialized fragile agriculture, which demands local expertise. (G)

To understand the Mediterranean environment one must first understand the impact of man, because this environment was made by man. (V)

Animals and the sale of wood are the centre of this 'gardien de l'environnement's' enterprise, and not EEC environmental subsidies, which he accepts 'commem si il y a des avantage de dans'. For example he wants to buy a machine for picking up branches, if he can get a subsidy for that as part of the agro-environmental programme, tand mieux (WW)

Thinks the future is with the machine, 'les hommes sont fatigues du travail physique', they avoid it if possible. That is why there is no point trying to put the Haute Aspre in production, when there is better, more fertile and easily mechanisable land idle on the plain, a lot of which is also being abandoned.(S)

What we are doing is 'l'apprentissage de sourcerie'. Humans are part of nature not external to it, we are acting as if we were extra terrestrials. It all comes down to a question of values. What we have now is a false power (feeling of car accelerator), a false sense of values, we see no limits. A lot of people are lost and apart. (K)

Told me the story about the 'Gentille Homme', who unknowingly became a bourgeois, thanks to his professor who taught him to read and write in prose. It is the same with the farmers, who take care of the environment unknowingly, the poets of the landscape. (WW)

Thinks desertification in a phenomenon of the 'moyen montagne', and does not apply to the Basse Aspre. After the war the farmers could no longer live from autarchy, the young left for the towns in search of a better life (pour mieux vivre). She believes there are two causes of desertification in the Aspre, a) attraction of the town and secure salary, b) Le system politique Europe de marchand. (AA)

It would be better to valorise our produce and not the environment. We are more interested in creating a cooperative to promote and sell our produce, like the one in Aude, rather than doing 'gardien de l'environnement' work. After 6 months this experiment will be over and then what? What we want is to improve the quality of production and not maintain space for the Tourists. Personally I would prefer to maintain a plastic pipe rather than a water canal for the tourists. (XX)

Thinks the retired will not 'faire marcher l'arriere pays', what the place needs is some small ecologically sensitive light industry, eg silk factory, for the outsiders, Catalans

are not interested in working in the arrière pays, forget about trying to employ them. (FF)

I would prefer to see one hectare of degraded (herbicides) vigne to 1 ha of garrigue. (So this neo-ruraux also values production and order XYZ). (H)

The Sanglia (wild boar) are rising in numbers, this year 70 of them were shot in the Llauro/ Torderes area. The reason their population is increasing is because they are now farm breed and then released into the wild. Actually the farm sanglia have ruined the sport, they have a completely different nature and mentality to the wild ones, they are not really afraid of man and are too easily caught. They put up no fight, they are not interesting, 'la chasse est fini'. They produce 8 children twice a year as opposed to 2 to 3 once a year by the wild race. (BB)

Hunting is very important here, they do it for the pleasure and to be out doors. Like the farmers they consider themselves the best ecologists. (P)

Irrigation would not work here, the slopes are too steep, the water would all flow off. The schist soil could not absorb or retain water, like the sandy plain. (AB)

The subsidy for uprooting vines is a very bad thing, it leaves big gaps in the landscape and encourages people to hold the land in limbo, preventing others using. It also encourages land speculation. (H)

Hunters have a right to go everywhere, unless a proprietor has more than 20 ha together and makes a special appeal to the Hunting Federation, which meets every six years. Mostly we hunt the wild boar, rabbits rare here due to miximatoxis, we also hunt birds, pigeons, depending on the season. (BB)

In our youth we walked everywhere and everything was done by hand, machines have revolutionised life, nobody knows how to work any more. Before all around here was cultivated, now it is forest. (CD)

People are not interested in maintaining the environment of the Haute Aspre, because they gain nothing from it in return, it is no longer seen to have a function. This change in perception is linked to changing values and end of autarchy. Everyone is selfish why maintain a functionless environment. (P)

Best way to aid the environment here is to reduce taxes for those who really take care of the environment, like farmers (i.e himself). (P)

If SIP goes there will be a big fire risk. The forests are not well exploited now, they come with bulldozers, and break everything in order to remove a few profitable trees, short term thinking again. (Y)

The cork oak depends more on slope than altitude, it prefers the Southern slopes, and grows well in the Basse Vallespir. The green oak is more robust and can be found higher up, it is also more resistant to drought. The reason it is not found very high up is due to competition from white oak rather than cold climate. Man favoured the green oak over the white oak, because it was used for charcoal making. (UU)

Technician; All the Agro-Environmental policies are experimental, they have to fit in with the existing animal husbandry system. (XX)

Agriculture is dead, the restructuration of the countryside 'se fait tout seul'. (agriculture involves mastery and taming of nature XYZ) (I)

The Catalans exploit their beauty simply by selling it, they don't want to be slaves to the public, which tourism entails, they prefer to watch TV and chat. They are not dynamic. (KK)

SAFER is finished, there is no agricultural demand for the land on their books. 'L'agriculture est morte, la restructuration de la campagne se fait tout seul'. (I\$)

Theme: Aesthetics, - Nature over Man.

Thinks the hunters do a lot for nature and are the best guardians of the environment. They make little roads everywhere like S.I.P, and set maize fields in the garrigue to attract the wild game. The annual hunting licence is 40 F. (BB)

Thinks the 'gardien d'environnement' system is completely idiot, the cows are not the real solution. It would be better to get the unemployed to clear the scrub. (AA)

Tourists and outsiders are not afraid of fire, they did not experience the 1976 fire. For instance my cork oak plantation is only about 35 meters from a secondary holiday home, and I put a lot of work into clearing its undergrowth, as a fire prevention. When I was finished the owner of the maison secondaire came over complaining that what I had done 'n'était pas joli' and took from his house. I was furious. The outsiders do not understand the environment here and have no fear of fire. (S)

One must not underestimate the force of the weather here, floods, snow, fire. (FF)

She thinks that the 'gardien de l'environnement' scheme on its own is very silly, one cannot live from that alone, one must also have a good market for our lambs etc. Besides there are certain species of scrub, Genet, that animals will not eat. (AB)

He does most of the environmental 'debroussage' work with his herd of cows or by hand. He has no machinery. (BC)

We are tired of hearing about the environment for others. I say we should accept all the aid that is available to us, we are handicapped here, eg the high price of hay. We need the money, but we will never accept those ideas. (PP)

A lot of outsiders who come here want both the advantages of the country and city without the inconveniences'. (AB)

The 'gardien de l'environnement' system is 'tres pinable' for the farmers, they will never accept it. The vocation of a farmer was always to produce, c'est un autre metier d'etre gardien de l'espace. Besides farmers are egotistical/selfish, they want to work for themselves and will never accept to work for the tourists who only come here a few weeks of the year. (DE)

I am not against being a 'fire watchman'. The shepherds travel all over the place and provide a good surveillance system. If we see the door of a holiday home open we reports it. Sometimes there is theft from the holiday homes 'mais pas grand chose'. (LL)

Thinks progress and nuclear power have gone too far from 'la terre', we forget that we are part of nature not outside it. Humans are playing at 'apprentissage sorcière'. She is very attached to nature describes the trees as her friends. (AA)

He described the principle of the 'gardien de l'environnement' system as 'drole', thinks 'ca peut change, je ne croit pas que ca va duree', the farmers will never accept to be functionaries of the EEC, they want to be their own boss, 'pas ouvrier de CEE' . (NN)

Is against the 'gardien de l'environnement' system, he sees as a means of protecting the environment for the tourists and not the people who live here, les gens du pays, et ca c'est grave. Must allow the people here to live and give them the means of cleaning the forest with their animals, besides when the forest is cleaned mechanically it is dreadful, it breaks everything. (CC)

There are two schools of taught, 'faire 'l'environnement uniquement pour Bruxelles ou faire l'environnement sans savoir, pour produire. Our motivation as farmers was always our produce. Man likes to live from his work, prudence in relation to these new tricks, I say we should call in the union. I started out here with the philosophy that no one was going to impose on me what to do, I would simply live from the sale of my produce. I am now given a 15 day ultimatum to say yes to this PDD, without knowing what it is really about, its a bomb. (PP)

If there were no forest and every where was under cultivation, farmers would consider that a success, but it would be a failure for the leisure industry. (V)

The mentality here had changed a lot, we are much dirtier than before, having a refuse collection system in the country is bizarre. Adrien Cazeilles said the same thing, he added what did she do but abandoned the land to work as a teacher in town, she can't

afford to talk. (T)

The price of cork, a noble substance in comparison to plastic, has risen from 1 F/kg in 1986 to 3 F/kg now (1993). The physical desertification of the soil is not a problem here. We are now in the process of creating a forest of leisure, totally unrelated to its former production role. Demographic desertification exists here, when there are less than 10 people per km², c'est le desert humain. (HH)

Thinks that blocked rivers etc are only a problem for man, if for example, he has misplaced his houses, 'la nature se debouche. (UU)

One Belgian neighbour will not clear the obligatory 20 meters around his villa, which poses a fire risk for our house and cherry plantation. We did it for him one year and in return he complained us to the Mayor. The Mayor should impose this law but is politically very sensitive, do not want to upset their voters or absentee owners. (H)

This technicians works essentially with the implementation of article 19, which relates to environmental protection, which in the case of the Aspre is essentially concerned with fire protection. All agro-environmental work is subsidised by the EEC. Essentially they are adopting old techniques but with some new additions, eg fencing grazing plots, and new animal foodstuffs. It is a new experience, the first 'dossie' was opened in 1990, and in the Pyr. Or. there are 12 éleveurs involved in the plan, the majority of whom are outside neo-ruraux. The idea behind it all is to maintain the environment for the tourists. (HH)

The 'chasseurs de la ville' do not have the right to come here, they normally go to Cerdagne. He normally hunts in a group of 20 - 25 people, they divide the meat after. He hunts for the pleasure of it, enjoys the sport, and sees himself as protecting nature. (BB)

Thinks holiday homes and sprawling developments have degraded the environment, but that has now stopped due to 1976 law which limits construction to around the villages?? (D)

Thinks it is the hunters who are benefiting most from the Arrière pays now, they have a lot of power, there are 2 million of them more than the number of farmers in France. (LL)

He thinks that the Mediterranean landscape as a unit of production 'fait partie de la vie souvenir, maintenant nous mangeons avec les yeux pas la bouche'. He see the Aspre future not in productive agriculture but in maintaining its environmental patrimony, 'consummation visuel de paysage'. In that way it will become a distress zone for urban people, who constitute the vast majority of Europe's population. Thinks that the economie and employment in the Aspre and to a large extent the Department will be based on gites, tourism and guardians of the environment, 'c'est mieux que l'abandon. (V)

Globally we are talking about a rural economy, not an agricultural economy. Rusticity acts as an anti-stress zone for the people from the city, it is like that he sees the Aspre evolving. (V)

Thinks that here (Basse Aspre) will in time become like the Haute Aspre, does not wish it, but believes Fourques and Passa are poorly placed and would go first. (DE)

Thinks that the physical environment here is improving, the forest is spreading. (KK)

The objective of the Government and the EEC's 'gardien de l'environnement' system is tourism, but no real farmer will accept that, their profession is to produce and not landscape gardening. (U)

Pour lui la desertification est humaine, la nature reprend ces droits toujours' (common comment). (T)

Thinks that deep down it is a problem de foi/croyance (faith). Today we are witnessing a blind faith in the God of Ecology, it has become a fanaticism and all fanatics are dangerous, the most fanatical of all are the newly converted. The reality is more difficult than they think, biological agriculture pollutes also, there are more nitrates in biological manure than in chemical fertiliser. Enough research has not been done on biological techniques, so it is very dangerous to be putting all our confidence in it. (SS)

Thinks the present trend of being paid to maintain the environment and not to produce is not right, no real farmer could accept it. 'C'est pas une vie pour les jeunes de vivre des primes, c'est dégoûtant. La terre est une vocation, c'est une religion, un sacrifice'. (A).

Can't understand why we need refuse collection in the country, she produces no waste. (K)

Choice is all important we must choose how we want to live, she made the choice to live apart in harmony with nature. (K)

Intelligence seems to be the hallmark of those who integrated best and appreciated the environment. They have also noticed that people from Holland and Scandinavia tend to be more environmentally conscious. (H)

'Nous avons mar de produire l'environnement pour les autre, c'est un joli paysage qui est derriere tout ces politiques. (PP)

Technicians: We don't know the level of compensation for this PDD yet. Essentially it is aid for environmental work, especially around the villages, 'faitez les chose classique en ajoutant l'environnement, comme les par feu'. (XX)

The future of the Aspre is in the maintenance of its environmental patrimony, but in a coherent and reasonable fashion, not the tricks with the cows and sheep. Those experiments are only political, there to placate the farmers, which we have to pay for in our taxes. One only has to look at the Provençal experience, all the villages there that function well and are well maintained, are tourist villages, populated by outsiders. The same thing is about to happen here, 'c'est la seul avenir' (Colonialism). (W)

The widening of the road in Torderes by the Mayor has created an ugly entrance to the village. The 60,000 F public square is very ugly, shows no taste. The money would have been better spent on housing for those on social security. (A)

Holiday home owners have a different concept of environment, they do stupid things like putting concrete on rare fertile soil, building swimming pools, even though there is a water shortage. The administration sanctions them as a pretext to fill fire engines, in case of fire. (A)

The Technicians explained that the PDD was about integrating the Paysage within their production system. He said the forestry aspect is important because the Valleepir is 68% forested. It is about maintaining the structural aspects of the Paysage, such as, terraces, canal d'arrosage, stone walls etc. Promote your products, just don't forget about the environment and the 'aménagement du territoire', especially around the villages.

They consider (A) totally selfish, stating he will do nothing for anyone except himself. They claim he is living off EEC subsidies, and gets a lot of money from the commune and EEC to graze the fire breaks, he grazes the clover all right, but does no 'debroussage' work. (ZZ)

The only solution is to start with one self and choose how one wants to live, and not follow blindly the 'mentalité du cloche'. We are living blindly and dangerously now, everything has to be easy, heating at 20° C, but when something goes wrong we fall in a hole. (K)

Eleveur; The fire-breaks open up the countryside to cars and motorbikes en vitesse a 100 km/hr, and we hiding behind the bushes with our herd scattered in all directions. (XX)

The essential thing I drew from the PDD meeting in Prats de Mollo, is that the whole thing is experimental and that the technicians are as lost and confused as the eleveurs. The great unknown', nobody knows where it is leading to, they all feel like guinea pigs. (XX£)

Outsiders, like (ZZ) have a different view of space and the environment. He puts big emphasis on hygiene, cleaning up the refuse bins and removing the fly infested bergerie. They want to transfer their 'urban' vision of order and space on to the rural landscape (ZZ)

Eleveur; All we are doing is to give pleasure to the tourists, everything is vague, vague, etude, etude! (XX)

The problem with the subsidies and guardian de l'environnement is that one has no incentive to work. In life man aspires for promotion, higher income and 'd'etre chef', but one can never hope for those things from Brussels subsidies. (WW)

Considers the EEC subsidy for uprooting vines as catastrophic. Firstly there is the psychological affect, it discourages those who are already struggling to survive. Secondly it is not good for the environment, it brings diseases to the surrounding vineyards, especially vineyards that have been abandoned or badly pulled up. The other problem with abandoned vines is that the paths and drainage systems are not maintained, which can cause erosion. Everything is linked. (DE)

Theme: Natural Hazards: (A) Fire.

Article 19 was put in place in the Aspre in 1982, essentially in the domain of fire prevention. pour lutte contre la desertification. Abandoned sites colonize very fast, progressive fire degrades the milieu, but it is very rare for fire to pass every year, we are talking about cycles of 15 - 20 years, besides now they say fire is part of mediterranean ecology. In the Aspre fire zone lies between 100 to 500 m. The frequency of big fire here is about every ten years, sweeping from Bouléternere in the north east to Vives in the south east. (UU)

Thinks that controlling the forest undergrowth by flocks of sheep, goats and cows will not prevent the forest fires. He claims that the fires are often intentionally set by hunters or shepherds searching for after grass, or by those looking for revenge on a neighbours. (EF)

Traditionally the people here lived in the village or hamlets, however with the arrival of holiday homes and dispersed habitation, the price of land went up as did the fire risk. The new inhabitants have short memories, they think fire is no longer a risk due to SIP intervention, which is not true. For this forestry technician the point of no return for the Aspre is if there are secondary holiday homes 'partout dans le foret'. (UU)

The last few years have been very wet, consequently there has been very few fires, people wrongly think that is due to SIP, which is not true. SIP is not the solution, essentially it only improves access. (L)

The forest is progressing at high altitudes, the biggest problem is between 100 and 300 metres, i.e the intermediate garrigue zone, which is very susceptible to fire. The problem with the green and cork oak as fire prevention measures, is that they take so long to grow and cover the milieu. If the canopy is completely closed in it controls the

undergrowth. (L)

SIP is not the long term answer to fire in the Aspre. The best solution would be to return to productive agriculture. If the SIP fire prevention system works for a while, after ten years people will forget about the fire risk and stop maintaining the fire breaks and water cisterns etc. (G)

The abandonment of land by man often reduces the erosion risk and is good for the environment, unless there are frequent fires. The biggest problem is if the land abandoned by farmers is repopulated by a 'holiday home' population, that would greatly increase the risk of fire. (UU)

Fires are a big problem here because the environment is gone wild. (B).

The par feu will never stop the fire they are only access routes for fire engines, along which cisterns of water are placed. Sometimes those cisterns are empty and that is dangerous, other Departments have created 'Les Comités Communal de Feu de Foret'. Here the fire service were not in favour of this village surveillance system, because they often end up better equipped than themselves. (UU)

They are not really worried about fire, but they are very careful and tell tourists to put out fires etc. SIP has done a lot to isolate the fire, but doubt that they can completely prevent it. Goats have done a lot of damage to walls, they would never keep them as they bring flees. (FF)

In 1976 they arrived from Brussels on the day of the big fire. 'Ca fait vraiment peur', they were all helpless, all they had was a little fire engine of 200 litres, with a ding a ling bell, it was comical really. The fire came to their house from all sides, they think somebody deliberately set fire to the vineyards down the road, settling a feud. All the trees around them were burnt, but a few years after they remarked that the green and cork oak regenerated, you would never think it had happened. (II)

Fire is a problem here and definitely degrades the vegetation. There is an obvious difference in vegetation that has been burnt and that which was not in '76, it impoverishes the soil and removes the organic matter. (Y)

Water is a big problem here, but it has rained a lot in the last three years. It is not normal to see the paysage green in August, like this year. Fire is a serious problem here, 'les par feu ne vaut rien', they are only access routes. However the fire surveillance system has advanced, now the fire engines arrive at the first trace of smoke, but if the fire gets a footing there is nothing they can do. (QQ)

Fires are no longer a problem here due to SIP surveillance and water points, fire is now under control. (HI)

If the forest is burnt more than two times he notices that it does not regenerate the third time, the soil becomes acid and the garrigue takes over. (T)

SIP helps a little but would not stop a fire with the tramontagne blowing at 100 - 120 km/h. Of course, he said, that a lot of tourists did not experience the last big fire of 1976, and they are not afraid of fire, think they can just spray a little water on it. (S)

In relation to forest fires, prevention costs less than 'la lutte'. I am in favour of having a herd of sheep, not for themselves but to graze the undergrowth and protect the environment. Most probably it will not be the present day farmers who will accept to live like this but others will. (V)

They spoke about the problem of selling parts of the forest, cutting and removing the big trees, leaving the kindle wood, which poses a large fire risk. She was evacuated by helicopter during the fire of '76. (X)

For him desertification here is not something physical, the vegetation always regrows after a fire, rather it is 'le transfer de population.' (W)

He thinks the best solution to the fire risk is to put in prison those shepherds who start it and also to increase surveillance. It is not possible to remove all the vegetation and plough the soil, neither is it possible to exploit the forest like before, the experiments with the cows and sheep are 'rigolant, et ne va pas loin'. The best solution is not to start the fire in the first place and have a good surveillance system. (I don't think he understands how fires are caused, often spontaneous like in 1976 (XYZ)). (W)

Natural Hazards; (b) Erosion.

When they plough the natural prairie of the Haute Aspre with modern machines, it results in a lot of gulling (ravinement). Again it is only a short term gain. (UU)

The plain has always acted as a recipient for erosion from higher up. (Y)

A lot of the ravines around here were caused by floods, his Grandfather told him about a ravine in his farm that was a chestnut plantation, before a big flood swept it away, leaving a ravine. (T)

Does not think there is more erosion now than before. She thinks the flooding in September that swept away the bridge in Fourques was a result of the Travaux Publique not maintain the waterways of the Haute Aspre. (AA)

Finds the condition of the soil in his vineyards the same as before, perhaps even better. He uses herbicides over the vines, but said the water infiltrates in the ploughed part, he does not know about the long term effect of those chemicals but that does not

'enquete' him now. (R)

Sees no sign of physical desertification here, on the contrary it is improving, the forest is spreading. (LL)

Does not think there is too much erosion in the Pain, true the use of herbicides instead of ploughing makes the soil impervious, but one must not exaggerate, similarly grass and shrubs grow over the ploughed up vineyards binding the soil. (Y)

Thinks the bulldozers 'qui fond n'importe a quoi' in the garrigue are bad and do cause erosion. She thinks the unemployed in Perpignan should be employed to repair the Terraces etc. (AA)

In the Aspre one must talk about the susceptibility to erosion, the schist erodes easily, but covers over fast. The red soil around Tordères is highly susceptible to erosion, if it is covered in garrigue it is less susceptible. (UU)

Thinks there is not much erosion here, ravines were always there due to heavy rain. He thinks there is nothing wrong with the bulldozed terraces in the hills, he has two bulldozers for that purpose. Admits that the terraces like before were better but it is too expensive (labour) and time consuming to do that now. (S)

Soil erosion is not a problem here, the ravines around here have always existed due to torrential mediterranean rain. Before they were controlled more and filled in during slack periods, but in these harsh economic times ecology and the environment suffer. (G)

Thinks the soil is tired due to the monoculture of vigne, and the lack of organic fertilisers. (G)

Thinks there is no problem with the environment here, on the coast yes with all those ugly buildings. Ecology is not a problem here but it is true that it is degrading faster than before, there are more ravines and floods, because the environment of the Haute Aspre is not maintained. Bulldozers that create terraces without walls etc are not good and cause a lot of soil loss, but bulldozing is faster and costs less. (R)

Erosion is not a problem here, he uses bulldozers to create vineyards in the garrigue without terracing, which he thinks has no affect on erosion, because the conseil technique tells them how to prevent erosion, it is all a matter of 'savoir faire'. Erosion is caused by those mis-informed. (F)

There is no problem with environmental degradation here (St. Marsal), there are trees growing everywhere and they bind the soil preventing soil loss. There are a lot of fir trees here, fires are rare, we are at too high an altitude. the forest around here is cleaned mechanically. (MM)

Soil erosion is not a problem here, but land abandonment and fire are. The ravines here are due to the harsh mediterranean climate. (I)

Thinks there is a problem with erosion here, even if it is not noticeable in the vineyards. There has always been a transfer of fertility from l'arrière pays to the plain. (L)

Does not notice any changes in the soil, but remarked that there are more natural catastrophes than before, floods, fire etc, but then again people always say that, he thinks it is cyclical. (S)

Thinks there must be an erosion problem in the vineyards, because a lot of bare soil is exposed. When they plough, Spring or Autumn, and when and how they apply the herbicides are all important, if plough in Spring at least the earth is covered over the winter. There is more erosion in vineyards than in grasslands. (L)

For him desertification is uniquely physical, and is a change in relation to a climax, equilibrium state. Obviously man disrupts this equilibrium, but we have no bench mark to relate it to. If we can't measure erosion we can at least constat a loss in fertility or acidification of the soil. There must certainly be erosion on the tertiary, pliocene marine deposits. (SS)

Natural Hazard; (C) Pesticides and Chemicals.

Thinks the herbicides and other chemicals used in the vineyards have no adverse affect on the soil, vines or environment. (I)

Does not agree with the use of herbicides, but if he had to use them for economic reasons to survive he would.(D)

Thinks winegrowers pay more attention to herbicides and insecticides than before, more aware of the health risks. (GH)

Think herbicides are not good, they are a poison, but he also feel obliged to use them, in order to save time and expense (ie cheaper than ploughing). He uses herbicides on 1/3 of the ridge, ie over the vines, and plough the rest. (NN)

Does not see any big change in the environment over the last twenty years, except he has noticed that since the viticulteurs started using herbicides there are less insects than before, and more snails and rabbits attack the stumps of the vines. He thinks there is also less water infiltrating into the soil, and more surface flooding. He thinks there is a general return to ploughing, because herbicides are getting more and more expensive, and people are afraid some of the chemical residue remains in the soil. (DE)

Herbicides arrived 12 years ago, and were initially widely used, They are now being used more sparingly, turning more to ploughing to remove grasses. (E)

Ten years ago 80% of vineyards were ploughed, now 80% use herbicides. Short term effects are not noticeable, but thinks their long term impact will not be good. The American system of systematic vaccination is used, insecticides are used to control diseases like mildew. He has noticed a reduction in wildlife in the area, especially birds, the hirondelle has disappeared, thinks this is related to the chemicals used in viticulteurs. (J)

Some farmers are very attached to their land and are ecologically conscious (like his boss), but for economic reasons they feel they have no choice but to use chemicals etc. Of course others 's'en fou completement'. (O)

Feels obliged to use herbicides, because it takes less time and costs less than ploughing, but he knows that it is not good for the environment and nature in the long term, it is a poison, and by replacing ploughing they prevents water entering the soil. (T)

Sees viticulteurs pollute very little in comparison to other types of agriculture and industry. He has no qualms about using herbicides, insecticides and other chemicals and sees no change in the soil. He admits that the medium and long term effects may well be different, but he is not worried about that for the moment, one must survive economically in the present, that is the priority. (G)

Thinks chemical pollution poses more of a threat here than erosion. People here are not very sensitive to the environment, 'on ne peut pas vivre de ca'. (S)

The wine growers use a lot of chemicals. The locals take nature for granted, they never leave the village and have never experienced the effects of industrial pollution, the neo-ruraux are a lot more environmentally conscious. Fire is a big problem here. (N)

Started using herbicides on 1/3 of the furrow two years ago. He does not like the practice, thinks it is a poison that will affect nature in the long term, but for the moment he feels obliged to use them, 'c'est le progrès, mais surtout pour les raisons économique'. For the treatment of diseases such as mildew, chemicals are necessary otherwise one would have no harvest. (S)

In the last fifteen years the viticulteurs have started to use herbicides, insecticides and chemical fertilizers, but he thinks they have no adverse affect on the soil or environment. (F)

Insecticides and pesticides used in the vineyards are very dangerous, a number of my sheep have dies from them. They also reduce the pasture for the sheep in the vineyards. (A)

Considers herbicides bad for soil and wine, but they save time, labour and money. This Spanish farm labourer enjoys pruning the vines but obviously his values tell him it is low status. (C).

Theme: Perception of Ecologists.

Thinks the ideas of ecologists are good, but the politicians who represent them are not real ecologists, just using it as a cover to get to power; 'Ils ont des belles phrase dans la bouche, mais ils ne comprennent pas vraiment la campagne, ce sont les gens de la ville'. (AA).

The ecologists are the modern intellectuals, who do not understand the life of the earth or the countryside. (LL)

People here are against the Ecologists, 'ils les trouvent rigolant et pas serieux, c'est la mode seulement pour trouver le pouvoir. A lot of socialist politicians have become ecologists. The ecologist vote is mostly in town. It is not the ecologists that will regulate the problems in the economy and with unemployment. (P)

The 'Green Politicians' in Cèret are using the environment as a political tool to get to power. She thinks it is a pity the Green intellectuals and 'les gens sur place' can't join together and understand each other. If the intellectuals do not understand the real problems on the ground their work is futile, eg treffle. (H)

People here are against the ecologists and their rules relating to the use of chemicals etc. They find them 'enmerdant'. They are too preoccupied with time and economics to pay attention to the environment. (J)

Does not like ecologists, 'ils sont rigolant', ce sont les gens de la ville qui n'ont jamais cultivate un pied de salad', what do they know , how could they give advice to farmers who are the ones who live in close contact with nature and know it best. (U)

Ecologists now gaining ground because people are fed up with both the left and right. 'Les meilleur ecologists sont les agricultures'. The political ecologists are not real ecologists, they are against farming, they say stop using nitrate fertiliser etc, but if there is no harvest how will we live? (R)

We don't like ecologists who come here telling us what to do without knowing the constraints. 'Ils n'aiment pas les gens qui leur donne des lessons.' (G)

Theme: Perception of Technicians, (Essai Technique).

See the SIP attempts to control fire as a joke, the Mayor of Tordères is 'con' and understands nothing. The forces of nature are far stronger than token human attempts of empty water cisterns and toy aeroplane. (H)

Learnt his trade from an old Basque shepherd, who taught him the traditional medicines, which the technicians are now re-discovering as new. (A).

The 'gardien de l'environnement' system is completely 'idiot', the cows etc are not the real solution, it would be better to use the Perpignan unemployed to clear the scrub undergrowth. (AA)

Subterranean clover is a typical technical solution, intellectuals removed from reality, here is not Australia, 'Le reve de technicians', it is not suited to here. (H)

Seems to be a genuine animosity between technicians and farmers, each thinking the other knows nothing. (A) complained that a lot of the sites chosen for fire breaks are useless, as are the methods for removing ciste species. (PP)

Considers SIP, fire breaks, water cisterns etc, as 'essai technique sans consequence'. (D)

SIP is totally ineffective, if there is a wind with the fire, like there always is, it would jump the fire breaks. It would be better employ the unemployed to clear the undergrowth. (AA)

Subterranean clover is only an academic experiment, it is no solution to forest fires. The forest needs to be grazed selectively, a few of his sheep died from eating too much of the clover, ('gonfle a l'estomach'). (A)

Thinks SIP intervention is good, but it is only at an experimental level and is in financial crisis. The problem with the clover is that it must be grazed in the winter while it is growing or else it will not regrow, but 'élevage' is in a catastrophic situation now due to competition from Eastern Europe and Argentina. Toutes ces experience ne sont pas de vrai solution sans d'abord avoir une vrai élevage'. It is just a technical experiment, not the solution. (Y)

The plantation of conifers that got burnt down in Tordères, was never a success. It would be better to guard the Mediterranean species adapted to here like the green and cork oaks, rather than experimenting with exotic conifers. (BB)

The future for the Aspre is to work with the indigenous ecologists, not the technicians who advocate conifers and Australian clover, they do not know the reality of the Aspre. One must go with nature, just like food, conifers may grow fast like battery chickens, but the quality is not the same as free range, which take a few months longer. (M)

The fire breaks are not effective, the water cisterns are frequently empty. Subterranean clover is expensive, only a technical essay. (A)

The hunters oppose fencing and all those technical experiments, because they are artificial and nothing will come of them, waste of tax payers money. He agrees with them, the land here is too poor to fence off. (P)

The newcomers no longer perceive fire as a threat here due to SIP interventions. He believes those things 'ne vaut rien', when the tramontagne is blowing those easy technical solutions are useless. Dangerous covering up the fire risk. (P£)

SIP is not the solution against fire, fire jumps the fire breaks when there is a wind blowing as there always is. We are very afraid of fire here, we are surrounded by the forest, we had to be evacuated by helicopter once, everyone was crying and praying. (CC)

The SIP have made huge improvements in surveillance and putting in access roads. As soon as there is any sign of smoke the Canadair and fire brigade arrive on the scene and isolate it. SIP is very effective. (II)

No simple solution to combatting desertification, SIP surveillance helps a little but the best solution would be to reinstall an active population with a bit of green tourism. (K)

Thinks that the State throws money in silly things liked the controlled burning in of the garrigue in Tordères, that 'essai technique' was very badly done and serves no purpose. Thinks SIP intervention is good but it would only 'relantir' (slow down) the fire not stop it, especially if the tramontagne was blowing, which is generally the case. (T)

Technicians advice can be very dangerous, there are more constraints in the real world and environment than they are prepared to acknowledge. When we were setting out here we listened to our parents and relatives who know the land, the climate and constraints of this environment. Those who listen to the technicians end up in debt, like the 'Jeune Agriculture' from Trouillas who committed suicide last year. (H)

The fire breaks look ugly, we need a vision of progress that can maintain the harmony of the landscape. 'Il faut crée une autre société'. (RR)

Complained that Article 19 was wasting a lot of their time 'inutillement', eg they had to spend 20 days in total at I.U.T, Perpignan with technicians, 'qui ne voit plus loin que leur treffle'. (PP)

Join all the agro-environmental programmes, some of the Brussels bureaucrat/technocrat thinking is so stupid, like constructing waste pits for sheep that are outside all year, that it simply suffices to point that out to them, otherwise it will be imposed on us. We will end up polluting just in order to touch the primes. (PP)

Theme: Temporalities; - Short and Long Term Environmental Memories.

Physical desertification is not a problem here, there are trees and vegetation everywhere, 'le sol est bon'. The ravines were always like that, they are a result of heavy rain. (NN)

Due to lack of maintenance of the environment fire and floods are a big danger here. Houses are often constructed on flood plains, in order to sell them to unsuspecting outsiders and make money, but they know they should not be there. (Z)

Water is not a problem here (Haute Aspre), there are a lot of mountain springs. Water for the village of Saint Marsal is piped 6 km from a source in the mountains. In La Bastide it is piped from a distance of 14 km. She was brought up in La Bastide, and in her childhood water was a big problem there, had to be transported in buckets and barrels from the river, and was the cause of many disputes. (AB)

There is a bad sanitary problem in the village of Tordères, (A) was complaining about the smell from a German Holiday home cistern, that is placed under the cave, when it is being emptied once a year, sometimes she claims there is also an odour in Summer. Her own overflow is going right through the village, she always blames every one else, especially the rich. (VV)

D'être Catalan et de l'endroit est très important. He spent some time at the other side of Pyrenees, but felt completely disorientated; to see the sun rising from behind the Canigou, 'c'était drôle', pas chez lui. (QQ)

She does not like Tordères and the Basse Aspre, because it is arid and garrigue, said she loves her mountains. The trees that regenerate naturally here is the oak and fir. (AB)

Do not really see any major changes in the environment since coming here 20 years ago, some fields have been abandoned eg vines, but others have been cleared, a lot of roads have been put in by SIP. See more of a change in the landscape than in the environment. (FF)

Does not notice a degradation of the environment since coming here. Thinks the unemployed would not want to live here. (VV)

The word degradation has negative connotations, here is not negative, it would be better to use the word transformation. (V)

La richesse c'est l'homme, pas les tomates. If people depopulate the countryside for towns, c'est à dire que la richesse est en ville. Two hundred years ago man was in the country, leisure and art was in the city, now we are witnessing the reverse, the country is becoming a site of leisure. (V)

Until the middle of the nineteenth century there was very little forest here, which is surprising because the Aspre are now covered in forest. The cork and green oak regenerate by themselves, if their canopy is sufficiently developed it covers over and prevents undergrowth and reduces fire risk. But it takes a long time for that to happen, many are setback by fire. (Y)

Ravines have always been here, (thus not perceived) due to torrential rain. (D)

'L'histoire de climax de vegetation ou sol n'est pas viable', eg. if one leaves a herd of goats graze eventually there will be a botanical transformation based on the preference of the goat. It is the same with the forest, it can be perceived in different ways. It provides wood for carpenter, fire wood, grazing for animals, leisure for tourists etc. 'C'est l'utilisateur qui transform'. (V)

Tourists are not afraid of fire, they did not experience the big fire of 1976, they think they can just spray a little water on it. When he cleaned the undergrowth in his cork oak plantation, the owner of a maison secondaire complained that 'ce n'était pas joli'. (S)

In his youth, it was all organic fertilizers from the 'bergerie' that was used in the vineyards. Or sheep were just allowed to graze the vineyards, it was a symbiotic relationship, now the cycle is broken, there are no sheep, and the one remaining flock in the area is dying from vineyard herbicide poisoning. (E)

They consider tradition and long collective memory very important. From listening to their ancestors they respect the forces of nature and know that things can happen suddenly here, eg, flood of 1940. (H)

Adrienne Cazeilles and the ecologists are too passivist, 'trop renferme dans le passé', they want to live like we did 100 years ago, but that is not possible 'il faut vivre avec aujourd'hui'. Cannot live in the twentieth century like we did in the nineteenth, history shows that one can also change the mentality. (V)

There are less sheep in the Aspre than when they arrived here twenty years ago, but it is more difficult to find pasture as the environment is so degraded, - garrigue. (A).

The last three years have been very wet and consequently there have been few fires, people wrongly think that is due to SIP, which is not true. SIP is not the solution, it improves surveillance and access only. (L)

'Avant l'amour de la terre était fort', one took care of nature 'gratuitement', society looked badly on it if one left their vines uncared for or fields dirty. Before there was no unemployment, there was always something to do around the village, digging a garden or working for others. (T)

Degradation here is linked to the absence of maintenance of the terraces and the abandonment of agriculture. The society of the stone wall terraces was linked to the soil that those terraces defended. When the walls fell, the society itself fell. It is not a question of man no longer being able to live here, it is the Capitalist system that condemned the existing economy. (V)

Biggest changes over the last 50 years is the abandonment of polyculture and the imposition of monoculture of vines.(J)

Thinks soil erosion is a problem here. Ten years ago one could live from 10 ha of vigne, and had time to arrange the vineyards well, maintain terraces and drainage system etc; now one need 25 ha to be economically viable, and there is no time to care for the environment like before. 'Actuellement ils sont foux de tous'. Now they flatten everything including drains with bulldozers, and use no terracing, the whole thing erodes and gullies. They say they have no time to rectify it, actually they could not give a damn. They say it does not affect the vigne because it is 'costaux'. (J)

Greatest change he remarques in his lifetime is the move from polyculture to monoculture and the resultant loss in diversity. (G\$)

Soil erosion is not a problem here, and the ravines have always existed, due to rain. Before the ravines were controlled more and filled in during quiet periods, but in these harsh economic times environment and ecology suffer. (G)

Sees big changes in the environment over last 30 years, before there was a lot more garrigue now everywhere is under vines (even hill slopes), even though every one complains of the poor economic returns, which he finds contradictory. The other biggest change is mechanization, the use of tractors and bulldozers for creating terraces. Big increase in the number of fires, don't know why. He also remarked an increase in holiday homes which he thinks have a bad impact on the environment. Ravines, due to torrential rain, seem more pronounced than before. (C)

For the locals the environment is not important, they don't see the degradation, but he does. For him degradation is really lack of maintenance, forest undergrowth not cleaned, river blocked prompting floods in plain, terraces falling down, fires risk. (P)

Desertification is not a problem on the plain or in the Basse Aspre, perhaps high up in the Aspre it is. There has been very little pulling up of vines here in comparison to the coast, thinks that is because people here are attached to their land? (E).

Sees no change in the environment over the twenty years they have been coming here, certainly no deserts, what has been abandoned regenerates fast, new vineyards are being planted to replace old ones. The biggest changes they notice are the growth in villages and their restoration. (TT)

There was a big 'defrichement' in the middle ages, again in the XV11 and XV111 centuries due to over population and famine. In XV1111 century there was another population increase in the Aspre, followed by an exodus in the XX century. Ce sont les cycle. (UU)

We now see degradation as the disappearance of Terraces and stone walls, but the walls were artificial, 'seulement nous avons l'habitude de les voir et le changement chock, c'est normal, transformation du paysage. (UU)

Machines have revolutionised life, before everything was done by hand. Before all around here was cultivated, now it is forest and wasteland. (CD)

She does not see a change or degradation in the local environment except that 'ca bois'. The forest is taking over the abandoned land, (she implied that was degradation). Avant la terre etait pour nourrir'. Said that before these hills were completely deforested, a lot of the farms could not be sold because there was not enough trees for fire wood in the winter. There is a famous Roman forge on her farm that had to stop operating because of lack of wood. (AB)

Before everything was cultivated here, 'le paysage a change, les joile terrace sont disparu', sometimes I cant even recognise the old fields. Water is not a problem here, it comes from a source in the mountains. That day they were taking down the overhead telephone wires in St. Marsal and putting them under ground, (EEC aid) because they look ugly for the tourists. (MM)

Was only prepared to talk about superficial things, defensive, and asked me as many questions as I asked her. Said here (St. Marsal) is not 'la desertification', there is a school with 12 - 15 children who come from the surrounding villages, une épicerie, une boulangerie, une coiffeuse quelque fois par semaine, et le médecin une fois par semaine. (MM)

Sees the crumbling of the terraces and not cleaning river banks as a big problem, (visual impact within living memory, unlike ravines), leading to massive erosion and flooding in the plain, where people with short term memories have built houses, one day they will be washed away. The rain carries away a lot of the Aspre's topsoil. (H)

The Mediterranean is the interface between the mountains and the sea. Space de transition,- le moyen montagne, that which looses it's young looses its dynamism. (V)

Does not consider physical desertification a problem here and does not envisage it in the future unless there is a change in climate. mediterranean man is not very aggressive towards his environment. Thinks the physical environment of the Aspre is better now than at the beginning of the century, because the forest is gaining, this reduces erosion and soil loss due to floods. The floods this year (1993) caused less damage than the one in 1940. Saw an aerial photograph of Conflent, before bare rocks and ravines, and now covered in forest. (HH)

The climate here was a lot drier before, now it is raining a lot, it is no longer a mediterranean climate. (II)

Does not notice any change in the soil, true there are more natural catastrophes, floods, fire, snow, but people always say that,- it is cyclical. (S)

Newcomers have short memories, the fire of 1976 is forgotten, they think it can never again happen due to the SIP technical intervention. He believes those things *ne vaut rien*, when the tramontagne is blowing at 100 km/h those easy technical solutions are useless. Dangerous covering up the fire risk. (P)

Biggest changes they notice here are depopulation and the dying out of Polyculture, cork, cereals, vegetable gardens, sheep, vigne etc.(H)

All the signs show that the Réat forest in Tordères was deliberately burnt. People think that there are only two trees adapted to here, the cork oak and the green oak, which is not true. The cork oak is the worst for attracting fire because of its colour, (white bark), the tree itself often survives the fire. The pubescent pine, white oak, beech and eucalyptus are also natural and well adapted to here, but the people always favoured the oak for economic reasons, that is what they are used to seeing here and will not support anything else. (UU)

Before there was solidarity among the people and they paid for work by exchange of work. But all that is gone, she is now surrounded by Belgians, Dutch, english, German holiday homes. She feels isolated there is no one she can turn to for help on the farm, she thinks the change is irreversible. She neither knows nor has anything to do with the holiday home owners, who come here for a few weeks of the year. (AB)

Theme: Environmental Economics.

Ten years ago one could live from 10 ha of vines, had time to arrange everything well, maintain terraces and drainage etc, now need 25 ha to be economically viable and one has no time to arrange the environment like before, just use bulldozers to flatten everything. They say they have no time to rectify it actually they could not care less. (J)

People here don't really care about the environment or the land, what is important is *'la rentabilité économique et d'être chez eux'*. (N)

Monoculture is an economic necessity, but has an adverse effect on the environment. Now environment is only a unit of production, no maintenance like before. (D)

What one is dealing with here is human rather than physical desertification. Thinks that the small minds, rules and regulations of commerce are destroying the world. (GG)

Can not even enforce the law which obliges all householders to clear the scrub in a 20m circumference their houses. They say it costs money and the Mayors do not want to annoy people, a politically difficult situation taking into account their need to be re-election. (obviously not aware of the fire risk XYZ). (P)

The American model of mechanised agriculture is not suitable for the mediterranean where land is very fragmented, hilly and not suitable for mechanization. The mediterranean climate favours fruit, vines etc, all of which require a lot of labour and specialized skills. (K)

Ravines have always existed. Before they were controlled more and filled in, but in harsh economic times the environment and ecology suffer. (G)

A testimony to the vitality of the Aspre is when the forest spreads the less the place prospers economically, when the forest retreats the more it prospers. One must never forget that everything is relative. Reality does not exist, it is only ideas that change. Now the image of the Mediterranean forest is transformed into something exotic, before it was an instrument of work. (V)

In order to stay in the 'arrière pays of the Aspre, one must first of all love it. There are a lot of disadvantages to living here, must change the car every 3 years because of the bad roads, the vet costs 216 F/km, i.e 600 F a visit, have to pay more for hay etc, due to transport costs, sometimes we are cut off here in the winter due to bad weather; but these are the disadvantages of mountains every where, they are not unique to here. (WW)

General attitude to the environment here 'ils sont foux'. It is the profitability ('rentabilité') of the environment that matters for them. 'Il y a vraiment tres peu de gens qui aiment vraiment la terre, et ceux qui aiment la terre le traiter bien' (idealism). (H)

The meaning of environment for him is quality of life and visual impact, but economics and ecology are always linked. He will do whatever he has to survive economically in the present, realizing that the long term consequences may not be good. (G)

True the vineyards they create with bulldozers in the Garrigue are not good, and they realize that after a while. They are created for short term profitability, for the moment, 'les gens s'en fout de l'environnement, c'est uniquement la rentabilité qui compt'. There is also the fact that they no longer want to work by hand. (NN)

Thinks that the people here perceive the environment as something to make money from. 'Vendre la terre chere pour construire n'importe ou.(Z)

Considers the EEC's maximum input, maximum output approach very damaging for the environment. (D)

Desertification in the Mediterranean is above all else economic. To maintain environment one need a minimum 'rentabilité', the only solution is to subsidise, cork, élevage, vigne etc. (G)

In relation to the environment 'la rentabilité' is first, one must make a living.(E)

To work and care for the land it must give one a living, it must be useful and it is that is missing now. (D)

The present mentality is to profit in the short term, everything is done in the name of progress. It is no longer fashionable to work by hand, eg the terraces. He thinks it is not possible to work like before, 'revenir en arrière', the young would never accept that, besides the values have changed. (T)

Greatest change most people remarque here is the move from polyculture to monoculture, and the resultant loss in diversity, (linked to economic efficiency). (G)

Terracing is probably better than bulldozing for the environment, but it all comes down to economics, terracing costs more. (G)

Before cleaned river banks, removed cork, repaired terraces and drains, undertook controlled burning of the forest, now there is no manpower for these diverse activities, besides all tools today are mechanized, thus such work costs more, and machines cannot build stone wall terraces. (D)

L'essential maintenant est d'alley vite et de faire l'argent, l'environnement c'est la rentabilité. (AA)

The reason they no longer use terracing or drainage in the vineyards is because, ce n'est plus rentable'. (T)

AGRICULTURE.

Theme: Uncertainty in the Agricultural Future of The Aspre.

There is an economic crisis at the moment, last year his boss got 3 to 5 F/kg for peaches, this year he 50 centimes per kg, as the crop was bad due to excessive rain. Another indication of the economic crisis is that the price of land has dropped considerably. (O)

Problem with liege is that it takes a long time to grow and can only be harvested about every 12 years. For cork one need to take a long term perspective but we are trapped in short term thinking. Prices for cork are also very low even though they have risen lately. (H)

Thinks the future is not good, especially for the young, there is no work, a lot of young farmers are heavily in debt. Debt is a big problem here. (R)

Thinks agriculture here is finished. 'La Region a pris l'habitude de vivre de rent de situation, - a) speculation de terre, b) tourism, c) le vin. (W)

No long term vision for the future, everything is moving towards short term benefits. (H)

Thinks the future is going to be most difficult for large exploitants. Viticole as a sole full time occupation will not exist in future, we need a complement to it like tourism in Banylus, but in the Aspre there is absolutely no other outlet. He predicts a lot more uprooting of vines in the area in the future. (G)

Thinks that the uprooting of vines and the land 'en friche' is dreadful. There are problems in wine but it is the same thing for vegetables, meat and milk etc. (AA)

Agriculture in the mountains is finished, people here are not dynamic, ils ont pris l'habitude de laisser faire. Now there are also problems in viticulture, because they did not make an effort to improve their wine quality or the marketing. Sees no future for the wine co-operative, except for the rare dynamic ones like Terrats. In other wine growing regions like Bordeaux, all good wine comes from individual caves, the co-operatives only produce 'le vin du pays'. Thinks there is a future here for quality wine, if well marketed and comes from individual caves. (W)

Economic survival is the name of the game. (G)

In the future thinks there will be more uprooting of vines in the Aspre, but that there is a future for those who modernise and stay, because the wine of Roussillon now is not bad and 'pas chere'. With less quantity and improvements in quality 'ca peut alley'. (S)

Food is the new ammunition, the U.S, GATT has a big influence on agriculture world wide. (I)

There is a lot of uprooting of vines on the plain but not around here, as there is no alternative crop, and the majority of holdings are small with no successors.(D)

They would like a return to a form of Regionalism,- each Region of France specializing in a product. (H)

What he would like to see is a reduction in land tax for those who live in difficult places, like the Haute Aspre. The tax 'fonciere' for cherries in Llauro is very high and at the same rate as for Céret. (P)

There is a surplus of everything in the EEC and one will always find some place that will produce a product cheaper. If one carries this argument to its logical conclusion, all of France should stop producing and just consume. (H)

Biological production is secondary, it is the quality and 'le sens qui aliment que nous avons perdu'. One must link the clients with 'la terre', it is that that is now missing and not bioproduction. The clientele for his produce (vegetables) are there, they are often young mothers, naturally the prices are higher than in the supermarket, thus his niche in the market could easily become saturated, and his clients may be loyal but not numerous. He sells his farm produce at the weekly markets in Céret and Collioure. (QQ)

The only thing that could work in the Aspre is extensive élevage, there are EEC subsidies for élevage at the moment but will they last?. Elevage is also slavery, one must stay with the herd all day, fencing is only of limited value here due to the poor grazing, the animals have to be moved frequently. The majority of mas now have some form of fencing. (T)

He is part of a 'Group Pastoral' with 3 others, during the summer they transhumance to an ONF (Forestry Dept.) fenced mountain near the Canigou, and pay 35 F per animal for the summer. His cows are kept outside all year round, but he gives them hay in the winter which he makes himself. Before his family always supplied milk to the village, but they had to stop in 1991 due to EEC hygiene laws, since their milk was not pasteurised. They always milk by hand, never had a milking machine. (NN).

Les choses vont trop vite. The agricultural technicians were just about to put things in place bit by bit improved agricultural practices, - preventing pollution, improving quality of produce etc, there is less risk with gradual change, it is now demoralizing to have all this effort devalued. (SS)

Mediterranean agriculture produces non essentials, like wine and fruit. During a recession people cut down in these luxuries. (I)

The reason the young are not taking over their parents holdings is the fear of falling into debt. Successors is not a big problem in Fourques, the allure of industrial way of life is diminishing. (F)

He is strongly attached to the agricultural development of this valley, his family roots here go back centuries, but he admits that agriculture in the Haute Aspre is a failure. It is not profitable, but also one must admit that physically it is not easy to farm here; there is the violent and hard climate - snow, floods, drought, storms, tramontagne, steep slopes, erosion, poor soil covering rocks that do not retain water. No it is not easy to live off the land here. (Y)

Said he is proud to be a viticulture, it is his life and it gives him a lot of pleasure. When the people in Brussels say that his wine 'les embette', and that we have to diminish the quantity produced, 'ca lui fait beaucoup de mal'. To be a farmer the pleasure is to produce and not sit in a cafe all day. (R)

Farmers every where always complain, last year was always better than this year. (N)

Thinks it's a shame agriculture is finished in the Arrière Pays, but would have to be an idealist to think otherwise. Can only survive there now with an outside job or via tourism. (X)

Thinks it is not possible to return to productive agriculture in the Haute Aspre. 'Pour travailler cette terre il faut etre un esclave, et meme ca ne donne pas assey pour vivre'. The only thing that could work there is extensive elevage, but there is no market for its products and it is very hard work, remain with the animals all day long is slavery. (P)

Does not see a future in agriculture for the Haute Aspre, its future is solely in tourism, here will become like the coast. (P)

There is not a future for agriculture here, 'c'est la desertification' - i.e depopulation. (T)

Not possible to live solely from the land now, charges are rising and prices are stagnant, we need a complement to agriculture, - eg women working outside. If the State does not help the farmers who want to work the land, c'est fini, we will be surrounded by land speculators and holiday homes. The problem at the moment is that subsidies help anyone including those neo-ruraux who are not serious, and the 'chasseurs de primes', who are just in it for the money. 'Il faut faire l'agriculture avec les gens agricole'. (Z)

Pension for retired farmers at 65 is 2,500 F/m and for Gendarmes 12,000 F/m, labourers get 3,500 F/m, 'comment ces gens peuvent vivre ensemble avec tellement de difference'. (Z)

Actuellement nous voyons la dernier vie agricole dans l'Aspre, a partir de maintenant il faut parler de vie rural au lieu de vie agricol. (Y)

For about ten years now there is a law that forbids slaughtering outside of the abattoir, 'il faut le tampon'. However he has no faith in the vets inspection, he exposed one fraudulent bourgeois vet that was condemning carcasses as having brucellosis and then taking them to his own abattoir. The price of lambs at the co-operative in Perpignan is poor so he tries to sell direct to particulars whenever he can, even though it is illegal. (A).

Underlying message from government and EEC is that they want us out of production, there is a surplus of wine and we cannot compete with cheap imports from Spain. (B)

Borrowing for farmers to expand and intensify was O.K when the price of land was rising and inflation was high. Now land prices and inflation have dropped, an unprecedented difficult time in agriculture. (L)

Uprooting vines is a short term arrangement, but not the long term solution. (K)

The cost of élevage production here is much higher than in other Departments of France, eg hay etc, thus within the national context there is no point producing here. (L)

Thinks that the mark 'Agneau Catalan' is not very serious. There is a local market for quality produce, but it is easily saturated. (L)

The traditional culture here has always been extensive elevage, with 3 - 5 year rotation of potatoes, wheat, grass, 'avec les murettes en pierre'. Elevage is no longer profitable, due to outside competition from places like Argentina and New Zealand. The plain has always acted as a recipient for erosion higher up. (Y).

Times are tough, with 200 sheep have only a subsistence life and could not survive without EEC subsidies. (A)

The biggest problem with agriculture in the Aspre is that it is not 'rentable' (profitable). 'On vivre pauvre sur la terre pauvre comme toujours'. (Y)

He has a herd of 200 sheep, he sells the lambs at the age of three months to the Co-operative Ovine Pyrenees Oriental, in Perpignan. He also castrates some lambs for the muslims which are kept to age of 5 - 6 months, and he kills some for his own consumption. To qualify for EEC subsidies next year must have a herd size of over 230(?) sheep, changes all the time (A).

Most wine growers are in debt, one year behind and cannot catch up. (E£)

There was a time ten years ago when the Belg did block agriculture, but it is not an issue any more because there is no more agriculture here. They may have accelerated rural exodus but did not cause it. (Y)

They cannot make a living from cherries, (work for others) the market fluctuates from 40 to 18 to 8 F/kg without notice. We are badly affected by imports from Spain and Italy, due to EEC opening of frontiers. (H)

Young farmer living with his parents but does not have 'Jeune Agriculture' status as he inherited his land. He has 17 cows and 14 ha of A.O.C wine. He keeps the cows for the calves which he sells at 6 months, 250 kg, for about 3,000 to 4,000 F each. The buyers take them to Italy and Spain where his mother said they are feed on hormones, fattened and resold in France. Prices are better in Spring than in Autumn. There is a calf co-operative in Prad which he is not part of, prices are much the same, they also supply the Italian and Spanish markets. (NN)

Said that the PIL programme for which she is responsible for in the Aspre runs counter to the subsidy for uprooting vines, one trying to increase efficiency and the other to get viticulteurs out of production. People like her at the DDA were not consulted when these plans were being drawn up. (Q)

There are problem with successors in Fourques, as the young do not see a future in viticulture, and look instead for secure employment. They find it very hard to have to leave the Region and adjust to other places. (B).

Agriculture is finished in the arrière pays, the objective of the Government and EEC 'guardian de l'environnement' is maintaining space for the tourists, which no real farmer could accept. (U)

Association Pasturel has helped them but it is not very secure. Land owners can get around it by saying they need the land back to plant trees, or pretend they are going to work it themselves. (A)

Thinks there is a real revolution taking place in agriculture, there is a turn towards extensification. The EEC has reacted to the CAP reforms by; a) lowering prices and compensating the producer with 'les prime a l'hectar', - i.e extensification. b) Before it was the price of the product that was guaranteed by subsidies, now it has changed to income support, a real revolution. It is extensification that is behind, le PDD, Prime a l'herb. Article 19. etc (L)

There is no market for sheep wool, last year he had to burn it. (A)

Buying hay and straw is a problem for him, first it is difficult to get, has to be transported from Aude, and secondly most of the straw is now in big round bales which he does not have the machinery to handle. (A).

At the perpignan co-op he gets about 320 F for a lamb of 27 Kg, out of that the lamb has eaten 120 F of grain and F 50 of hay for the mother, so about 150 F profit. To compensate for the fall in prices and raising costs of production there are two sorts of subsidies; a) La prime compensatrice pour toute la France (PAC), b) Intervention special dans les zone defavourise qui fond la transhumance. The combination of both these subsidies give him about 300 F a year per ewe. He also gets a subsidy for maintaining the fire breaks under Article 19. He maintains 9 ha, 3 per year for which he gets about 600 F / ha. 'Sans les primes je ne peut pas vivre'. (A).

Thinks the land bought by Belg in the mountains has blocked agricultural development and that there are loop holes in the Association Pastoral. But the biggest blockage to agriculture in the mountains is that sheep are no longer profitable, due to cheap imports from Argentina. (D)

One has to live in the present, the patrimony of the Aspre today is that of its natural environment and landscape, a hundred years ago it was cereals, olives, vines etc. One has to change with the times or die. (V)

The future for here is not in agriculture, we cannot compete with wine from Spain and Italy, we must opt for quality here. In relation to animal husbandry, sometimes there are problems with people who do not want to let the animals pass on the land, but those problems are not just confined to the Belg, often it is locals from the village who are the obstacles; - 'encore l'esprit fermer'. (Z)

Thinks there is a future for agriculture in the arriere pays, but they must create their own system, biological produce and sell direct. (GG)

Il y a un transhumance de population ici. The young do not want to live from agriculture, education takes them towards the towns and administration. The few eleveurs (generally outsiders) that remain are supported by EEC subsidies. (KK)

Does not see a future for agriculture here it is too difficult and not profitable. Before under autarchy people were content with 'peu de chose', but unfortunately that way of life is finished. (BB)

He is a 'Jeune Agriculture', in the business now 10 years. Early on most of his herd was killed due to brucellosis, he could not have managed except for State aid which helped him to build up another herd. He now has 200 sheep and like (A) cannot make a living from it, he works in the morning as masson. When he has paid back his loan would like to live solely from his sheep. (LL)

The inhabitants of the Aspre never lived uniquely from agriculture, it was always but a complement to work in the mines, the forest (bois et charbon), or the cottage textile industry. The Belg have no interest in agriculture in the Aspre, but for us it is still 'un utile de travail'. (WW)

Does not see any serious return to the land here unless something catastrophic happens. Problems in agriculture are world wide, if they got the markets together there could be an outlet for organic agriculture here. (FF)

There are several conflicting EEC subsidies for éleveurs, they change on a regular basis, depending on market demands, making it impossible for eleveurs to predict what next year is going to be like. They find all this uncertainty very confusing, hard to keep up to date with and even harder to apply for. They are not always aware of what they are entitled to. (EF)

Most eleveurs cannot survive without subsidies, as confusing as they are. The reason they change all the time is to avoid compensation getting too expensive. Often, even the agricultural extension workers are not aware of the changes. (EF)

The biggest problem in elevage is that the whole enterprise is not economically viable, people want to stay, but their incomes are dropping all the time. Now the problem of age and successors is a big problem. (EF)

Future for elevage in the intermediate zone of the Aspre is bleak, transhumance has become very costly. The various subsidies include;

- a) Handicap Mts.
- b) Compensation du marche, PAC Bruxelles,
- c) Aid revenue, d) Maintenir d'Activite social. (EF)

His principle income is from selling fire wood, and his wife has a full time job. He also keeps horses, some goats and a 'fromagerie' (Dairy), which does not correspond to European norms, but he sells his cheese at the market any way, he is waiting for the Gendarmerie to come and break up his Dairy. Once he went on hunger strike for five days at the church in Taulis, after which the Mayor granted him planning permission for here. (WW)

Cooperatives do not work well, the abattoir in Perpignan is on the verge of closure, as they cannot get a constant supply of animals. The suppliers have no fidelity, they sell a droit a gauche, for the highest price. They do not see the long term consequences of their actions, neither do they understand the market system. (EF\$)

The Pyrénées Oriental is the only remaining Department in France in which Brucellosis is still a problem, especially among ovines. Sanitary conditions are often poor here, and control is slack. The resultant meat is generally of inferior quality to that produced in Northern Europe, regardless of whether the animals are organically fed (on garrigue) or not. The market now demands homogeneity and quality. (EF)

Thinks there is a future in elevage here if they succeed in bringing out a mark of quality, that is well known, mais bien sure avec les subventions de CEE, comme pour tout l'agriculture maintenant. (LL)

Seems to be a lot of ambiguity surrounding this 'nouvelle agriculture', eg what are the criteria for passing the technicians annual visit. Confusion as to what exactly the eleveurs role is in all this. Are they trying to protect the village, forest, the par feu or feed their animals?. (PP)

Before there was solidarity among the people and they paid for work by exchange of work. But all that is gone, she is now surrounded by Belgian, Dutch, German, English etc, holiday homes. She feels is isolated, there is no one she can turn to for help on the farm. She thinks the changes are irreversible. She neither knows, nor has anything to do with the holiday homes around her, they only come for a few weeks of the year. (AB)

The agriculture structures which we have worked hard at putting in place cannot change from one day to the next, if after 5 years we realize this approach is wrong we cannot revert it, because the ancient structures will have disappeared. Naturally it also discourages the technicians and all the hard work they have put into it. There is too much instability, agriculture is not like industry. La grand question est ver ou en va? (SS)

Thinks the future will be difficult, agriculture in the arrière pays is finished. There is a living to be made from elevage, but the young don't want to work so hard and the young from the towns do not have 'la force ou connaissance'. (NN)

The subsidies they are creating everywhere are artificial, more and more things are becoming abstract and removed from reality, models of reality but not reality, very dangerous we are living in a cloud. (SS)

They were very emphatic that agriculture is finished here, now it is just tourism. A lot of hippies tried to work the land here and kept a few sheep and goats, but they came from the city and knew nothing about agriculture, they have all failed and moves on now. There is no future with them, they are not serious,- usual story. (CD)

Considers agro-environmental policies dangerous, only short term, 5 years and after that nobody knows what will be next, impossible to plan. (SS)

He participated in Government PIL programme for grouping fragmented vineyards. He is also raising the number of his herd, kept 3 yearlings this year, but does not know how many he is actually aiming for. Would appear not to plan and don't seem to have any long term plans, very much a matter of wait and see. (NN)

Said there is a living to be made in the arrière pays, 'mais il faut cree une nouvelle marche'. The present system is uniquely designed for the 'chef d'entreprise'. He has no confidence in the EEC administration, he thinks they would prefer somebody on the dole rather than somebody like him who wants to do things differently 'en gardant leur dignite'. They would prefer someone to remain with their arms folded, pitiable, 'il y a un trou pour vous dans le system - RME'. (QQ)

Most éleveurs do not own the land upon which they graze their herds. Because this Department is so depopulated, it is generally not a problem, as long as they do not try fencing off areas, which prompts an immediate response from the owners and the hunting clubs. This means the landless éleveurs cannot modernize, and have to stay with the herd all day, which is very labour intensive. Even if they did fence they would have to move frequently due to the poor land. It is necessary for the éleveurs to respect local customs. (EF)

Over the last 5 years the objective of the CAP has changed radically, but the biological and ecological agriculture they are promoting here are not easy to implement, we do not have sufficient experience in that area. La nouvelle agriculture est liée à la préservation de l'environnement, mais ce qui est grave l'idée de compensation est disparu. All of a sudden the farmer has less income, but the people in Brussels don't care all they see is the environment. (SS)

The role of the peasant was always to feed the people of the country, the new EEC directives are the opposite to what always existed. 'Le problème de l'Aspre est un problème de la planète, c'est le problème de sens de la vie, il n'y a plus aucun sens'. (RR)

Theme: Problems in Viticulture - Basse Aspre.

He employs 20 people from Seville for the 'vendage' (grape harvest) every year.(D)

Celibacy is not a problem here, like in centre of France, and neither are the young leaving the land in Terrats and St Colombe. (We are O.K thank you).(E)

Two important wine organizations, 1) Syndicate de Cru, they fix quantity of production, quality control and legal matters, eg. say two caves want to join. 2) Organization Interprofessionel, this is a state organisation created in 1943, it is responsible for A.O.C wines, distribution, marketing and fixing price. This is the organization under attack by EEC, which claims it does not have the right to control prices. The EEC already controls the sale and distribution of table wine, now they want to control the A.O.C also. This is a very serious question for this part of France. He questions the EEC ability, competence and organization to do this job properly. (G)

The wine co-operatives insulates the viticulteurs, they are local and the growers look upon them as their employer, - salary on time. Its certitude attracts them.(G)

The wine Cave in Terrats is the best in the Aspre, due to a) human motivation, b) started bottling and promotion 25 years ago, as opposed to five years ago in Fourques, c) the holdings in Terrats are larger, 20% of the producers produce 80% of the wine, - more mechanized. In Fourques and the other villages of the Aspre the holdings are

much smaller and the young do not want to stay on the land, as they see no future. In Terrats they see a future. (G)

This region is ideally suited to wine production, sun, wind and poor soil. What held them back was that they were far from the place of consumption. The coming of the railway was the turning point after that it was monoculture of vines. (G)

Mains d'oeuvre is not a problem here, we get plenty of seasonal labour from Spain and Portugal. (F)

Does not use herbicides, insecticides or fertilizer as no point in upping the yield. Very little grass due to summer drought, control it by ploughing. (D)

Spanish wines lack quality, Roussillon wines lack marketing. (F)

Age is a problem here, most exploitants are over sixty. (G)

Biggest problem facing wine cooperatives is cheap imports from Italy and especially Spain. (I)

This neo-ruraux shepherd who also works in the vineyards get 60 centimes and a quantity of wine for pruning the vines. His wife is the only woman has progressed to that job, most women's work in the vineyards is 'penible', (picking up branches, stones, grass etc), and is less well paid. Interestingly their own well educated daughter never works in the fields,- mal vue. (A)

Holdings in Terrats are generally between 15-20 ha, higher than the Departmental average of 6-7 ha. (E)

A lot of problems with viticulture in Fourques. Terrats is doing better as they sell direct for a long time. (B).

The 1983 Dublin accord limits the production of wine by giving subsidies for (a) uprooting vines and (b) distilling poor quality wine. He thinks the 'prime d'arrachage' is not the answer, leaves large gaps in the environment. In the Plain of Roussillon where the soil is rich they can grow alternative crops, but here the uprooted vineyards are just left en friche. (I)

Thinks there is a future in biological wine, but it would have to be promoted and subsidised. However, for the moment he has no choice but to use chemicals, economic survival is the bottom line for him, to feed his family and keep his two work men. If he had a choice would prefer to make biological wine. (G)

Aspre ideal for wine but not much else due to its poor soil and lack of irrigation, this is why so few pull up vines here as there is no alternative crop. The plain and coast is fertile and irrigated. (F)

This year 20 - 25% of the total surface under vines was uprooted in Montauriol. There are a lot of old viticulteurs without successors, their children left for the towns twenty years ago, it is not really the young of today who are leaving, it is a phenomena of the past. They uproot the vines, avail of the 'prime d'arrachage' and hold on to the land, in the hope that the price might rise. (S)

Most vine growers are definitely in debt, one year behind and cannot catch up. (E)

He is a small viticulture of 12 ha and rents 12 more. Before 10 - 12 ha was plenty to live from, now one need 25 ha. The economic return from vines is about 20,000 F/ha gross. The price depends on weight and quality of vines, % alcohol. (R)

Said viticulture is still 'tres rentable' (very profitable) in Terrats, and that a lot of young are staying on the land, no problem with successors. The positive situation here is due to the good management of the cave over the years. They started bottling and promoting their wine over twenty years ago, there was a young director at the cave at that time, the others around were old and opposed to change. (R)

Economics; 1 ha of A.O.C wine worth, 15,000 to 20,000 F/ha.

1 ha of Vin de Table , 12,000 to 13,000 F/ha.

In Alsace 1 ha of quality wine gives, 100,000 to 200,000 F/ha.

Thinks the wine co-operatives have played a large role in the lack of dynamism in the sector. Frequently they were poorly managed, besides the caves did everything for the viticulteurs who became like functionaries of the cave. He would like to have his own cave but does not have the money, for moment is part of Terrats cave. (S)

Times are not great but can still make a good living from wine, returns of 20,000 to 25,000 F/ha for Cote de Roussillon, and 30,000 F/ha for muscat, but charges are raising all the time, chemicals and insurance policies are very expensive. (S)

He is young and farms 40 ha vineyard. He did a four year wine growing stage. Visiting other vinegrowing regions had a big impact on him, he thinks the viticulteurs in Roussillon are twenty years behind. Before the VDN was doing well and people were happy to stand still and were not concerned about the future. Lack of dynamism and also people here did not have a lot of money to modernise. (S)

Seasonal workers treated badly here as everywhere, exploited, poor conditions, no over time. (O)

The overall mentality resulting from the protectionist policy of the caves is a conservative, stagnant esprit, they have failed to move with the times, quality was not great and their marketing techniques very poor. Now they are in a crisis, except for caves like Terrats. The majority of the caves have no future, they are relics of the past. The future is with those with their own cave. (U)

Definite drop in consumption of wine, replaced by coco cola. (M)

The caves have insulated the wine growers for too long, have not encouraged dynamism or investment. A lot of suppliers have 'double emploi' so they are not really interested in investment or improving the cave/wine. (U)

A lot depends on the Director of the cave, the human element is very important, if there is a dynamic director and a good team it makes a huge difference. A lot of the cave problems are linked to human incompetence, it is the members of the cave who elect the Director, so he generally reflects their aspirations. (Q)

Prices for wine have not changed for years, but the charges are constantly rising. 'Actuellement ils vivent tres mal. (GH)

Big problem in viticulture in Fourques with age and successors the young don't want to stay because the holdings are too small and they cant make a living from them. (M)

Insurance for vines very expensive, eats up about 25% of takings. (R)

The vigneron with their own cave must take care of production, vinification, and commercialization. It is difficult to do all three well, often they concentrate on commercialization and are a bit careless about the production end. Their clients are often clients of the family for years. (Q)

Thinks the wine co-operatives have played a large part in the ruination of the viticole industry in the Department. In other wine growing parts of France the Caves are rare, the reason they are so popular here is that this has always been a Communist Department. (U)

The limit for production in the Aspre is 50 h/lt, but that is not a problem he normally produces 40 h/lt, thinks the relatively poor yield is related to the poor soil and lack of water. (S)

He treats the vines 3 to 4 times a year depending on the weather, June, July & August. The Chambre d'Agriculture sends them out a letter beforehand telling them when to treat the vines and the products to use. Higher up in the mountains it is not necessary to treat the vines, here we are too close to the sea. (R)

Problem in viticulture here is that we are 25 years behind, because our ancestors were not dynamic, they relied on the reputation and monopoly of the VDN. (they always blame someone else, even the ancestors XYZ). (M).

Viticulteurs with less than 12 ha have inevitably have another part-time job. There is a lot of that in the Thuir cave, but not in Terrats. 'Double emploi' can cause problems for the management of the cave, because the part-time and fulltime growers have different needs. (R)

Changed the cepage a few years ago now we are starting to make good wine. The vines are the lungs of the country, it is not possible to have quality and quantity together. Future for here is in quality. (AA)

Celibacy is not a problem with Jeune Agricultures in Terrats, they often marry functionaries, which is a very good thing because it supplements the farmers income, but it can cause problems at home when the wife and mother is not there. (R)

Ten or twenty years ago it was a paradise in viticulture, but it is still OK now. There is a living to be made from it, even though the viticulteurs always complain. (P)

Vineyards in Llauro and the Haute Aspre are not profitable and very hard work. The degree of alcohol, upon which price is reckoned, is 9° in Llauro as opposed to 11° in Fourques or Terrats. Thus in the Haute Aspre one has to work harder for less returns. (P)

Bit of an economic recession over last 10 years, people in debt, but still a good living to be made from viticulture. (F)

Yields in Roussillon are very low, eg. 45 hecto/litres as opposed to about 100 to 200 h/lt in Italy, Spain and other parts of France, (poor soil). (GH)

Thinks there is no future for the wine of Fourques, nous sommes en retrait ici pour le vin. The wine often remains in the cave for 2 years, sometimes even 6, before being sold. At all the local reunions they advise the parents to encourage the children to leave the land, it has no future. Our wine is not of great quality must be mixed with Cote de Roussillon to improve its quality, after that one still has to market it. (EE)

Irrigation of vineyards is forbidden, because it would increase yields and thus cost of distillation. Irrigation could also affect quality, but if applied at the right moment, drought conditions, could be beneficial. (GH)

Thinks that the crisis in viticulture is a human error problem. The Department did everything to improve the quality, changed cepage, technique de vinification, cave, but the problem lay with the men at the head of the cave, they were content to make a lot of poor quality wine. That was acceptable up until 1970, mais ca ne va plus, and it is too late to change now, no more good cepage or openings in the market. Even the VDN is not doing very well, it is too much like Port, but more expensive. Now in France there is only a market for quality wine, we cannot compete with cheap imports from Spain, Portugal and Italy. (HH)

Thinks there has been a big improvement in the wine here, when they arrived here 20 years ago one could not drink the wine, since then quality has much improved, but what they sell in the supermarkets in Brussels is still of bad quality. There Cote de Roussillon is not known as a quality mark. On their return to Brussels they stock up with wine from here. They think the people here are not perfectionists they think,

'l'ancienne system va toujours'. (II)

Thinks Terrats is in a good position in relation to the other caves of the Aspre, but the situation is not great either. If there were two bad years in a row it would ruin a lot of people, because a lot have borrowed heavily, and have high repayment charges. (DE)

In the cave in Passa there are 130 members, at the annual meeting less than 25 ever turn up, they show no interest, no discussion, even I was discouraged. It is very difficult to motivate the people here. They are twenty years behind Terrats and their dynamic Director. (Z)

Three types of wines are produced in this Department, a) Vin Doux Naturel, b) Cote de Roussillon (both a + b are A.O.C. wine), c) Vin de table. The crisis affecting wine growing in the Region relates to a) changing consumption habits, people are drinking less (economic crisis), it is no longer fashionable among the young to drink wine, b) The wine from Roussillon-Languedoc is not well known outside the Region, due to lack of marketing in the past by wine cooperatives. Neither did they invest in improving the quality of the wine, the market now is for quality wine. As a result the wine from here is not competitive, not well known and far behind the other well known wine growing regions. (GH)

For the vines the traditional system is one ploughing after the vendage in October, one in Spring and one in Summer just to break the soil. Now they often eliminate the Autumn ploughing, but the practice varies. The Spring ploughing is the most profound, 40 cm, the summer one is only to scratch the top of the soil, 20 cm. They either use herbicides over the whole vineyard, or just the vine furrow and plough in between the ridges. The practice varies. (SS)

The good position of Terrats in relation to the other caves around is due to a dynamic Director, who twenty years ago started bottling and selling the wine. The Director of a cave can only go forward if the members of the cave are with him. 'Le cave est un ensemble'. Unlike the other caves the members of the Terrats cave attend local meetings, and show interest. (DE)

The biggest problem in viticole now is that the average age is over 50, and many have no successors. The young do not want to stay because it is not economically feasible, esp. on small holdings. (GH)

The wine co-operatives have neglected quality, modernization and marketing; neither have they any long term vision, this is at the root of their present problems. (FG)

EEC 'prime d'arrachage' is catastrophic, (A) the psychological effect discourages those who remain, 'a la limit', (B) it is bad for the environment, brings disease to other vines, the access roads and drains are no longer maintained precipitating erosion. Visually the friche syndrome is depressing. (DE)

It is culture that prevents the people here changing, they are deeply conservative and saw the future as a continuation of the present. Must also remember that most of them do not live solely from vines, they have other patrimony, esp apartments and land speculation, 'donc c'est viticole + rente. (HH)

Thinks that the wine here is now excellent, but unlike Corbiere wine is not well known in England. Thinks the improvement in the wine quality is due to the co-operatives adopting new scientific methods, not like before when they used to press the grapes with their dirty boots. (TT)

Because this is the only region producing Vin Doux Naturel, they presumed it was the best wine in the country and there was no need to promote it, or see how the market was changing. He has seen fraudulent co-operatives adding lorry loads of sugar to the V.D.N. (FG)

There are advantages and disadvantages to wine co-operatives. For him a cave 'est uniquement un regroupement d'homme', everything depends on them, if there is a rotten apple in the barrel, everything goes badly. Thinks that big wine co-operatives are not the solution. 'Le cave est un utile de travail seulement'. (DE)

There is a crisis in vines and market gardening on the plain, so he thinks there may be a viable future for élevage in the Plain, if it abandons cultivation. (EF)

Due to the over production of poor quality wine, the EEC are obliged to pay for distilling the excess. About 12 years ago at the Dublin Accord, they put into place a subsidy for getting out of wine production, 'Prime d'Arrachage';- 30,000 to 35,000 F/ha. This means land is taken out of production for good, one also needs an authorization to plant vines. Between 1983 - 1991 approx 12,568 ha were uprooted. (GH)

Can still make a living from wine, the average gross returns being around 20,000 F/ha (depending on cepage, can vary between 13,000 and 30,000 F). After charges and bank repayments what remains is often about 6,000 F/ha. The average monthly salary of the viticulteurs in Terrats is between 8,000 to 9,000 F a month. (DE)

Takes his vines to the co-operative in Fourques and Le Boulu, thinks they are both doing well. Said that the cave in Terrats had a good name, but they also say it has a lot of debt 'et ca c'est movais' (Again idea that one must not invest or take risk). (NN)

The wine growers do not invest in the cooperative systems, they use them to get the maximum possible out of them, a very short term view. The wine growers have come to see the cooperatives as their employers, they have adopted a 'salary' attitude. The monthly date of payment is all that concerns them. (FG)

The reason they paid little attention to marketing in the past is because we are just small poor producers here, and did not have the money to invest in marketing. One need a

lot of money for that thus it was not possible or practical. (not their fault) (EE).

There is a lot of dishonesty and self interest among the winegrowers, eg the Director of the cave in his village, has two separate vineyards, one AOC, the other vin du pays, during harvest he fraudulently transports the vine du pays grapes to the AOC cooperative. There is also a problem with them adding sugar to the grapes, to get a higher alcohol content, thus higher price. (FG)

Theme: Modernization Versus Marginalization Model.

As well as being responsible for the PIL programme in the Aspre, she is also involved in the DDA, Jeune Agriculture programme, a National directive which started in 1978. Under this programme the insertion grant is 65,000 F in the Plain, 85,000 F in disadvantaged areas like Fourques and Terrats, and 136,000 F in mountain zone. 60% of the grant is given at the start and the rest after 3 years provided one can prove that they are economically viable, if not they are not obliged to repay the initial sum. (Q)

Mechanization has brought about the greatest changes in his lifetime. In 1956 there were 90 horses in Terrats, they are all gone now except for tourist ones. (R)

Many of the young farmers now are completely 'sauvage' (wild), they do not socialise and are 'renferme chez eux'. (M)

It is difficult to qualify for the 'Jeune Agriculture' status because of the high level of education required. After 1997 those born after 1971 will have to have the Baccalauréat, which is very rare here. (P)

The 'Jeune Agriculture' course is all about accounts keeping, the idea being aimed at turning them into 'dirigants d'entreprise'. It is obviously where the government sees the future, but it is more suited to farms around the Paris basin than here. (Q)

Objective of PIL and SAFER is to increase size of holdings, increase mechanization and efficiency. On similar lines 'Jeune Agriculture' system is trying to increase education, need Baccalauréat, creating Chef d'entreprise'. (D)

She is very against plastic bergeries, like that of Mr (LL). Her worry is not that they will fall down with the snow, he is a mason and his is well built, but it is that they are bad for human and animal health. Because they are not made from natural material such as wood or stone, they do not absorb condensation, they are unhealthy and cause respiratory diseases. (AB)

Underlying message from government and EEC is that they want us out of production. There is a surplus of wine and we cannot compete with cheap imports from Spain. (B).

The accord between France and the Magreb allows Moroccan tomatoes to flood the French market at low prices. This is advantageous for France as a whole but not for this region. They would not allow that for the products of the North. The imprisonment of two wine growers from this Department who demonstrated in Montpellier last year reflects the same attitude, they take no notice of us. (G)

The PIL quota for the viticol Aspre is 70 ha per annum and they have achieved that. A lot of the parcels here are only 6 m², and if they could re-group them into 1 ha that would be good. (Q)

The American model of production is not suitable for the Mediterranean, where land is fragmented, hilly and not suited to mechanization. Our climate favours fruit, vines and vegetables, all of which require a lot of labour and specialized skills. (K)

The American model is false, it is based on advertising and prestige. The young are encouraged to drink coco-cola rather than wine. Wine has been transformed into a deluxe product, not to be consumed locally. (K)

The lack of flexibility in current economic system militates against small producers. Before one could sell a box of cherries now one need a lorry full. (K)

One cannot discuss the Aspre without talking about models of progress. She thinks the problem today is that we are all following the American model of large scale mechanization. (K)

Agriculture is now run like an industrial enterprise. Machines have replaced man, but machines do not consume. Modern agriculture is based on the myth of 'haute technologie', they do not count the price of fertilisers, chemicals etc. We have arrived at a moment where we cannot tell fact from fiction, which is serious for the long term. If we don't change our life style we will fall into an abyss. (K)

Biggest changes they notice here are depopulation and dying out of polyculture. (H)

He is expanding the amount of land under vines in order to survive economically. Only allowed to produce 40 h/l of muscat due to surplus. (D)

PIL programme was established in 1990, and is due to end 1993. It is 80% French Government aid and 20% Regional funds. It is directed at medium and small size holdings to help them to buy up adjacent plots, so that their exploitation would be more productive, aid mechanization and save time. It contributes 10,000 F towards the price of the land. (Q)

Biggest problem with agriculture in the Aspre is that it is not 'rentable'. 'On vivre pauvre sur la terre pauvre comme toujours'. (Y)

Is against the 'Jeune Agriculture' system, that encourages people to get into debt and then they are trapped by the system. (QQ)

France produces 120 % of its agricultural needs, it is a net exporter, imports exotic food produce. (L)

A few years ago there were 80 labourers in Fourques, now there are only 5. The minimum salary is 6000 F/M. Mechanization is the biggest change here. (M)

Found the Jeune Agriculture course totally irrelevant, all about book keeping and borrowing from Crédit Agricole in order to make their enterprise economically viable. They encourage mechanization and large holdings. (H)

Herbicides and insecticides are expensive and raising all the time, but herbicides are still cheaper than ploughing, and takes half the time. He uses herbicides on 1/3 of the surface and ploughs the middle furrows, between the vines. But in his vineyards positioned on mountain slopes he uses only herbicides on the total surface area. (R)

Thinks the future is in mechanization, and that the viticulteurs will have to adapt to the machine à vendage, labour is too expensive. (W).

Thinks the advice of technicians can be very dangerous. There are far more constraints in the real world, what the technicians consider non viable holdings like theirs is where one has to start. They listened to their parents and relatives who know the land and severe climate where nothing is certain. Those who listen to the technicians end up in serious debt, like the Jeune Agriculture from Trouillas who committed suicide last year. But the 'Jeune Agriculture system did help them financially to get set up.(H)

Change in mentality, people don't want to work by hand any more, see prestige in mechanization, in places like Fourques they are proud to have big tractors even if they can only cope with 20 ha. (H)

Future in viticulture is with the large exploitants, 'avec plus de terre et moins de travail'.(I)

Biggest changes over the last 50 years is the abandonment of polyculture and the imposition of monoculture of vines. (J)

Jeune Agriculture system helped set him up, lending rate 3%, but his enterprise must be viable after 3 years i.e earning SMIG,-62,000 F. (P)

The young are not staying on the land for economic reasons. Those who do decide to stay or come back to the land have a different outlook. A lot of them go on courses in California and return with expansion, mechanization and reduced labour ideas. They are into quantity rather than quality. (I)

Biggest change in agriculture is the imposition of monoculture and loss in diversity. Before on this farm had olives, sheep, cereal, vines, cork oak and vegetable garden. Now only monoculture of vines. Also had more labour before, 5 families lived on this farm, now have only one workman. (D)

Biggest change he remarks in agriculture over last twenty years is mechanization, tractors and bulldozers are now used for creating terraces, spraying, ploughing etc. (C).

She is very interested in élevage de chevre. Did a course on it, but afterwards could not set up on her own as there was no bergerie available and she could not afford to construct one. The other obstacle she came across was to qualify for government assistance must start off with a minimum of 40 goats, that would produce too much cheese which at least initially she would have problems selling. Obviously system set up for large scale enterprise. Now she is doing a course on hot springs. (O)

Thinks one should produce where there is the best infrastructure and land, for example, on the plain of Roussillon but not in the Haute Aspre. (S)

Future is with the machine, men are tired of physical work, they avoid it when ever they can, thus there is no point in putting the Haute Aspre in production, when there is better easily mechanizable land idle on the plain. (S)

Problem with Mediterranean agriculture is that it is not industrial and cannot be industrialized, due to the terrain and climate. Here is a specialized agriculture, viticulture, market gardening, etc fragile and demands expertise (G)

The main reason the PIL did not work, is because the problem does not lie there. Morcellement/fragmentation may be an inconvenience, loosing time and travelling costs, but even if all the plots were together, it would still not be profitable. No point in being more efficient when there is no market for the product. The problem lies with the economic crisis and over production. 'Le PIL a quoi ca serve?' (G)

Must replace vines every 30 years now, before the vine stock lasted 60 to 100 years. Due to monoculture vines are not as healthy, and contact more disease than before. 'Plus ca change plus on perd le control'. (D)

Biggest change he remarques here is mechanization, tractors were introduced in 1965. (E)

Sheep have to be sheered every year, but there is no market for the wool, last year he had to burn it. (A).

The greatest change he remarques is the move from polyculture to monoculture and the resultant loss in diversity. (G)

It is getting more difficult to qualify for 'Jeune Agriculture' status, those born after 1971 must have the Baccalauréat after 1997, and will have to do a six month stage. The idea of the high level of education is to be in harmony with the other European countries, but it will eliminate a lot of people from poorly educated regions like P.O. (Q).

Believes that Mediterranean agriculture is marginalized from the rest of Europe. Two incompatible systems of production. Thinks a local market system would work to their advantage. 'Le vrai problème est que les marchés ne sont pas extensibles'. (G)

Mechanization is the biggest change he has seen in his life time, he has known working with horses. Does not think mechanization has had an adverse effect on the soil or environment, because they have 'le savoir faire'. (F)

In the end it is the middlemen, 'traffiquants', and commerçants that are profiting from the PAC. Spanish growers also forced to sell at lower prices, so they do not profit either. (H)

Young farmers availing of expansion scheme are often crippled by debt. (A)

It is no longer feasible to produce primary produce here, one has to pass to the tertiary level, i.e. provide a service; like a plumber there to repair the environment, protect the villages from fire. (UU)

The old farmers do not understand market economics, for example, around here they are used to setting a fixed price for their lambs, if the client does not give them that they would bring home the lamb rather than bargain or lower their price. (LL)

Lives from 120 sheep in a very traditional self sufficient manner, I imagine not very different to a hundred years ago. Used to grow their own cereals, for household and animal consumption up until recently, but had to stop because the only thrasher left is in St. Laurent de Cerdagne and the owner said it was not worth his while coming all this distance just for her. It was only recently they got a phone, car and tractor, but has no machinery to go with the tractor, it is just use it for pulling things, manure. (AB)

This neo-ruraux considers himself a competitive éleveur, because he has no production costs, unlike the intensive farmers. Because he has no overheads he can cope with falling prices, they can't. Considers their method of production artificially buttressed by cheap petrol, which is at the basis of their production, fertilizers, etc, is subsidised. Exploiting the Arabs, neo-colonialism. (BC)

If you do not do the same as the indigenous locals you are finished, they will do everything to discourage you. They told him his plastic bergerie would fall with the snow, the silo he made with peaches in the ground was 'fou', the owner of the mas was

informed and promptly came out from Perpignan and told him if he did not close it he would be evicted. The Mayor was snooping around wondering if it posed a pollution hazard, one is not allowed to be different. (LL)

Agriculture is not the same as industry, their products and means of production are completely different, the EEC is dangerous. (SS)

The locals really can't understand how somebody young like him could choose the profession of a sheep farmer in the 'arrière pays' of the Aspre, they think he must be *derrange et bete*. They don't understand that agriculture is now a business. But the people who remain in agriculture are obliged to adapt to what the society wants, eg 'Agneau Catalan' etc. (LL)

The reason we did not pay attention to marketing in the past is because we are just small poor producers and did not have the money to invest in marketing, need a lot of money for that, thus it was not possible or practical for a poor place like here. (EE)

The future in viticulture depends on the originality and quality of the wine produced. The problem now is that everything is 'global', the market for wine has dropped, reflecting consumption, and there is a lot of competition from Spain and Italy. (DE)

Does not think debt is a big problem here, only the rich go into debt in order to invest. (DD)

In the 1950s, after the war there was a deficit of food in Europe, the objective of the EEC was to increase food by all possible means. Now there is a surfeit of everything, people no longer produce for the pleasure, but because they have to for economic viability. It is the same in viticulture, they have to keep on increasing production in order to survive, - vicious circle. (DE)

Says he is 'hors du system commercial', because he does not pay T.V.A (Tax de la Valeur Ajoute). This tax is very important and means that when one sells something they have to pay a tax to the Government, or else buy material to avoid paying the tax, why lots of farmers have machinery they never use. He does not pay this tax it is whoever buys his calves that pay it. (BC)

Sees the future definitely with the 'Chef d'Enterprise'. There will be less people on the land, they will be better trained and more of the Department will be abandoned. The young who stay on the land today are more careful about which plots they buy, want all the holdings together to increase mechanization. They generally also have an agricultural training unlike their predecessors. 'Subsistence farming is out, Capitalist enterprise is in'. (GH)

Now agriculture is like running an enterprise, 'il faut change la tete des gens pour ca'. it is true that things are going too fast and Brussels is far away, but it is Brussels that gave the Mairie of this commune (St Marsal) the money to improve its roads and put

the electricity and telephone wires underground. (KK)

Machines have revolutionised life, no body knows how to work any more. Before all around here was cultivated, now it is just forest, - failure. (CD)

Thinks the problems in agriculture are the same through out Europe, thinks prices of food in shops is artificially low, and farmers are no paid enough. Thinks that industrial agriculture that is only looking for profit in the short term is not right, should work with the environment. (VV)

Theme: Perception of Agro-Environmental Policies.

Does not like the set-aside system, for him farming is about cultivation and production. If he was paid or had to accept set-aside he would, or would most likely get out of agriculture altogether at that stage. (G)

This agricultural technician and his colleagues do not agree with 'la Nouvelle Agriculture', but they are obliged to go along with it. However, they selectively promote what they consider advantageous for the farmers, eg improving their production system, constructing new buildings etc. They will continue to place emphasis on production rather than environment, thus the interpretation of this 'new agriculture' sur le terrain could prove interesting. Another battle between bureaucrats and practitioners. (SS)

On the whole these frontier people, including many neo ruraux, find it very difficult to accept that agriculture here is no longer about producing a product, but providing a service, maintain space for bourgeois tourists. They describe the whole thing as a farce and the people who develop these policies are stupid and faceless bureaucrats in Brussels. (PP)

This outsider thinks the future of agriculture could be 'gardien de l'environnement, mais pas avec les troupeaux, ils mangent le bon et movais herbs, il voit les chose plutot mecanique avec les tractors', i.e pay people to mechanically maintain the environment. The agricultural mentality will have to change they are not too conservative comme meme.(W)

Extensification is not the answer. (G)

Le paysage Méditerranéen comme utile de travail fait parti a la vie souvenir, maintenant nous mangons avec les yeux, pas la bouche'. The future for the Aspre is not in productive agriculture, but in the maintenance of the environment, consumption visuel de paysage. (V)

Thinks the future for the wine cooperatives is uncertain. Farmers always complain that is standard, but it is a difficult time for the cooperatives, the charges are rising but the price of wine is stagnant for some years. (Q)

Thinks agriculture is finished in the arrière pays, the objective of the Government and the EEC's 'gardien de l'environnement' is maintaining space for the tourists, but no real farmer will accept that, their profession and skill is to produce and not landscape gardening. (U).

Does not see a fundamental difference between producing a product or service, they are both notions of work. (V)

Thinks that (BC) experiment with the cows is completely artificial, he is living off state hand outs which is not normal, which he has to pay for in his taxes. His experiment is as artificial as a crocodile farm here. (P)

To be a farmer the pleasure is to produce and not sit in a cafe all day. (R£)

The future of the Aspre lies with the maintenance of its patrimony, but in a coherent logical fashion, not the neo-ruraux tricks with the cows and goats. Those experiments are purely political, there to placate the farmers. (W).

Ce n'est plus une vie agricole ici mais rural. We must no longer talk about the production of products, but the visual consummation of the landscape. That is not necessarily degradation, we do not have the same needs as before, what we are witnessing is a transformation not degradation. (V)

All we are doing is giving pleasure to the tourists, everything is vague, etude, etude. (XX)

Thinks it is ridiculous to fight against the decision of the EEC on the subject of the Gardien de l'Environnement system. It is exactly the same thing to sell an agricultural product or an agricultural service. Il faut s'adopte. (L)

60% of French revenue comes from services, there is a blockage in the catholic religion about the question of commerce, they think that it is not morally right to make money on the backs of other people. This is also a factor with the farmers who do not want to enter into service work. (L)

Sees future of agriculture in extensification rather than intensification. There was no golden age, we must adopt to present difficulties, equilibrium is a myth. He is pro progress but one must acknowledge limits. (L)

Tourism is an important industry in France with a revenue of 50 million francs, exactly the same as for agriculture. Donc c'est normal pour les agricultures de rendre service au tourists. The problem between the tourists and farmers is often one of rural-urban

misunderstanding, but one must adapt to the present climate. (L)

I would prefer to see 1 ha of deherbed vines to 1 ha of garrigue,- (production good) (H).

Would prefer to see bulldozed terraces on the side of a mountain than garrigue. Obviously values production and sees garrigue as waste and poor land management. (G)

The objective of article 19 was to slow down 'la deprime agricole', and to halt rural depopulation. the farmers are paid to prevent the fire risk. The SIP paid for the initial debroussage, le travail du sol et le semance, ca cout 15,000 F/ha. In return the farmer got free grazing and some money, in exchange of services rendered. It is the French State that pays for the initial cost of creating the fire breaks and the EEC intervenes for the maintenance. So article 19 is half State and half EEC funded. The fire breaks are often positioned on poor soil or hill crests, which is not ideal grazing ground for the shepherds, so article 19 compensates him for these handicaps, but one must not forget that the grass and clover of the par feu is to the advantage of the shepherd. (U)

By training is an Agronomy Engineer, and has worked in the Céret Elevage office since 1986, specializing in agriculture in the arrière pays. He has a double brief, a) elevage comme action économique pour entretenir l'environnement, b) La diversification, chercher les compléments intéressants à l'élevage. (HH)

Thinks there is a general air of insecurity in agriculture. 'C'est difficile de revenir en arrière par les techniques, comme laver la linge à la main. But he does not consider the new system a return to the past; 'il n'y avait jamais la production rentable agricole dans l'Aspre, ce n'est pas un zone agricole'. (UU)

Il faut changer l'esprit du monde agricole, ils ont l'habitude de prendre le train de production, maintenant il faut qu'ils quittent cette train (même si il y a des gens qui mort du fain en Afrique), et prendre le train de l'entretenir de l'environnement. Nous sommes à un carrefour. He thinks the farmers can change, after all it was agriculture not industry that has increased production so much over the last 50 years. (HH)

L'esprit des agriculteurs restent avec l'ancienne system, they look upon their work as a 'Noble' task. They think that the Agro-environmental policies diminishes their liberty, and keeps them like Indians in a Reserve. Thinks it is difficult to change the minds of people and perhaps it will not be these people who will accept 'La Nouvelle Agriculture', perhaps it will be the Neo-Ruraux. (They appear to be thinking the same way). (UU)

Thinks it is not at all the same thing to produce a product or a service. that demands a big change in the mentality of the farmers. This Agricultural technician considers these changes very dangerous and based on short term vision, 5 years, after that nobody knows. Neither is the compensation for the PAC sufficient, and we dont know how it

is to be divided, a little for all or a lot for some. (SS)

She receives no aid from the State or EEC, did not do the Jeune Agriculture stage because she became pregnant. She is against too much assistance, ca deprime les gens, elle cherche seulement d'avoir la possibilite de vivre ici, sans paye trop de tax, impot. (CC)

The worst thing that ever happened was the EEC giving subsidies for keeping sheep and cows in disadvantaged areas, as farming is being taken over by speculators, like the ones in St. Marsal and La Bastide. They are only in it for the Brussels subsidies. (AB)

Thinks the new EEC agro-environmental laws are only normal, because we have over produced and must now slow down. The French are very militant against foreign imports, they overturned a lorry of mirrors coming from Italy near here recently, they mistook it for fruit. They think this narrow protectionist vision is normal for little introspective communities like the Aspre, that cannot understand the wider implications of world trade. (TT)

Thinks the new system of 'gardien de l'environnement' est tres pinible for the farmers they will never accept it. The vocation of farmers was always to live from their production, c'est un autre métier d'être gardien de l'espace. Besides farmers are used to working for themselves, they will never accept to work for the tourists that come here for 2 months of the year. (DE)

He anticipates that the future for the éleveurs will be in the maintenance of the environment, and doing other things other than food production on the side. It is a real cultural revolution for farmers to learn that their noble work is no longer to feed people but to distract them. (HH)

L'homme a envie de vivre de son travail, et pas les subventions. Peut-être il y a des chasseurs de prime, mais dans leur tete ils sont different que les vrai agricultures qui sont sur place. Real farmers could never accept to live like that. (WW)

It would be better to promote our products and not the environment, after 6 months this PDD will be finished and then what. We want to improve the quality and marketing of our products and not maintain the environment for the bourgeois tourists. Personally I would prefer to maintain a plastic pipe rather than a stone canal for the tourists. (XX)

This neo-ruraux has 25 Gascon cows, a rustic race, not great milkers or for beef production. He lives by selling the calves at 8 - 9 months, frequently for the Italian market. He is part of a cooperative in Perpignan, said there is a lot of competition from cheap imports from Argentina. The cows give him half his income the other half comes from the EEC 'compensation for work done, not subsidies' (Article 19). (BC)

C'est fou de vivre de gardien de l'environnement, c'est tres difficile pour un agriculture de faire ca. (Z)

It is because of EEC subsidies that farming is being taken over by speculators, with no turn for the land or the animals, they are only in it to make money from the subsidies. She went on at length about this dreadful man from Paris who is renting a Mas near them, and has 70 cows running wild just in order to get the subsidies. He takes no care of his animals they are often hungry, wandering onto everyone's land, or fenced in for days without food. He has no stables for the severe winters, carcasses thrown all over the place. She no longer considers it safe to drink from the many spring mountain sources in her walks with the sheep. One of his cows was found in the drinking water reservoir for the village of Taulis. But he speaks well, has contacts in the administration and no one interferes with him. The village signed a petition against cruelty to animals, and the Mayor handed it to the relevant sanitary authorities, but nothing happened. 'In this Department the authorities never interfere and one can get away with anything'. They eventually sent their petition to Bridget Bardeau, shows the dept of her feelings. (AB)

The agricultural profession is not in agreement with paying farmers to employ certain experimental techniques, if he is not also being paid for the cost of production. These subsidies are totally artificial and only for 5 years at most. (SS)

Often in the winter the cowboy chasseur de prime in La Bastide (accountant), calls in the State Helicopter to drop hay to his animals. That is not normal, neither she nor any other traditional herder ever did that. If he ran his farm properly he could foresee all these things, and have hay in stock and animals indoors during snow storms. But he has too many animals and not enough provisions; 'compt sur la société'. Thus she thinks primes are a gross error and encourage people like this. (AB)

Chasseurs de primes, catching on all around. Accountant in La Bastide has a huge herd of sheep he cannot take care of. Last winter he went on holidays to Madagascar, and left the sheep in the hands of the hippies, many of them died in the winter snow. (AB\$)

The Eleveurs realise they cannot survive without EEC subsidies, and therefore must unwillingly conform to these 'betise', but in their minds their own pride and self worth is related to the products they produce and not maintaining a museum for the tourists. (PP)

Sells his lambs to the co-operative in Perpignan, which is small with only 50 young suppliers. They are trying to bring out the 'mark Catalan'. Thinks a lot of the funds were badly spent, they had to spend a lot on publicity, problem is the bureaucracy does not follow them. 'Il n'y a pas un dialogue avec les gens de Bruxelles, ils sont loin et ils ne comprennent rien. (LL)

Over the last 5 years the objectives of the PAC have changed radically, mais les chose biologique et ecologique ne sont pas facile a faire, we do not have sufficient experience in that domain. The 'new agriculture is linked with the preservation of the environment but what is serious is that the idea of compensating the farmers is gone. All of a sudden the farmer has less income, but the people in Brussels don't care all they see is

environment. (SS)

The éleveurs who fence their fields have a problem with the hunters cutting the fences at times. Dogs also pose a problem, a friend of mine lost 50 ewes due to dogs. There are roads every where now, they open up the countryside to motorbikes, tourists, dogs etc., which is annoying for the Eleveur. there is also problem with the holiday homes who don't want to fence their nice lawns and exotic shrubs, making it difficult for us to prevent our sheep on their garrigue diet from attacking them. (LL)

Thinks that tourism is behind all these Agro-environmental policies, because they are not implemented every where in Europe only in certain Zones. We are in zone 5B, 'Zone Rural Fragile', Mountain. (SS)

This neo-ruraux eleveur strongly believes that one must not look upon agro-environmental aid as subsidies, 'ce n'est pas un grace ou cadeau, mais remuneration de travail'. Neither must one think that a Eleveur with a herd of sheep or cows can do this work cheaper than a mechanical enterprise. He sees the EEC as his employer and expects to be paid for everything he does, 'vrai guardian de l'environnement'. He complained a lot about not getting paid on time. (PP)

He insists he is first and foremost an 'Eleveur', the other thing (Article 19), is just payement for work done. (BC)

Thinks that the Agro-environmental policies mostly affect the big cereal growers in Europe and mountain zones, not so much viticulture, except perhaps biological production may be imposed. (DE)

Guardian de l'environnement is not the solution, it is humanely disagreeable and diminishes the person. 'L'agriculteur a envie de vivre de son travail et ne pas être assister pour maintenir le paysage pour les tourists'. Perhaps they will get some of the unemployed to accept that, but they are not true farmers and they don't understand the environment or how to work. 'C'est un etat d'esprit qui bloque les vrai agricultures d'accepte le gardien de l'environnement system.' (CC)

For the eleveurs the most important unit are the animals themselves and the price in local markets. Even though they cannot live from them alone, unless they have a very large flock, need to sell 800 lambs a year to earn the SMIG wage (65,000 F/yr). Price of lambs at 2 - 3 months 500 F. They generally sell locally, Perpignan, or to Spain where there is a defecate of lambs in the Autumn. (EF)

He intends always keeping animals here but not for the subsidies which he accepts commem, si il trouve des avantage dedans. He wants to buy a machine for picking up the cut branches, and if he can get that as part of the environmental maintenance programme 'tand mieux'. (WW)

THE LAND

Theme: Land Speculation.

Don't talk to me about SAFER they did not do the job they were set up to do. (E)

Thinks people here are not too attached to their land, 'ils n'ont pas l'esprit de patrimoine'. They uproot their vines, because then they are at ease, besides they often don't have successors. There are other young people in the village or in Terrats who are looking for vineyards, but they prefer to avail of the prime d'arrachage and leave the land idle, that way they can also speculate on price rises. (J)

Nobody will sell or lease land here, they are all speculating on higher prices in the future. They want to expand their property, but the Belgians who bounds them will not sell, even though he never even visits here. (H)

Before people were far more attached to their land. 'Il y a un grand changement dans la mentalité des gens il y a vengt ans, un changement sur tous, l'attachement à la famille, la terre, la vie, -un changement de valeur'. (R)

SAFER (1962) is finished, has no longer a role, there is no demand for the land on their books. 'L'agriculture est mort, la restructuration de la campagne se fait tout seul'. (I)

The old left behind in the villages were deprived, no schools, post office, shops. The more land that was abandoned the more difficult it was to stay for those who wanted to, no agricultural neighbours to give a hand at harvest time. Then the land speculators came and offered what appeared to be colossal sums of money for land no longer with a function. The problem that created remains with us today, children of those who emigrated are now unemployed in the cities, they cannot go back to the ancestral land besides they have lost the know how. The Aspre's Human-Ecology cycle is broken. Once land is abandoned, fire and garrigue take over, it degrades and unlike a factory is difficult to restore to its former state. (K)

Fourques lacks land, because people prefer to avail of the subsidy for uprooting vines and leave land idle rather than sell or lease it.(I)

Believe the Belg have had a devastating effect on the area and block land for agricultural use. (I)

Prime d'arrachage is a very bad thing, holds the land in limbo, prevents others using it, and encourages land speculation (H).

The locals look favourably on tourists who up the price of land. (J)

Does not believe in the 'prime d'arrachage', it is better to sell, (why is he buying?). The value of land is decreasing, it is only a burden being idle. (M).

Said he would sell his land in the morning if he got a good price for it. Afterwards he mentioned how he bought land recently, - contradiction? His friend doing the biological wine is also buying up land, must be a good time to buy. (M)

The fragmentation of the land due to the inheritance system is a big problem here. But the PIL never worked well here, because 'la speculation de la terre est fort ici'. They see what happened to property in the Cote d'Azur, and think that in time the same thing may happen here. It is also easier to get planning permission for small plots). (G)

A lot of young people are staying on the land in Terrats, they obviously see a future here, these are also the people who have borrowed heavily, even if they inherited the land they are buying up more land to make their holdings more productive and profitable. (DE)

The Catalan mentality is attached to their land and identity and reject everything that is not Catalan, but their strongest attachment is to money, and speculate with their land if they see an advantage for themselves in it. (DD)

When buying or selling land have to go through SAFER as they reduce the government tax by 10%. A neighbour of theirs bought property to find that SAFER had already sold the wood on it, this sort of corruption is common. (FF)

She is realistic and said it was they who sold the land to the Belg, but they offered money they never dreamt of, and besides they thought the land was no longer of use for agriculture. (CC)

SAFER has become very corrupt and not doing the job it was set up for, - to give priority of land to locals. Carried away by their initial power, bought up all round them and when the slump came could not get rid of it, poor management. They then started playing Estate Agents buying and reselling at a profit mostly to foreigners. The estate agents, builders and SAFER are all in league, send each other clients and have the whole thing is sown up, so that outsiders (like the insiders) feel helpless. (FF)

Ten years ago one could not get rid of property here, then the English moved in putting up the price. The Catalans are greedy for money and once they found a market are keeping the prices up. (DD)

Fears she may have to go into a retirement home costing 7.800 F/M when she can no longer take care of herself. Even though she previously said she is very attached to her vines, which I think she is, and talks admiringly about other well kept vines, now said, 'rien est definitive sur terre'. Land is not selling well now but if she could hold on to it for another 5 or 6 years 'ca peut donné d'avantage'. If she has to pull up the vines in the meantime to pay for the retirement home she will and hold on to the land. (EE)

They do not want to change their habits and traditions, so there is no place for the young, prefer to uproot the vines and speculate on the land 'a batir', rather than change their ways. (DD)

Thinks that people are very attached to their land but it is only normal they sell it for high construction prices, but often they buy elsewhere with that money. Also only normal to keep children who do not do well at school on the land. (DE)

The Belg did nothing for the Aspre, except to arrange their houses, build a swimming pool and especially raise the price of land. That is why SAFER was created, but they ran into trouble when the farmers were no longer interested in buying the land. They control a bit the Estate Agents, as all land sale is obliged to pass through them. (WW)

The locals like to profit from tourism by selling their land, but they don't like foreigners owning their land. Even after selling it they still regard it their property, the son of the man they bought this site from still comes back to contemplate the view and harvest the cherry crop. They are friendly with him, but they think he regrets his fathers decision to sell the land. Thinks the Midi Roussillon agency tricked a lot of people into selling their land, and they resold it at higher prices, in allotments. (TT)

SAFER is finished, it has become a society 'd'immeuble',- after profits. (M)

All the land around her place has been bought up by Belg, Germans and now English. They erect fences and private property signs, but by law some of those 'chemains' are public. We must not allow them to walk all over us, we must fight for our rights. She like many others particularly dislike the 'Pied Noir'. Thinks they made their money by treating the Arabs like slaves, they think they can come here and do the same thing. That is why nobody wants to work for them. (AB)

The Belg who bought up a lot of land here, 'ont donner un route Colonist ici'. Les agences d'immeuble ont fait beaucoup d'affaire sur le dos de proprétaires. The Catalans thought they were selling their 'terre inutile a un bon prix', but after splitting them into lotissements, in effect it was the Estate Agents that profited most. (HH)

The old find it hard to support the strangers who buy up the land, only take care of the houses and lawns, and leave the rest en friche, provoking a fire hazard. Thinks the old people were attached to their land but not the young. (AB)

A lot of people here sell land to the tourists, especially those whose children dont want to stay. 'Ils ne sont pas vraiment attachee à la terre ici, c'est l'argent qui compt. Sometimes those who sell buy somewhere else in Oms. (NN)

A lot of people in Terrats buy up land in Fourques, if available, Cave there far more dynamic and has a better future. (J).

Thinks the 'Plan d'Occupation du Sol' n'est pas bien fait, because a lot of good

agricultural land is designated as constructible, because of that it is impossible to have a 'bail', (lease), even from her own uncle, because they always have it in mind to sell if a good occasion arose. (CC)

The reason people uproot the vines and leave them idle, rather than sell the land is because (a) No one wants to buy (b) Hope times will improve and land will once again be a resource, so keep it for their children as a form of security, (C) attached to their land. (E)

Holiday homes have put up the price of land, but the locals like that. (G)

Incomes have fallen here over the last few years and also the price of land, but not in the Aspre due to it's tourist value (B)

Said there are a lot of people who are not attached to their land now but for him it was 'l'education traditionnel', others are prepared to sell it in order to make money - rentabilité. (T)

Says Catalan's are 'tres attacher a leur terre'. They see it as an 'instrument de rent'. There are three ways it can be rentable; 1) Planting it with trees, 2) transformation eg. vines 3) Prime d'Arrachage. (G)

Thinks land prices will not increase, if we continue with EEC, North European model, which will only allow optimum places to produce. (D)

Buying up of the land in Haute Aspre by Belg was a bad thing, but it was the fault of the French who sold. They sold it because they could no longer make a living from it, 'car ca ne leur servent plus'. The belg do nothing with it. (R)

La question foncière de Haute Aspre ne lui derrange pas. It is true a lot of Belg bought up the land there ten years ago, 'mais les gens ne sont pas eternal'. Besides 90% of good agricultural land in the Department overall belongs to locals. (U)

Thinks they are not too attached to their land here or too concerned about the environment, eg between Perpignan and Canet they sold all their land. La rentabilité est la plus important. They always complain but that is just a typical peasant mentality. (W)

After the take over of the Conseil Municipal by outsiders in Montauriel, the Plan d'Utilisation de la Terre was change, to allow more sprawling houses, but the locals want that as it ups the price of land. (S)

People are attached to the land but sell it for economic reasons. (HI).

Theme: Land Symbolism.

'Pour travailler cette terre (H-Aspre) il faut être des esclaves, et meme ca ne donne pas assey pour vivre. (P)

Le rapport entre l'homme et la terre est special. For the Catalans here is their home, leur terre ancestral, le foret est leur capital. (CC)

He is nearing retirement (57) and has no successor, both his children are well educated, a nurse and other on the Conseil Municipal in Perpignan, and they will not return to the land. His wife is younger than him and will take over the property for a while, postponing the terrible day when he will have to either uproot his vines, and avail of the 'prime d'arrachage', or sell the land. Thinks he would fall ill if he had to do that, said 'je vis pour les vigne ce sont mes enfants'. (R)

Generally people prefer not to sell the land as (A) one day it may again be valuable - speculation & security-, (b) they are attached to the land. (D)

There is a symbolic attachment to the land here. They often maintain a postage stamp size patch even if living in Paris, adding to the fragmentation. (FG)

People are attached to their land and vines and find it very difficult to uproot the vines, but they are realistic and attached to their wallets also. Often they don.t know what to do, but normally the trend is not to sell the land. (S)

Said he is deeply attached to his land and vines, whenever he goes away for a few days the first thing he does on return is to walk the land and examines the vines. For him the vines are alive and vibrant, and he talks about how they change from day to day. (R)

Generally people prefer to uproot the vines rather than sell the land, 'parce'que la terre faire vivre toujours'. Times are difficult now, there is a lot of unemployment, nothing is certain, the children might one day need the land again. The land is always a form of security, 'on ne sait jamais'. (R)

'La terre est la pour nourrir l'homme, pas pour son loisir.' (BC)

She decided to live like this (Catalan neo-ruraux) because she is very attached to her 'pays et la terre', and it hurt her to see all her uncles land abandoned. Le pays a besoin de gens pour y vivre, mais il ne faut pas penser á la rentabilité comme les vigneronns à Fourques. (CC)

Sees no future for agriculture in arriere pays, nor in tourism, there is nothing to do there, eventually they all move on. (I get the strong feeling the Arriere pays is looked upon locally as just waste land, no point in working it or living there, they have condemned it to abandonment (XYZ)). (EE)

Lots of neighbours children do not want to stay on the land. Thus on retirement they are forced to pull up the vines and hold on to the land, who knows the future, their grand children may need it and 'recommencer les vignes encore'. (This prudent mentality is common here, they dont really believe in the way the world is going, so incase there is a return to the old ways, want to hold on to the patrimony for their descendants (XYZ). 'La terre faire vivre toujours'. (EE)

All Catalans like their 'pays', they do not like that others succeed where they have failed. 3/4 of those who are obliged to go away to work in Paris, etc, come back here to die. (QQ)

Even though they sold their land the Catalans still consider it theirs, and they ignore the presence of those who are now living here and working the land. (QQ)

The land is completely useless if it does not produce, the land is there to serve man and not the other way around. He was first classified as a Hippy, then a Neo-Rurauux, ..Agriculture, Exploitant et maintenant Eleveur. (PP)

The people here do not want to accept that she or the other outsiders are capable of doing what they did before. She thinks there is also an element of shame, because they failed, sold their land and deserted the Aspre. They claimed they had no choice as they could not make a living here, and now they don't want others to show them they were wrong. (CC)

40 or 50 years age the people here left as they could not make a living from the land and the mines also closed. 'Maintenant ils ne support pas que les autre puis y vivre de leur terre patrimonial. Ils ont l'idee si tu est ne ici, le village et la terre sont a vous. If you were not born here they take you for an imbecile who knows nothing. It is impossible for an outsider to be accepted here, he is not accepted, there is a lot of racism among themselves, especially from village to village. (LL)

'Ici nous sommes un peuple de la terre, pas tres instruit, donc les gens du Nord nous traitent bete ou inferieur. (U)

To work the land and have a presence in the arriere paye is essential, abandonment is the last word, because it is tied to our identity? (CC)

It is essential to maintain 'un tissue vivant ici', and for that one has to diversify. Vivre la survivre ici en etant libre'. (abandonment is commonly seen as the last word). (QQ)

'Si on ne peut pas vivre de la terre on est obliger de le vendre'. (BB)

Thinks there is a move back to the land, agriculture will always be of value. In the cities there is too much pollution, unemployment and noise, people need calmness to live properly. Thinks it is a very hard time for the young, some say they are 'puree', but he thinks they never got a fair chance. (R)

The more one separates the land from the rest of life the more problems there are. People here must open up socially, there is not the will to understand each other. (QQ)

The reason they sold their land to the Belg was because they could no longer make a living from it; 'car ca ne leur servent plus'. (R)

After planting the vines must wait 5 years for the first harvest. She is now 75 and finds the responsibility of her big inheritance, 40 ha vines, difficult. But still says that it is beyond her to pull up the vines, likens it to committing a crime, 'comme tuer votre grand pere'. (EE)

Before the Notables, Doctors and Solicitors always bought land now they are investing in apartments. (R)

The old people are attached to their land, but if they have no successors they realise that it is useless trying to continue. To be a real eleveur, unlike the neo-ruraux, 'il faut être un esclave'. (AA)

Rural exodus in 1960, plenty of work in cities, fashionable to devalorise country way of life, subsistence farming hard and no rewards like cars and TV. That period marked a noticeable change in how people valued the land. Parents encouraged children to go to the city, the land was devalued and sold to the Belg. (K)

Ten years ago the Belg did cause a blockage, due to their city mentality and customs, they fenced off their land and prevented people using traditional communal paths, that always existed (under French law if path used for 30 years automatically communal, because the land was so fragmented. (U)

Under Catalan inheritance law the oldest son inherited all the property, the French system forced the patrimony to be divided equally between all the children. (V)

The land question in Haute Aspre is a problem for the Neo-Ruraux but not the natives, because they look upon that land as waste without a purpose. They would prefer to sell it to the Congo Belg than see the neo-ruraux have it. (N)

There is a peasant mentality that never want to sell the land, saying they are attached to it, but the bottom line is economics. (M)

Catalans hate to see foreigners profiting from their land. (O)

Very difficult to get vines to rent, especially good vineyards, they prefer to pull them up and avail of the 'prime d'arrachage' - 40,000 F/Ha, and hold on to the land. They don't want others to profit from their lives work, it is a form of jealousy, and individualism, chacun pour soi. 'Les autre ne doivent pas profiter'. (P)

Think the locals are not very attached to their land, at least not all of them. That is not why they don't want to sell, 'Pour eux la terre est quelque chose de rente, de l'argent d'abord, c'est économique. They don't sell because they are speculating on a rise in prices, 'terre à bâtir'. (P)

Present mentality is to profit in the short term, tout est fait pour la rentabilité. It is no longer fashionable to work by hand e.g. terraces. The young see that as 'revenir en arrière'. (T)

Attachment to the land here is ambiguous. It is an insult to use the word 'paysan' today. Progress has changed the old relationship with the land, which was first to produce food and if a good year sell the surplus. The present model is expansion and debt. (K)

Peasants have difficulty seeing 'la terre' as something other than that which produces food. The new arrivals see it in aesthetic terms, and map onto it the 'mentalité de la ville'. (K)

Borrowing for farmers was OK when price of land and inflation was high. Now land prices and inflation have dropped, unprecedented difficult time in agriculture. (L)

There are really very few people who love the land, and those who love it treat it well. (H)

Working the land is a noble profession in comparison to tourism (O).

Morcellement de la terre is a problem in Terrats and Fourques, but people don't really respond to PIL or SAFER, they prefer to hold on to their own plots resisting change. (F)

People do not like to sell the land, because they speculate that one day it will one day be profitable again, so they hold on to it for their children and grandchildren. There is also a symbolic attachment to it, eg many who work in Perpignan like to come back to their few hectares of vines in the Aspre, 'beau paysage, ancestors, etc. (G)

This farm labourer had a few vines but pulled them up as his children were not interested, now he is at ease. Was emphatic about not selling the land, 'jamais vendre la terre', it is for the children. (C).

Morcellement de la terre is a big problem in Fourques due to inheritance system, divided among all the children or the one who stays pays rent to others. They tend not to respond to the PIL, do not want to sell or exchange their land. (I)

His children work in trade, which is far preferable to working the land. 'Le travail du terre est le pire du monde', better to work in a factory. But he loves nature la chasse and the mountains,- contradiction. (C)

They admire intellectuals, see it as a 'moyen pour quitter la terre'. (N)

To work and care for the land it must give one a living, it must be useful and it is that, that is missing now. (D)

The future here depends on the people who live here. If they have lost 'le sens', they will not love their land any more and poison it. Before the land was patrimony to be handed on intact from father to son, that way they had an interest in caring for it, now it is only 'un instrument de rente'. (QQ)

The difficult land of the Haute Aspre was abandoned thirty years ago. People here are very attached to their land, the children more to the holiday houses, but even they find it very hard to work in Paris, Lyon etc. (Z)

Now it is not possible to live from the land, prices are stagnant and charges are rising. One needs a complement to the land, e.g. women working outside the home. In the future if the State does not help the farmers who really want to work the land, c'est fini, nous serons envahis par les spéculateurs de la terre, ce qui n'est pas bon'. (Z)

Left school at 13 and has worked the land since, which he feels very attached to and has enjoyed his life's work thoroughly. (T)

For him the land was 'l'éducation traditionnelle', others are prepared to sell and speculate with it, but not him. (T)

People are attached to the land. Mediterranean is strong in tradition and la culture ancestrale. (I)

'La terre est une vocation, c'est une religion, c'est un sacrifice'. (A)

'On vit pauvre sur la terre pauvre comme toujours'. (Y)

The work of the land sometimes 'rend les gens brutes'. Too tired at night to do anything interesting. (A)

To make a living from the Aspre requires working from dawn to dusk, it was too rough for the hippies and in the end just like the Catalans they too had to desert the Arrière pays. (GG)

Theme: Perception of Working the Land.

He hates the lazy viticulteurs sitting around in Terrats and Fourques, they consider them bad workers in comparison to wine growers in other regions. He travels all the backroads with his four wheel drive and remarks that they only clean and maintain the vineyards near the main road, where they are seen. (ZZ)

The self image of farmers here depends on size of holdings. For small farmers to stay on the land is 'mal vue'. Is still seen as the one who did not do well at school, the more intelligent get better jobs. Big farmers are looked upon differently, more interest in staying on the land, better image. (J)

The image and status of farmers here depends on the size of holdings and whether they are rich or not,- les notables have high status. (H)

Difference in social status between big and small farmers.(A)

Big difference in status between viticulteurs and vigneronns. Eventually the co-ops will disappear and with them the small producers. (M)

Being a farmer is 'tres mal vue', and low status here. Have problems getting wives. (B).

Poor status of farmers, treated as stupid and dirty by the administration and even some of the agricultural university students. Farming is 'mal vue'. (A)

La nostalgie que nous avons maintenant n'est pas un reve de l'agriculture, c'est un reve de paysan. (RR)

People are not ashamed of working the land here but before they were proud of it, that pride has diminished, can only be proud when one succeeds. These are difficult times, there is a crisis in wine since 1989. Initially people turned in on themselves, but now they reacting, less fatalistic. Debt is certainly a problem for some people here. (I)

Thinks people are very attached to their land, it is only recently that the idea of working the land is looked down on. (E)

The future is with the machine, men are tired of physical work, they avoid it if possible. There is no point in putting the Haute Aspre in production while better mechanizable land remains idle on the plain. (S)

Lack of dynamism related to former trend where 'le plus bete mentally et physiquement le plus fort' was kept on the land. (G)

Does not consider working the land 'mal vue', thinks this is more the attitude of labourers and small farmers. (F)

To work the land of the Haute Aspre, il faut etre un esclave. (P)

People are attached to land and proud of their ancient expertise in viticulture, 'Tradition de haute niveau'. (F)

Likes what he is doing and prefers his sheep, which he claims to know individually, to people. For this kind of work one has to have a partner, shepherds who live on their own become 'sauvage'. (LL)

They can't understand how somebody young like him could choose this metier, (elevation farmer), think he must be stupid and deranged. (LL)

Thinks Catalans consider being a farmer very low status, they want to move away from being peasants to functionaries. They are also very racist and anti unemployed. (FF)

The second reason this neo-ruraux is not accepted here is because they think he is mad, crazy to be working the land. 'Pour eux c'est degradant d'etre paysan, la terre pour eux est la miser, et cette phenomen est tres profound. They would prefer to die of hunger than work the land now. Their children brought up in town are different, they appreciate it more, mais l'homme modern ne peut plus s'adopte, il a perdu beaucoup de connaissance'. (LL)

Thinks it is also only normal that parents keep the child who is not very good at school on the land. (DE)

In Roussillon it is mostly small holdings of 5 ha, et double emploi. The general trend was to let le plus bete on the farm and educate the others towards work in SNCF, Post, Gendarmerie etc, or if well educated Chambre d'Agriculture. The people left on the land were the least innovative. (GH)

She spoke about a visit they had from a technician from Montpellier doing research. He sent them a massive questionnaire to fill in, he found that most of (A's) answers were stupid and contradictory and wanted them to redo it. They felt he understood nothing about them, treated them like ignorant peasants, the questions were too personal, all about income, and they did not want their details being put on nation wide computer, so they refused to co-operate. (A)

Remarked on how times have changed. In their youth they complemented working the land with work in the mines in La Bastide, which was very difficult, they were often submerged in water and worked with only a crow bar. Still times were better then. (CD)

Before to be a farmer was a bit 'pejorative, vue comme quelq'un qui ne peut pas faire autre chose'. Now that image is changing, 'maintenant c'est bien vue d'etre fermier'. (AA)

In Roussillon it is mostly small holdings and double emploi. The general trend of keeping 'le plus bete' and least educated on the farm, meant that the people left on the land were the least innovative. (GH)

THE EEC

Theme: Perception of the EEC; (A) Bureaucratic.

All the farmers complain about the mountain of paperwork, all asking similar questions, to be filled in for the various subsidies, they risk becoming full time bureaucrats. The Technician advised them to sign their names to all the forms and send them off, that way they are in with a chance. (PP)

Thinks the EEC does not understand the problems here or in agriculture, they are treating agriculture like an industry, but do they even understand industry, look at all the unemployment. (I)

In spite of all her efforts has the feeling the future does not depend on her, but on decisions made in Brussels by people who neither understand or want to understand life and agriculture in the Aspre. Feelings of powerlessness and helplessness, when confronted with that bureaucracy. (CC)

Thinks EEC can only work if the member states are united against competition from the U.S. and Russia, but it appears that they can't, it is everyone for themselves. England should not be a member, they should attach themselves to the U.S. There are some positive aspects to Europe, but fears that it is now becoming a bureaucracy in Brussels. (W)

People here feel very far away from Brussels and Paris, but he would prefer to be attached to Paris than Barcelona, because the French economy is stronger. (S)

His vision of the EEC and Brussels is something 'tres loin', full of bureaucrats and technocrats, who do not understand the life or problems in this 'milieu', trop loin'. 'C'est le contact humain qui manque surtout', how could all of Europe be treated as one, when even in a village of 7 or 8 houses no two are the same, homogenization. (R)

EEC plutot un jeu politique. Does not think that the people in Brussels understand the local mediterranean problems. They do not see the difference between agriculture and industry. (HH)

Pyrénées Orientales voted against Maastricht, ils se mefient de CEE, they don't understand it, see it as something far away. What they dislike most is that it offers them no protection, e.g. the open frontiers. (J)

Describe the EEC Gardien de l'Environnement as a farce and the people who develop those policies as stupid and faceless bureaucrats in Brussels. (PP)

The Technician advised the Eleveurs to join all the agro-environmental experiments, on the basis that some of the Brussels bureaucrat thinking is so stupid, like constructing waste pits for sheep that are outside all year, il suffit seulement de leur dire, si non they will impose it on you. (Reverse of roles bureaucracy depicted as stupid (XYZ). (PP)

Thinks EEC/Brussels does not understand the problems here, their policies are too general, change direction all the time and have no follow up. (Y)

EEC holds no advantage for us, it is far away and removed from our reality. He voted no to Maastricht and thinks the frontiers should be closed. (M)

Says it is a full time job for farmers to keep up to date with all the subsidies, they need the technicians help more and more, it is they that inform them about the subsidies, what they are entitled to and how to apply. The quotas are also always changing, this year to qualify must have 230 sheep, he is just below it, last year it was 200. (A)

People here feel powerless and alienated from centres of decision making. Brussels and Paris is a long way away. 'Ils ne savent pas trop les problèmes d'ici, et aussi ils ne s'intéressent pas trop, ils ne veulent pas savoir'. (G)

Perceives the EEC as something of a 'grand bureaucracy', technicians who know the theory but not the practice, and we are their victims. They understand nothing about our problems and they impose their system of monoculture. There is also a homogenization of culture, every one must be the same, 'mais je n'a pas envie de parler anglais'. He tried to read the Maastricht papers but they were incomprehensible. It is the same for everyone here they feel far away from the EEC and their bureaucracy and papers are incomprehensible. (P)

Europe seen as 'tres loin d'ici et tres complique'. They are not really interested, leave it to the Director of the cave to respond to. (G)

Thinks Brussels/EEC is full of technocrats who neither understand or want to understand the problems here. (CC)

Perception of the EEC: (B) Symbol of Capitalism.

The EEC is a dangerous homogenizing system that leaves no room for individuality. The EEC is a mass of middlemen, what we are witnessing is dehumanization not desertification here. (GG)

Must not exaggerate the impact of the U.S, they lost a lot of markets to Europe initially, only natural they should fight back. (L)

He sees future of EEC with industrial agriculture - 'arm economique' like cereals. It is all political. (G)

Both himself and his mother think the EEC is not good. It offers no protection, they should sell French products first before allowing in foreign produce from Spain and Italy, - Protectionism. The single market is not fair because everyone is not at the same 'niveau social', different tax system, currency etc. (NN)

The technicians and bureaucrats of the EEC could not understand the problems here, they would consider someone like him an imbecile et pas rentable. He practices polyculture, and has seven ha of vines on a slope that cannot be worked by a tractor. (T)

Thinks the EEC will accentuate tourism here. Spain will eventually produce all the products of the mediterranean and we cannot compete with them, so we must turn to quality products and variety, not one cheese, but 50. (U)

The EEC is the symbol of progress, 'mais le progres a augmante le travail de 5 fois', we produce more and at the same time are throwing potatoes into the sea, is that progress'? (T)

Considers the EEC 'mouvais', c'est le monoculture. Believes it is not right to open frontiers when every one is not at the same 'niveau social'. (T)

The EEC imposes the minimum price, but production costs are going up all the time, so farmers are getting poorer, only the middle men profit. (SS)

Thinks the EEC is a good thing, 'Ca change les idees'. The only thing he did not like was that 'l'esprit du marche' was dominant and it does not place enough value on quality. It promotes quantity rather than quality. (F)

Very anti EEC Europe de marchand, 'nous ne sont plus maitre chez nous, ce sont les multinationals qui profit et les commercants. Elle est pour Europe de peuple mais pas l'Europe de marchand'. Believes the EEC has sacrificed the Mediterranean to tourism. (AA)

EEC does not understand or know the problems here. Every country and region has

different constraints. They are imposing one simple rule, the capitalist market system, but every country in the EEC is not at the same level, different labour costs, taxes, pollution laws, monetary system etc. Cheap imports of wine from Spain is unfair. (D)

Eventually EEC will realize it cannot maintain the present standard of living, - our expectations are false and too high, thinks we will return to the old system. (D)

Ce sont les commerçants qui va enreshir avec le system de CEE. (H)

Thinks the future is with Europe,- his modern face, then goes on to criticize it. Said the EEC is sacrificing agriculture for industry, treating it like car manufacturing. (R)

The EEC vision is short term, market oriented, they are treating agriculture like an industry, but they have even failed there, look at the numbers unemployed. (H)

If we continue with the North European model only optimum places will be allowed to produce, and price of land here will not rise. (D)

If the protectionist policies people advocate were introduced, the price of everything would rocket. We now have cheap clothes and cars due to the external market system, Maghreb, Taiwan. (L)

We are creating a society de marchand, circulation de l'argent seulement. It is people high up in places like Brussels who decide production and strategy, the producers are only victims. (K)

They impose their system of monoculture, and homogenization of culture, 'mais je n'a pas envie de parler anglais'. (P)

Cooperatives here are throwing away peaches in order to maintain prices, while at the same time they are importing more. The EEC is treating agriculture as if it were an industry. 'C'est politique, le CEE est devenu comme un banc de speculation'. (Y)

Thinks the EEC will survive but they will be more vigilant and protectionist, problems with special trade agreements with ex-colonies, l'Accord de Lome, etc. (L)

In relation to the 'prime d'arrachage', there is a surplus of everything in the EEC and one will always find a country that will produce it cheaper. If one carries this argument to its logical conclusion all of France should stop producing, and just consume.

Very anti EEC (even though admits he cant live without them). C'est l'Europe de marchand, ils sont en train d'acheter les agriculteurs, c'est l'agriculture dependant, et le chomage double, il y a quelque chose qui n'est pas normal'. Renault are now laying off 30% of its French labour force and going to exploit cheap labour in Morocco. Pour lui l'Europe est un monstre, c'est difficile de diriger un village comment on peut diriger un contenant'. He cannot accept or understand the capitalist system. (A).

Theme: EEC Reinforcing North-South Psychological Barrier. (L'Europe a deux vitesses).

Les gens du Bruxell ne comprend rien du Midi, pour eux l'agriculture est un industrie, mais c'est pas vrai. Le rapport entre l'homme et la terre est special. For the Catalans, here is their 'home', leur terre ancestral, le foret est leur capital. (CC)

We are handicapped here, accept all the EEC and Government aid. 'Nous avons envie de gagne de l'argent, mais n'accept jamais ces idees. (PP)

Agriculture here cannot work on its own, it needs aid and outside intervention. The view of Brussels is; (a) garde a local presence for the tourists, (b) for those who live here to recreate local markets, 'circuit court', with emphasis on quality not quantity, e.g L'Agneau Catalan co-operative, would not normally exist under EEC norms, it is too small, but the objective is to create, 'les marche de circuit court Catalan', the complete opposite to normal EEC philosophy, - l'Europe a deux vitesses'. (HH)

'Notre produits les embettent à Brussels, ils sont trop chere pour eux, nous ne sont pas assey efficace, nous n'avons pas le choix que de travailler pour eux. Ils nous impose les chose a faire chez nous, il y a un grand difference entre ici et Bruxelles'. (PP)

The importance of complementarity, seeing the country as a complement to the city, complement between how we view the EEC and how it views us. Does not agree with Europe a deux vitesses, one is a complement to the other. (V)

It is Brussels that gives the Mairie money for roads, and for putting electricity and telephone wires under ground. (KK)

Committee Interprofessional is very important here, it fixes the price of AOC wine. It is under attack from the EEC which consider it illegal. They strongly resent the interference of the EEC in their affairs. (E)

Thinks most people here accept the EEC, but like in politics 'ils ont peur d'avoir tord'. They are conservative so they are afraid of it, just like they voted against Maastricht, not because they don't support it but because they are afraid of being wrong, so they prefer to wait and see. (F)

General belief these stupid EEC policies will not last long, but they have to go along with them for the moment, and turn them to their own advantage. (PP)

The EEC intensive agricultural model is not suitable for here where only extensification could work. Mediterranean agriculture is sacrificed in relation to that of Northern Europe. Cereal production is better protected than fruit and vegetables, since grains can easily be shipped around the globe. (Y)

Thinks Roussillon would be best attached to Barcelona, because they are only two hours from there and they have similar problems, climate and agriculture. Thinks the EEC favours the Cereal and Dairy farmers of North of Europe and do not consider the Mediterranean. (R)

EEC is sacrificing here for tourism, 'Le promenade pour les gens du Nord', si c'est uniquement les tourists c'est trist. (CC)

She voted oui pour l'Europe de Peuple (Maastricht), mais dans sa coeur elle a senti tres mal car le CEE a condamner l'agriculture ici, and are thus preventing her leading the life she wants to live. (CC)

Thinks it is not in the Latin nature to be dynamic, and thus they are victimized by the EEC. (GG)

Does not think that Brussels has excluded the Mediterranean. Ce sont les gens d'ici qui n'ont pas pousser, ils ne sont pas dynamique. La mentalité d'ici est de vivre bien et de laisse passe. They are their own worst enemies, for example, with the wine they did not make an effort to improve quality or marketing once more due to lack of dynamism. (Z).

Theme: Perception of EEC Agricultural Policies;

(A) Unjust, Lack of Continuity and Long Term Vision.

Is a strong EEC supporter, but fears free trade in 1993. It cannot work until all the regions are at the same level, social, legal, monetary, economic, etc. The rules should be harmonized first, otherwise it is not fair and they cannot compete with cheap imports from Spain, South America and Eastern Europe. (G)

The EEC has no long term vision, 'nous sommes dans un train qui va d'elle meme sans chauffer. Every country is different with different constraints, and one cannot impose the same law on everyone. (H)

Thinks the EEC could only work if every one was at the same 'niveau social' which is not the case, thus Maastricht is unfair. (R)

Thinks the EEC can not continue without; (a) a single currency, (b) Les charge unique, (labour etc), et le meme niveau social. Labour in Spain costs half of here how can they compete? (DE)

Emphasis today is solely on 'rentabilité' in the short term. It is about regulating the problems of today, there is no long term vision. We have too much of everything and 2/3 of the world does not have enough to eat. (DE)

The objective of the EEC at the start was to feed Europe, i.e produce, but it is no longer that, all the Agro-environmental policies employ the opposite. The idea behind the 'prime a l'herb' is to diminuer le taux de chargement, one will be rewarded for doing so by a subsidy, extensification is behind all those policies. All these measures are for 5 years, than what? No long term vision. (SS)

Land taken out of production here is generally just left fallow, also the EEC policy for uprooting vines is contradictory to their erosion prevention policies. When it rains a tremendous amount of soil is lost. (GH)

He said they are afraid of the EEC here, 'ils se mefient de ca, se mefient de nouveaux'. As usual he started off by saying that he thought it was a good thing they went on to say how it could never work,- every country not at the same level, a lot of laws not implemented everywhere etc. (S)

The EEC holds no advantage for our agriculture. The people in Brussels do not know where they are going themselves, il y a trop de tout les produits. (Z)

EEC should have equalised countries before opening frontiers. (K)

Thinks the EEC aided the mediterranean at one time. There are lots of subsidies but always for the short term and they change all the time, and are mixed up with the politics of the day. Their policies are incomprehensible and often lack an Ecological sense, e.g gave a 100% grant at one time for planting conifers in the mediterranean, all that did was increase the risk of fire and helped some speculators make fast money. Now there is a grant for maintaining terraces but it is too late the people have left, now they are for the tourists. (Y)

Spanish wines and cherries are often sold under French labels, EEC system is very unfair, 'pas la meme loi social, ce sont les commercants qui vont enreshir'. (H)

He thinks the EEC system is not good and will not last long, but for the moment they are obliged to follow it, 'il faut s'adopte ou laisse tomber completement'. Thinks what the EEC is doing is very dangerous, myopic short term vision, they have no global long term vision. 'C'est plutot les jeu politique'. (HH)

EEC policies are too general, do not understand local constraints and circumstances, change direction all the time and have no follow up. (Y)

Thinks that the ideas of the EEC are good, but in practice nothing works, the laws are not respected and everyone is not at the same 'niveau social'. (P)

She does not believe in Europe or the EEC, every country is different and they want to keep their identity. If there are too many English, Germans etc. who come here to work, they will take the place of the French and render them unemployed, that is not normal and could provoke a war. They say the Germans did not take France by war,

but by money, i.e they are now buying the place up. (AB)

The EEC instead of bringing every one to the same 'niveau social', are bringing every one to 'le niveau le plus bas'. Cannot have free trade until every one is at the same level. Europe should protect its own interests and exclude Magreb and South America. (I)

The EEC has destabilized all markets, there is no certitude any more. The EEC does not understand the problems here. Their vision is short term and market orientated, they are treating agriculture like an industry, but they have even failed there look at the level of unemployment. (H)

Many EEC policies are contradictory, eg PIL and 'Prime d'Arrachage'. PIL contributes 10,000 F towards buying vineyards next to ones holdings, to make it economic and efficient, and the 'prime d'arrachage' is paying people to uproot vines. (B)

There are several EEC subsidies for Eleveurs, many of them contradictory, they change on a regular basis depending on market trends, making it impossible for Eleveurs to predict what next year is going to be like. They find all that conflict and uncertainty very confusing, hard to keep up to date with and even harder to apply for. They are not always aware of what they are entitled to. (EF)

Perception of EEC Agricultural Policies: (B) Dehumanizing, Service - Product Debate.

Thinks the worst think that ever happened was the EEC giving subsidies for keeping sheep and cows in disadvantaged areas, like the Haute Aspre, as farming is being taken over by speculators. Here she touches; a) Prime de montagne, b) Prime compensatrice de Bruxelles pour le PAC. Without those she could not live because lambs are worth less now than 15 years ago. (AB)

The EEC has no long term vision; 'Ils connaissent l'agriculture de la communité mais ils ne connaissent pas les agriculteurs'. Ils ne raisonnent pas par rapport au gens, for them it is just an accord with industry and international trade, but agriculture is not the same as industry, their products and means of production are completely different. (SS)

EEC agro-environmental policies are very discouraging for 'la base technique agricole'. Their blind faith in the God of Ecology is undoing everything we worked for. (SS)

It is not a life for the young to live from subsidies, 'c'est dégoûtant'. La terre est un vocation, c'est une religion, un sacrifice'. (A).

Thinks EEC will accentuate tourism here. (U)

When people in Brussels say that his wine 'les embeter', and that we will have to reduce the quantity produced, 'ca lui fait beaucoup de mal'. To be a farmer the pleasure is to produce and not sit in a cafe all day. (R)

Considers EEC prime d'arrachage catastrophic. First there is the psychological effect, it discourages those who remain 'a la limit', secondly not good for the environmenr, terraces, drains etc, are not maintained. (DE)

The EEC subsidies are charity that hide misery, and diminish human dignity. Les subsidies are a deprivation of liberty, they signal the return of Fascism. The status of a peasant should be that of landscape artist not a slave to bureaucracy. (A bit idealistic). (RR)

It is people high up in places like Brussels that decide production and strategy, the producers are only victims. (K£)

The EEC would like to turn here into a tourist park. (QQ)

Thinks the EEC has no long term vision, and that they are sacrificing here for tourism, 'le promenade des gens du Nord'. If the 'arriere pays' is going to be uniquely for the tourists, it will be very sad. Who will maintain the environment for them? (CC)

Our motivation was always production, l'homme aiment bien vivre de son travail. I started out with the idea nobody would impose anything on me. Now I am asked to say yes to this plan (PDD), without knowing what it entails, and only given 15 days to decide. It is a bomb, EEC tricks, call the union. (PP)

The EEC norms have blocked a lot of people making goat cheese. Thinks what they did was not necessary, it caused a big political quarrel in France, 'car on perd le gout de terroir', more homogenization. Soon the only cheese available will be the industrial sort in supermarkets, which he does not like. Besides these cheese norms do not prevent one making unhygienic cheese in a hygienic building, the norms only relate to the building etc. 'Trop de regles et pas assey de sens'. (HH)

They had to stop supplying milk to Oms village due to EEC hygiene regulations, their milk was not pasteurised. Thinks the 'gardien de l'environnement' system will never work, because the farmers want to be their own boss and not labourers of the EEC (NN)

Underlying message from EEC and government is that they want us out of production, there is a surplus of wine and everything else. (B)

He wants to live his life here in liberty and on a human scale. The RME is le miser, a sad existence, as are the EEC tricks and subsidies. They are an insult that diminish human dignity. The EEC uses carrot tactics, one day they say do this the next day they say do that, 'il n'y a pas de sense ou un vision a long term dans leur politique. He does not want to be helped like a beggar. Create another system. (QQ)

The cowboy farmer in St. Marsal gets lots of subsidies because he falsely declares more animals than he has. He is nearly 70, but has a son like himself. Said these cowboy tactics are catching on all around. In La Bastide there is an Accountant with a huge herd of sheep, which again he lets run all over the place, but he is not as bad as the cowboy in St Marsal. Again his idea is to touch the maximum of subsidies, at least he has a bergerie. Last winter he went on holidays to Madagascar and left the sheep in the hands of some hippies, who took no care of them, they were eating peoples gardens, and many of them died with the winter snow. (AB)

Due to all the laws and EEC regulations, they cannot make goat cheese any more. What we are developing is a clinical, barren and sorrowful society. (GG)

EEC is a mass of middlemen, what we are witnessing is dehumanization not desertification here. (GG£)

Problem with EEC agro-environmental subsidies is that one has no incentive to work. L'homme dans ca vie a envie de promotion, d'etre chef et de gagne plus, no hope for that from Brussels subsidies. (WW)

EEC diminishes the dignity of farmers, just slotting you into a hole, better be on the dole than do something different, 'il y a un trou pour vous'. (QQ)

Thinks the Catalans do not want to adapt to the modern EEC world, because it is not their world. They do not want the dehumanized, robotic civilization of merd they are offering us, we cannot take that clinical, barre, efficient Anglosaxon world, - every thing is too controlled. It would be more economical to round us up and gas us. (GG)

TOURISM AND 'OUTSIDERS'.

Theme: Insiders Perception of Tourism (Temporary).

The Catalans are jealous and petty among themselves, but always unite against the common enemy, 'les étrangers'. There has been too much passage here, Gothe, Arabs etc, now they are suspicious of all outsiders. (N)

Does not see a future in tourism either, they will destroy nature with all their houses, which are empty 11 months of the year. (BB)

Does not see a future for l'arrière pays in tourism or holiday homes. What have they in Llauro to attract tourists?, Serrabonne is on the map. In Llauro they tried camping, Gites, Apartments, but none of them really work, the gite is empty most of the year, their camping is two star and they demand three star, we cant afford that, they ask for too much. Some of the locals had to give up camping à la ferm 'car ils ont trouvent les gens trop difficile. Donc c'est mieux d'aider les agricultures de se débrouiller ou lieu d'investir dans le tourism pour 1 - 2 mois d'anne. There are only 4 farmers left in Llauro. (Z)

Normally the retired employ some local woman to do the menage, but generally the retired don't stay long, when they get older they move to cities to be near their children and doctors. The commuters who work in Perpignan do not contribute much either, they spend their time on the road, et les villages dormatoir n'est pas bon, they participate in nothing. The retired adapt a little. Pour faire vivre le village il faut garde l'activite sur place. (Z).

Before in Calmeillas there were 3 cafes, a post office, épicerie and 240 people, now there are only 18 people which goes up to 60 in the summer, which she finds too much. Not many retired or outsiders live here, they left after the big snow of 1986 cut off the village for about two weeks. A lot of the holiday homes are owned by children whose parents come from here, and who now work in Perpignan and come here at weekends and for holidays. They tend to be a bit clannish and try to reinstate village fetes, working the garden, a bit artificial now. The second generation appreciate the beauty of here. (X)

She supports tourism as a complement to agriculture, but tourism on its own, holiday and retirement homes, are sad and hold little in the way of a future for the 'pays', besides they will not come if there is no local presence and the environment is degraded. Already the village of Calmeillas is sad, with all its closed up and deserted houses except for one or two months of the year. Her child is the first to be born here in the last 14 years. (CC)

Does not think there is a future in tourism for Oms either, because it is too far for those working in Perpignan. They try it for a few years but invariably move towards the city after a while, children's education is another factor. At the moment most of the outsiders in Oms are retired, but neither do they stay long term, they love the tranquillity etc initially, but when they get over 70 they move back to the towns in order to be nearer their doctors and children. So they are not the solution for the Haute Aspre either. (T)

Three quarters of the population of Fourques do not live from the land, it is full of people who work somewhere else or retired. Les vieux ne sont pas l'avenir du pays. (AA)

Tourism here is a very short term business, it is passive rather than active aid. Tourism here is very badly done, it is oriented towards mass tourism designed to consume only - money, profit, it is a lie, even Serrabonne is part of that. Tourism is not the solution in the long term. (RR)

There are a lot of Germans, Belg and English here, but not many of them have houses in the village, generally it is the children of the village who come back to those houses at weekends, the foreigners live in the Mas outside the village. In winter there are only about 50 old people living in St. Marsal. (CD)

Does not see the future here with tourism. Firstly they are not sufficiently numerous and stay for only two months 'D'abord il n'y en a pas beaucoup, pendent 2 mois seulement, aussi il faut un environnement bien aménagé et un présence agricole pour attirer les touristes, si il y a trop d'incendie ils ne retourneraient pas. (NN)

70% of his tourists are French and he has noticed an increase in the numbers of tourists in the 10 years he has been here, but always just for July and August and nothing for the rest of the year. One cannot live from two months work, has to diversify, is building a conference centre and to attract international tourists the 'symbol' of a swimming pool is imperative. (DD)

Thinks here not very suited to tourism because it is too expensive. People now turning to the exotic, Maghreb, Turkey only the English are still coming here and doing up old houses(I)

This Department has been invaded by several people, now we are being invaded by tourists, we can either assimilate them or drive them out. Thinks the 'arrière pays' needs Green tourism because agriculture is not viable here any more. (U)

Thinks there is not a great future for tourism here, it will continue much as it is. He envisages a lot of competition from Eastern Europe in a few years time. The French think it is not really a holiday if one does not travel outside the country. (DD)

Be ware of mass tourism, I do not think there will be an explosion in it here within the next 20 ans. One must not put too much hope in tourism, it could never be more than a weak complement to agriculture. Less than 1% of farms here are involved in tourism à la ferm. (PP)

Thinks tourism on the coast is finished, all the rich and retired are coming to the Arriere pays, the gite of the Mairie is always full. (LL)

Neither the tourists (holiday homes) or retired ever stay more than 10 years. In Montauriol there are 180 inhabitants, 30 of whom are outsiders. There is no contact between the two groups. (S)

Sees no future for the Arrière pays in agriculture, retirement or holiday homes. The retired always move nearer to town when one of them dies or get too old. She cant understand who would want holiday homes here, there is nothing to do and when the children grow up and start working in different places, they stop coming. Why invest so much in swimming pools and houses, when they all move on eventually. (EE).

What we need here is 'une tissue social vivant', people who live and work here, and not the retired, tourists and unemployed. (RR)

Tourism is not the future for here, they only come for two months of the year, 'ce n'est pas un tissue vivant social'. (QQ)

Les maisons secondaires sont de la foli, the rich retired, it is not them that will 'faire marche le pays'. Neither does he support agro-tourism, if it's only motivation is money rather than human enrichment. (QQ)

Theme: Conflict in Mentality and Needs.

She also meet the German tourist who was wandering around the village asking all kinds of questions, she thought she was doing research. She said that every year people walk right into their house often while they are eating and ask. 'c'est provisoir, ou, est ce que c'est a vendre'. Once they were eating outside and 3-4 tourists climbed up on the wall and stared at them right through the meal. She said they treat you like ignorant peasants, now I understand what (CC) meant by 'caged animals in a Zoo'. (A)

In Llauro there is a lot of conflict between the locals and outsiders, the community is very split, 'la population n'est pas la meme. The rich outsiders who live in the Calcina are a colony apart and have nothing to do with the village shops or school. There is no rapport between the two communities. (P)

Holiday home owners have a different concept of the environment, they do stupid things like putting concrete over rare fertile soil or constructing swimming pools even

though there is a water shortage here. (A)

Gave up camping à la ferm, because they were disappointed by it and perturbed by the tourists, 'trop dérange par leur mentalité', even though they needed the money. (H)

The needs of the two communities are very different, the outsiders are not interested in agriculture, they want a tourist village like Castelnou, and swimming pools every where. Most outsiders here are French retired or working in Perpignan. (S)

Relationship between insiders and outsiders in Oms is good, is that because they are all trosiem age? (T)

The german Tourist thought I was weird to be living here alone for six months in this backward and quaint village, said she could only spend a day or two here. It is not easy for the locals to support these tourists, they are completely out of their element here, but they try to make you believe that it is you who is out of place, - a very unnerving experience. She was like a hawk eying the property, could detect possessive greed in her eyes. Why would she want to buy in a place she could only spend a day in, - an investment or simply the thing to do. (ZYZ)\(JJ)

The village of Taulis is full of Germans and English, the Catalans and outsiders do not mix, they just tolerate each other and remain a part. Said when he arrived here first it was important to observe things for the first few years, it takes a long time to gain the confidence of the locals. (WW)

The two communities live to different rhythms. In the Calcina they have the way of the town, tried to put a stop to tractor work on Sunday mornings. Their culture and values are very different. He is often shocked by their naivety of things they take for granted, e.g don't know what mushrooms to pick and cant understand a lot of simple things, like cause of fire and floods. (P)

'A lot of outsiders who come here want both the advantages of the country and the city without the inconveniences'. (AB)

In order to appreciate something one has to merit it. This is why most tourists destroy everything, they just pass in their cars and throw papers out the window. He has to pick up all the papers at this X century hermitage near Céret, otherwise it would be a 'poubelle'. The person who walks to the top of a mountain merits the view and pleasure, which cannot be got by going there by car or helicopter. (BC)

The foreign property owners do not respect 'la loi de passage', he can come to an arrangement with the locals, they are used to those traditions, but the foreigners do not want anybody on their land. He does take his herd onto the mountains owned by the Belg, which is not habituated. (LL)

There are two sides to the story, the people here do not live very well, 'difficilement en fait', and they see the outsiders who earn a lot of money and have big cars and houses and they are jealous. The differences are too great, money is the biggest problem between the two communities. (Z)

Thinks it would be impossible to live from tourism here, even those who have tried it, like (H) found it impossible, 'trop embettant, l'esprit des tourists est affreuse, meme il ne veut pas rencontre lui meme en vacance'. Shooting photographs of n'importe a quoi, and they treat you like something from the last century, he was amazed to be told that there is a picture of him in the museum in Colliour, they could have waited a few more years until I was dead. Very anti the tourist solution, thinks people in the future will not be able to afford holidays. (A).

Independence day fete, 14 July. (A) turned up in her disgusting pink shorts, torn black t-shirt, and low cut wellingtons. She apologised for her soiled hands, said she had come straight from cleaning out the bergerie. Her presence was obviously designed to shock the bourgeois. (ZZ)

What struck me about (ZZ) was the vulgarity of his wealth, immaculate luxurious house, swimming pool, 4 cars, mercedes, a four wheel drive, a beach buggy, and a renault cleo for his wife. At the entrance gate was a closed circuit security system. (ZZ)

Thinks that the 5 or 6 retired foreigners living in the village are well integrated, les group de troisiem age. (AB)

If one gets something too easily they have no respect for it eg. bread. This is the problem with the tourists they destroy everything because they dont value or merit it. Thinks the Aspre will never be a big tourist area because it is, 'Piedmont du montagne', only pass through here on their way to the sea or mountains. Nothing for them to do here. (BC)

In the local mentality, tourism is not seen as real work, which must be physical, working the soil? Neither can they accept the behaviour of a lot of the tourists, eg sun bathing in the nude. They do not distinguish between the coast and arriere pays tourists, they are all 'Doryphores'. (FG)

The tourists are depicted as bourgeois imbeciles, out of their element in the country, e.g headless chickens picking mushrooms and loosing their cars and bearings, also physically not equipped for the country, allergies, hay fever etc Bamedas. (PP)

If the outsiders make the effort to integrate, they will be accepted, but the world must come to them. (G)

The needs of the two communities are completely different, their value system and way of life is also very different. For example, the Calcina dwellers want a tarmacked road going up to the Calcina, because they have big cars and don't want to dirty them, the locals have only small functional cars and don't care if they are dirty. (P)

If outsiders make an effort to integrate themselves they are accepted, but they must make the first move. (D)

They could have made more money from tourism than what they are doing, but they did not take that option, because it would have been unbearable for themselves, an insult to their dignity to have to put up with such weird people, they are like something from a mental asylum. The only people who can support them are those, frequently Northerners, who are prepared to run it as a business, and put up with their insults for the money. Les Catalans n'ont pas cette esprit de commercants, donc pour eux c'est insupportable. C'est plus facile de leur vendre un peu de terre, que de les supportent chaque jour. Their bizarre behaviour, and in peak season they block everything. Impossible to have a rapport with most of the tourists, 'ils sont d'une autre planète'. (QQ)

The EEC policies that would like to turn here into a parc touristique sont tres mauvais. It will degrade the country and profit very few people, essentially outsiders capable of running such businesses. With that system there is no dialogue between the people, just there to pay. (QQ)

The villagers see the tourists as 'trop different dans leur esprit'. In Fourques there are 10 swimming pools all owned by outsiders from other parts of France, even during summer drought the pools are full and lawns sprinklers on, they think it should be as green as Ireland. Water here is free, it comes from a bore hole in Fourques, but obviously too much extraction lowers the water level. They are city people who maintain the habits of the city in the country. So they find it hard to understand each other, no common ground. (J)

Relations between locals and outsiders are normally difficult, both sides are incapable of understanding each other. Personally she finds the outside artists the easiest to relate to. She gave up minding the keys of some of the local holiday homes, there were too many problems, no desire to do it a second time, even though she needed the money. Found the English and Dutch very difficult, 'ils ne raison pas comme nous'. (CC)

Find a real difference in mentality between locals and outsiders, for example, the Calcina dwellers have tried to prevent tractor work on a Sunday, showing complete lack of understanding. They leave the city to live in the country, but are not prepared to adapt to it's ways, rather they wish to impose the city mentality. (H)

Most of the tourists have a town mentality, they wanted to see everything fast and in a car, and blamed them if it rained, was too hot, too windy etc. They began to dread the summers. They used to give Catalan meals to the tourists and sell them their own

vegetables, but they appreciated nothing, all they saw was that the price of their tomatoes were more than at Champion. Price was all they understood, would appreciate a meal at Quick as much as a wholesome home cooked meal. (H)

The tourists have the idea that the country is theirs. Frequently they are allergic to flies, hay, grass, they complain about the noise of tractors and cocks crowing. They say that the locals should change their mentality, and be more accommodating of the tourists, but they must change their 'esprit' also. There is racism between people from the country and those from the city. The worst are often the children of those who are from here, but they themselves were born and brought up in towns, they have lost the way of the village, but think that they always have priority 'chez eux'. (WW)

Conflict in mentality between insiders and outsiders, they want their money but don't want them getting involved in local affairs, especially local politics. (N)

Tourism as it is now practised is not good, they pay for the image of sun, sea, mountains, and when they are confronted with the image they destroy it, 'Les touristes sont tromper aussi'. When they come here they have an infantile comportment, 'pas responsable d'eux meme'. They throw litter everywhere, if there is not somebody standing over them to give them a fine they are lost. 'Nous sommes en train d'aller vers le fascisme'. (QQ)

Some outsiders do integrate and are interested in local history etc, but the majority lock themselves up in their villas and swimming pools. (H)

Holiday homes are not a problem here, but admitted they don't know how to live in the country, they come with the ideas of the town and expect them to be fulfilled in the country, e.g pharmacies, swimming pools. (R)

They don't seem to have a very profound understanding of what is going on around them, e.g think the wine industry is thriving, live in a bit of a Calcina world of their own, but are certainly not 'mechant' like the villagers make all Calcina dwellers out to be, they just don't seem to have much in common. As (A) said; 'they don't understand each other because they live very different lives'. (TT) \ (XYZ)

The two camps have different needs. The outsiders are more objective, in fact it is easier to work with them. The people from the village always ask for favours for themselves, and not for the community or the commune. With the locals there is also the problem of family connections, they never forget what happened twenty years ago. It is also difficult for her because she, as Mayor, because she is related to a lot of families in the village and they expect favours'. (Z)

Does not have a problem in relating to outsiders, as children they always had Belgian friends, l'amiéte à la meme niveau, one must be tolerant. On peut conserver notre identite, tout en melangant et d'etre ouvert. (RR)

There is friction between locals and outsiders, it is not easy, they have different mentalities and customs. the outsiders are always criticising the locals. The reason we don't invite them to our homes is because the people from the North live indoors, and their houses are always well arranged, here people live outside, and our houses are only used for eating and sleeping. We invite people very rarely, and when we do it is for a 'griad d'escargo a l'exterieur'. Northern's dont understand our ways and say we are not friendly, but if they make an effort to understand us they will be accepted. (U)

The people from the village are selfish, in fact they are afraid, 'ils vivent difficilement avec les gens d'exterieur'. The locals have closed minds, 'ils ont l'esprit ferme, leur mentalité est tres movais, ils sont souvent mechant'. As Mayor she is more aware of the people from the village than those outsiders from the Calcina. the people from the village do not understand that their own way of life is finished, they now have no choice but to live with the outsiders. (Z)

Theme: Colonialist Attitude, (Tourism forced on the Locals).

They mix socially with the people from the Calcina and have very little to do with the village. End of interview, said she would like to talk to me but not under these 'uncertain circumstances', pity she could not judge for herself. (OO)

The Department should have concentrated on quality rather than quantity tourism. What we got was tourism de conge payee, 1936 Northern industrial workers, they only come for the sun and spend very little money locally. Mass tourism was forced on them along the coast in the 1970, mostly to the benefit of outsiders (French) again feelings of powerlessness. (G)

Sees tourism as necessary for here, but blames politicians for pushing it too much and being too greedy for money. (G)

They started talking about the fact that if people like (VV) the German Holiday house owner did not block up the houses in the village, the unemployed from town would come back to the country and revitalize agriculture? A bit fanciful, I cant see X with such ideas, besides all the houses were in ruin before (VV) renovated them. They all think the tourists consider themselves superior and look down on the locals peasants. (BB)

The outsiders who live in the village tend to be better integrated than those who live in dispersed villas, with their swimming pools, locks and guard dogs, excluding the locals. That type are not like and they have an adverse affect on local culture (G).

This outsider is a big believer in cleaning up the village, the 'poubelles' should be moved and bergerie knocked, only attracting flies. He would like to turn the place into a proper tourist retirement village, like Castelnou. (ZZ)

There is a huge retirement population in the arrière paye, some under 50. In the last five years they have noticed a repopulation of the area, mostly by English people, because the price of property in England was so high until recently. (FF)

Said a year in Provence is a disgusting book, written for those who cannot cope with life in France and thus they ridicule it. Said there are a lot of English moving in here, and for the first time, Masons and builders, because the English here have their own network and don't like working with the French. Said when the English come here, they come to colonise not integrate. (YY)

Thinks the big 'Agence d'Immeuble', like Riborel or Buig, ont fait beaucoup de mal. All they want to do is throw up concrete, sell it and after they could not give a damn, they are only interested in money. It is they who construct the big tourist apartments on the coast, they use a lot of black market turkish workers, taken on a daily basis from Place Cassan. There are a lot of political irregularities and bribes, even the new prison Potan in Perpignan is believed to have been constructed on the black market, dreadful for a public contract. (DD)

This closed mentality is also reflected in their attitude to tourism. First it had a bad start in the Region, about 30 years ago the Government more or less imposed it upon them, they bought up the land along the coast and built modern highrise tourist facilities, - a sort of colonial approach. It was 'tres mal senti' locally, they felt they were not considered, it was imposed on them. Thus the locals have never really accepted tourists or invested in the tourist industry, generally outsiders from other parts of France who profited. (FG)

Most of their friends here are Pied Noir, ex-African colonialists. 'People who have travelled, an industrious bunch, they really have nothing to do with the village. But said they did not come here to be a foreign community of ex- patriots. (TT)

The tourists want the environment here to be more like the one they left. They only come for the sun, the locals are anachronisms, picturesque but not needed any more. Imposition of urban rules, can't keep pigs, - unhygienic, can't sell sheep locally or cheese, cant keep cocks as they disturb the city dwellers, he was told to keep all his dogs tied up, but his dogs like most Catalans are friendly, not like the savage watch dogs of the foreigners. (GG)

When he first arrived here was very annoyed by the fact that the belfry in Tordères had only one bell instead of two, they went to see the Mayor and offered to pay for a wooden imitation bell just to put things in order, (lack of respect and understanding for local culture). The Mayor, a true diplomat informed him, that a missing bell is the hallmark of all the churches in the Aspre, which is obviously not true, but it satisfied him. (ZZ)

Was boasting that Tordères beats the national average of 77 inhabitants and I think 14 swimming pools. I think a swimming pool would be the minimum initiation rite into their little circle. (ZZ)

Outsiders frequently do not appreciate the local culture, e.g, (FF) considered the Sanga dance primitive, (ZZ) wanted to put a wooden bell into the belfry in Tordères. (XYZ)

Most foreigners, especially English living in the arrière paye, tend to form a clique and stick together more or less excluding the Catalans, (FF) are typical of that. (GG)

It is not the retired that will 'faire vivre le pays, ce ne sont pas des gens dynamique'. Does not want here to become like the tourist atrocities of the coast. It is utopian to want to live like our grand parents, to survive one must adopt, mais en gardant notre identite. We must not sell ourselves completely to Brussels or tourism, we must battle against, 'une vie comme un animal dans un cage, pour etre regarder par les tourists, absolument pas. Il faut vivre ici. (CC)

A lot of the Calcina dwellers are ex-colony Belg, and they don't respect them. His impression is that outsiders and tourists in general consider themselves superior to the locals because they have money, and for them Llauro is a tourist village and they mock agriculture. (P)

Thinks secondary holiday homes are scandalous, and should be doubly taxed, they have put up prices and stopped young people getting a footing in their own country. (GG)

Big problems between strangers and outsiders in Montauriol. His perception of the outsiders is, because they have money they consider themselves, 'trop important, ils sont bien gonflee', they consider themselves superior to the locals. The two communities have nothing in common, relations are particularly bad since the municipal elections in 1983, the village was divided in two. The newcomers won the vote, 59 against and 61 for. Created a very bad feeling, the old do not forget easily still brooding on it, the only place they feel comfortable now is in the village cafe, the outsiders never go there. People here are very stubborn, even after 10 years bad feelings remain, feelings are just as bitter now towards the outsiders who control the village. (S)

Has the impression that the outsiders consider themselves superior to the locals and have colonialist ideas. Ici nous sommes un peuple de la terre, pas tres instruit, donc les gens du Nord nous traitent bete ou inferieur. (U)

Consider X a witch, and a bad influence on her husband who is other wise a good worker. She was their 'femme de menage' for a while, they were very good to her and gave her lots of clothes for her children, but they never saw the clothes on them, thinks she sold them at le Pertus. One day she told them there was too much work at their house and left. The relationship was obviously too unequal, if they were being

benevolent they expected her to be grateful and dependent. I noticed they treat the children of the new 'femme de menage', who were using the swimming pool, like 'petits Arabes'. (ZZ)

She said that the outsider (ZZ) drew up a petition of what he would do if elected Mayor, wanted to construct a wall around their bergerie and to knock their house as it was unhygienic. Said his own house is built on communal path between Llauro and Torderes. They often come to the village looking for their dog, just sit in the car and blow the horn, and 'tute' everybody. (A)

When the (ZZ's) arrived here they held two parties, one for the rich ex-pats, and one for the locals. Notice the obvious apartheid, needless to say the one for the locals was not much of a success, as they never turned up. (ZZ)

Theme: Tourism as an Economic Necessity.

Said the difference between the aubergiste and the locals is that he had money to mount his enterprise, they dont? (LL)

Thinks the local economy could benefit from tourism in the form of Gite Rural, Ferme Auberge, but thinks the mass tourism of the coast would destroy here and not benefit the locals much, most of the investors, even those who work in the cafes are outsiders. (VV)

If tourism was a real meeting between people from the area and outsiders, on equal levels, he is very much for that. But the present system is completely based on 'rentabilité' (profit), the only thing people want the tourists for is their money. Aussi il faut dire que le comportement des tourists est bizarre, comme ca c'est insupportable, et ce n'est pas un avenir pour le paye, 2 mois par an, pas un tissue vivant social. (QQ)

Thinks that the area could not live uniquely from tourism, because of the holiday system in France it is always only for two months over the summer when all school and administration take holidays in July, and all the factories close in August. At his Gitotel he notices a big difference in the mentality between the two, the July ones mix well and participate in evening activities, the August ones, generally remain renferme chez eux. Thinks tourism here can only be a complement to something else, e.g ferme auberge, but that demands a big investment which every one does not have. (DD)

Tourism is the strongest motor in the Mediterranean now. There are two types, coast and Green Tourism of the l'arrière paye. Thinks the Green Tourism will not work if the environment is 'en friche'. Tourists dont like a hostile environment. To attract them one must maintain a minimum of agriculture and forest management. (HH)

Thinks that the construction companies that are allowed to do 'n'importe a quoi' is at root the fault of capitalism. (DD)

This Belgian man and his wife set up their auberge business in Saint Marsal 11 years ago. Now they remains open all year round. Said he had a different cliental to the Gitotel in Tordères, his clients are older and richer, who want tranquillity away from the coast. His restaurant is well known and gets a lot of retired clients from Amélie les Bains, Céret, or Catalans who come on a Sunday or for special occasions. Thinks the Gitotel in Tordères does nothing to attract tourists. (KK)

He is part of 'La Balaguere Pyrenees', a Parisian organisation that does organized walks all over the world, mostly because of that he stays open all year round. (KK)

Tourism here is very badly done, it is oriented towards mass tourism, made for consumption only, money and profit it all that counts. Just a business, no human exchange or interaction, the tourists are also let down. (RR)

There are three types of tourists (a) the retired; (b) families en vacances, (c) unemployed. They respect the first two but not the third, see them as failures with nothing to offer. In the arrière pays they only get the tourists when it is wet or cold at the coast. (J)

Because their idea of progress is the American model they respect the rich tourists and retired, as they represent economic success, they also raise the price of land. But they dont like their colonialist ideas, want their cake and eat it! (N)

Thinks there is a future for tourism here, but they made an error in the beginning by attracting tourism de mass, au lieu de prendre le model de cote d'Azur. (W)

The word progress is misleading, better to use change. In Europe there are 3,500 million people of which 2,600 live in the North of Europe, for them the Mediterranean conjures up images of holidays and leisure, et pas un utile de travail. (V)

People now realize there are two types of tourists, Coast and Arrière pays,- those who spend and those who don't. The mass tourists on the coast spend very little. (G)

She dislikes the tourist option, is afraid they will destroy the place with ugly buildings, but realistically things are going more like that, better than letting the place die, she thinks. Thinks the future for the neo-ruraux will be very difficult, one need a lot of money to live here. (X)

Holiday homes have put up the price of land and locals like that. (G)

They see tourism as an economic necessity and thus support it. (F)

We must attract the tourists intelligently, avoid the monstrosities of the coast, and also the mentality of people who want to exploit the tourists with false prices and poor service, trying to live all year from two months takings. (U)

Thinks the arriere paye has done nothing to attract tourists, there are no activities, nature and environment on its own is not enough, must give people what they want, ferme auberge, horse riding, swimming pools, motor bikes etc. A lot of the tourists bring everything with them and never taste the local food. (U)

Tourism is very important in Tordères. (HI)

Les retraites qui s'install ne donne rien de tous, c'est pas un avenir pour le paye'. (Z)

Future for the arriere pays is with tourism, holiday homes etc. It is they who repaired all the abandoned houses in the villages. (W)

Thinks tourism and agriculture is a good marriage, if they buy local produce, wine. (R)

The locals hate the neo-ruraux (eg his friend in Taillet who was making household compost in ruin was told to remove it), but not the rich tourists. (O)

Tourism, fire breaks, subterranean clover etc, are not an alternative to productive agriculture, but rather a complement, they will not maintain the environment. Besides tourism will not work on Gites alone, need surrounding environment and paysage intact. (D)

Does not think that the retired and holiday homes will faire marche l'arriere pays, c'est pas un avenir. They spend very little locally, they do most of their shopping in big supermarkets in Perpignan. (DD)

On the whole they look favourably on tourists who bring in money and most importantly up the price of land. In the end it all seems to come down to money. (J)

The massif of the Aspre, 20,000 ha is situated at the periphery of Perpignan, so the attraction of the Aspre is; (a) peri-urban, and (b) Peri-European, distance and exoticism for those from the North of Europe, we must exploit both axes. When he speaks of tourism he is talking about green tourism, mass tourism of the coast will have to be educated before they could appreciate the arriere pays. (V)

What he would like is to repopulate the arriere pays, perhaps it is only a dream, nothing could replace agriculture, but he knows that agriculture here is not possible any more, we are obliged to change and turn towards green tourism, even if the holiday homes could be lived in for 6 months of the year instead of 1 that would be a start. (He is only trying to accept the tourist option, but does not really like it XYZ). (Y)

Thinks the town has always been a magnet for those from the country, what we need now is to reverse that. Thinks that 'les villages dormatoir est un solution qui va repeupler les Aspre mais ce n'est pas la solution. (Y)

The revenue from tourism in France is exactly the same as from agriculture (50 million F). Thus, thinks it is only normal the farmers should 'rendre service' to the tourists. The root problem is rural urban misunderstanding, but we must adopt to present climate. (L)

Theme: Outsiders Reasons for Coming to the Aspre.

I was confronted by a German tourist in pink coat and grey woolly socks, said she was planked right on the plague, had just come to the arrière pays to eye the property. Asked all kinds of questions about this quaint little village, who owned what, what houses were for sale, how many swimming pools there were, how far from the motorway, how long to reach the snow, distance to sea. (JJ)

Thinks there is a big difference between his tourists and those of the Gitotel. His tourists are individuals, who do not need animation, they never go to the coast in July and August, they are interested in the local culture, and well informed before coming. The ambience in his place is completely different to that at the Gitotel, the village, church, terrace au soleil, tranquillity. (VV)

For the moment there is not much demand for green cultural tourism in Arriere pays, must educate people for that, it may develop in the future but for the moment the tourists are definitely coming for sun, sand and sea. (W)

Hope to retire here for six months of the year, and maintain a presence in England for the rest. They run an 'Alliance Francais' school for those thinking of coming to live here. (TT)

Ex-colonial Brits, they came here for the climate, the countryside, the mountains, proximity to the sea and Spain, in short the variety. Looked at a great deal of Southern France, but immediately fell in love with the view from here, felt at home. (TT)

He advertises in a good journal in Germany, most of his clients are well educated professionals. 80% of his clients are German, and about half them return. School holidays in Germany are more staggered than in France, June to Sept. (VV)

His tourists are looking for paysage, tranquillity, l'ambiance rural, sometimes they ask if there is a cafe as they would like contact with the locals and practice their French, but it is rare that they actually meet French people. (VV)

'A lot of outsiders who come here want both the advantages of the country and city without the inconveniences.' (AB)

Said she is very happy in the Calcina, it is only 1/4 hr from the motorway. They came here par hazzar, linked to the husbands work, most people in the Calcina are older than her and retired. (OO)

Like a lot of the rich retired around here he made his fortune in Africa, Morocco, in the car trade. He was Citroen director for North Africa. (ZZ)

The ex-colonialists are attracted to here because they need space, tranquillity and sun. They came here 22 years ago, as a result of an advertisement in a journal in Brussels. The Estate Agents in Perpignan showed them all around the arrière pays, which was very under developed at that time, when they saw the Calcina they fell in love with the view over the plain extending to the sea. Stressed their house is very modest in comparison to the mansions in the Calcina. Another reason for buying here was because at the time it was much cheaper than the Cote d'Azur, which they could not afford. (II)

Their principal residence is in Brussels, they used to spend most of the year here because they prefer it, but now that they are getting older spend more time in Brussels near children. When one of them dies think they will eventually have to retire completely to Brussels, to be nearer family & doctors. (II)

His tourists are mostly families with two children, they all want the same thing, sand, sea and sun, for the French those things are synonymous with holidays. They only visit the Arrière Pays when it is wet or overcast at the coast. Does not think Green Tourism could work here, because they are too near to the coast, would need a site well inland for that to work eg. Capcir or Aude. (DD)

Retired ex-Congo Belg, worked in cobalt mining in the Congo, left in 1960 after independence. (Get the feeling they want to hide their colonial past, kept saying they come from Brussels). Eventually said the Calcina is full of ex-colonialists, there is only one Catalan there who flies the yellow and red Catalan flag. (II)

Travel has now become very easy, can go to Morocco as easily and cheaply as here. Tourists are becoming more aggressive, they are tired of being ripped off, false prices and poor service. The only solution is to be well prepared and give them what they want, quality and reasonable prices. (KK)

Theme: Outsiders Experience of Living in the Aspre.

Never regretted buying here, even though it is in the path of the tramontagne. Last year her husband had two operations and now finds the gardening, cutting grass, too much, they asked in the village for a helper, and were prepared to pay the going rate, but they could not get anyone. Eventually they had to make due with an old man who comes from Céret. He thinks the unemployed in the village are not interested in working, she said it is because they are too proud and don't want to work for the rich outsiders in the Calcina. (II)

Thinks a lot of the jobs created in the arriere paye are artificial and will not last, e.g a lot of money was poured into Serrabonne and she feels there is not a lot for tourists to see there. (She probably does not value local culture). Some of the people working there live in Ille, thinks (Y) the gardener in Serrabonne is speculating on his land and will ruin the place with tourism, (obvious mistrust on both sides). (FF)

She would not allow me into her luxurious house, because she was not sure of my identity, was afraid I was a fake, as she believes there are lots of Drug pushers and religious freaks around. She phoned the Mayor to verify if I was who I said I was on the phone, the Mayor said she had no idea as to who I was, which was very strange as I am the only researcher in Tordères, and she knows me well. The reaction of the Mayor is as interesting as the reaction of (OO) in this affair, would appear she did not want to take responsibility/ denial. (OO)

I was speaking to her for 15 minutes outside the door waiting for the Mayor to arrive, who obviously never did. She returned from Africa two years ago, where I think she has lived most of her life. Her husband worked in Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina. she is obviously still living with the fear of Africa in her. She is young, 40, her husband now works in Perpignan. (OO)

Started the Gitotel 10 years ago, on returning from Africa he could find no work. He kept saying 'les Catalans aiment l'argent de tourism mais ils n'aiment pas les tourists'. Thinks desertification (depopulation) is taking place here and a lot of it is express government policy (DD).

He has lived in a village for the last 15 years, but himself and his family are still considered outsiders. At school where the numbers are dropping they do not even count his children. The usual response being; 'Oui bien, mais est ce qu'ils vont restent'. (FG)

Thinks society here is cosmopolitan, mixture of several societies, and has a high level of chaos. It is not just the retired foreigners that are coming here, people on sabbatical, working on the stock exchange from here, thanks to communication technology, a composer with two grand pianos who works from Ceret. This is a post industrial society, people are foot loose, powerful cultural movement. (YY)

Outsiders are not welcome, they would prefer someone with a holiday home who lives here a few months of the year than someone who lives here permanently, as they may get involved in local politics, besides they are always under their feet. He thinks this is a sign of a fragile society under threat and trying to preserve what it has, rejecting change and outside influence. (FG)

Thinks the people of the Calcina and the village get on well together, 'pas de problem'. Calcina people dont buy much in the local shops because the prices are high and poor choice. Thinks the school will go in Llauro, it is not practical there are not enough students in this little village. It is not the lack of schools and shops that have killed the sense of community, it is the TV, people no longer meet, except once a year for 14 July fete. The cafe in Llauro is not good. (W)

They think it is the retired who are functioning this Department, because they buy up expensive sites, employ builders, plumbers, electricians, gardeners, femme de menage etc. (ZZ)

Said her neighbours allow nobody in even if they are from the village, they trust nobody, she is learning fast. (OO)

Sees a future in combining agriculture and tourism. Thinks tourism needs to be kept under control or it could destroy the place with cheap souvenir shops, which is happening already. Thinks the Catalans are not efficient enough to manage tourism. (FF)

There have been a lot of improvements over time in the village here, the houses are better arranged, the village is cleaner, the roads are better, there are some large stores in Perpignan, ils ont fait du progrée commem, ca avance. (II)

They don't like the village, consider the bergerie a disgrace, dirty and attracting flies. The shepherd should be moved out of there and a parking lot put in its place. (ZZ)

They buy meat and bread locally and go to supermarket, Champion, in Perpignan for the rest. Do not buy from the local épicerie, because prices are never market, poor choice of produce, and things are often stale. (II)

The relations between the people here is often a question of individuals. She has a cousin who lives here now and she is more modern, and has nothing to do with the village, she tells her to at least say hallo, her cousin has 'l'esprit du grand ville'. The other factor is that the two groups have very little in common, they live completely different lives. The people of the Calcina with their big houses and capital, the people of the village with their little houses and vineyards. 'C'est une question de gross Capital aussi'. (II)

Like all the rich outsiders here they complain of not being able to find any one to do a days work around the house. They believe the unemployed have it too good and there is no incentive to work. (ZZ)

They commented on (A) entre this morning to the 'Fete du Village', neither do they like X & X, two other women from the village. They consider (A) a bad influence on them, they are now takeing to leaving her door open, also spoke about the cut of her dog, full of ticks. They cleaned it and she warned then to keep away from it. (ZZ)

Theme: Perceived Impact of Tourism and Outsiders on Local Culture.

Drug problem is new in Llauro, 3- 5 years, it is linked to the unemployed from the cities who come to occupy empty houses in the country. They live on the dole and do not integrate with the locals. They live exactly like they would in town, never go for walks, listen to loud music all day etc. (P)

Llauro no longer safe due to urban delinquents stealing cars etc. Was never like that before, the local community has changed. (A)

For him tourism here can never be more than a complement to agriculture, unless they want to turn the place into a disneyland. Monoculture of tourism is dangerous and degrading. It is true that the locals do not profit much from tourism, car ils n'ont pas l'esprit commercial, if they had they would sell their agricultural products better, we don't know how to sell. (SS)

People around here call all tourists/outsideers, Doryphores, and consider all outsiders to be the same, be they French, German, Belg etc. (G)

Locals generally do not like tourists, but that is true of small communities everywhere always, 'contre les etrangers'. There was a strong dislike of Spanish after the war, now it's the Portuguese who are discriminated against. (D)

'Les retraites ne sont pas une vie rural, si il n'y a pas un tissue vivant social de l'ecole, post etc, les villages sont mort. (DE)

There are a lot of foreigners in Oms, mostly retired, they do not bother us, some of them partake in the life of the village, mostly 'trosem age', others they never see. It all depends on the individual, but on the whole there is no problem here like in Montauriol. (NN)

It is the urban unemployed, 'en chomage aux soleil', who have brought the drugs and theft problem to the villages. It is a big problem in Llauro, sometimes the young locals are not strong enough to resist and are corrupted by it. (N)

The unemployed are not well integrated, they do not want to work, prefer to sit at home and touch State aid, an unmarried woman with a child can get more than if she worked plus her partner on the dole also. They do not want to work in the vineyards, prefer to sit at home. (P)

For them working the land is a 'metier noble et pas le tourism, mais ce depend aux gens aussi'. Tourists are accepted for economic reasons, but 'au fond' they dont like them, their customs and way of thinking is too different to themselves.(O)

We are living in a cultural desert. The tourists want bigger roads rather than smaller cars. They leave the city for tranquillity, but when they come here they bring the city with them. Town planning here is very bad. (GG)

Thinks the retired are the kiss of death for the country, they are non producers and non consumers. (GG)

A little tourism is good but it is wrong to sacrifice everything to a seasonal trick that lasts only a few months. Tourism can also be very], last year she was shocked with what she saw in the high mountains in Cerdagne, which she had not visited for 10 years, the ski resorts have 'assassinated the mountains'. (AA)

Thinks that if it were only tourism here it would destroy the place,- 'ille de vacance'. Must garde the local presence and agriculture for character. (VV)

The locals are jealous and petty among themselves, but always unite against the common enemy, 'les étrangers'. (N)

Unemployed from up North coming South for sun -drifters-, 'vivre leur miser au soleil'. (A)

Mass tourism does affect local community & culture. (G)

One of them was imprisoned by the Germans during WW2, he was in a labour camp. Said 'he never thought then he would see the day when his garden in St. Marsal would be bousing that of a Germans', which it is today. (CD)

Catalans deliberately wanted to concentrate the tourists on the coast, salt marshes, that were previously never cultivated or lived in, mosquito grounds. O.K for the tourist Doryphores to live there, but not in the Aspre, the reserve of the Ancestors, sacred. (L)

Three people from Llauro were put in prison for drugs recently, one died of Aids there. He does not take drugs but his friends do. The reason the trafficants set up in Llauro is because it is out in country but near Céret where they have a lot of clients. The wife of garage owner in Perpignan also spoke of big drug problem in schools in Perpignan. Her children go to night clubs in Spain where it is freely available. They speak Catalan with their friends (parents from Paris), 'C'est la mode'. (P)

Village 'dormitoir' not good, do not shop locally. (G).

He is very annoyed with the other German woman with two holiday homes in the village who has constructed a swimming pool. That is not the ambience his tourists are looking for. He fears it will attract the wrong clientele, already had problems with the drunk English people, carousing all night. (A) had to get up and turn over a table there. (VV)

The NEO-RURAUX.

Theme: Perception of the Neo-Ruraux and their Efforts.

Thinks the neo-ruraux are not serious. She has seen hundreds of them come and go, they set themselves up with a few sheep and goats, but they know nothing about the animals which often die of illness, one guy with a big herd got a nervous break down. Worse than the hippies are the 'marginoux', they often have a mauvais esprit. (AB)

Said there are not many hippies here. 'C'est fini, les gens de '68 ne tiennent pas le cou' (NN)

Thinks neo-ruraux could survive here if they find clients for their biological produce. The future depends on the political representatives of the Department and their vision. (VV)

The neo-ruraux will not succeed in their agricultural endeavours in the arrière pays, it is too difficult for them and they never stay long. (P)

Considers the neo-ruraux as folklore farmers. Was annoyed over the rally in Taillet, here is not a reserve. The neo-ruraux live too closed in on themselves and that is where their aggression towards others comes from. For a large part they live from State assistance, eg school transport, schools, roads, electricity. 'Ils ont moins de moyen et plus de temp, moins de desir et plus de discours'. (V)

The Mayor of Taillet said the hippies who blocked the rally should be gasses. As a result of blocking the rally, the local organiser and his accomplices, got several threatening phone calls, saying they were going to come at night shoot them and burn down their shacks. (QQ)

Came here for better quality life, idea of weaving their own clothes and growing their own food, besides they had nothing in Paris. (A)

Thinks the hippies (same as neo-ruraux) are living on illusions. they are not real Eleveurs, for that one has to be a slave. (AA)

Among the neo-ruraux there are two types those who are serious and honest and come here to work the land and the very marginals who bring a bad life of drugs etc, One should help the first type, but we do not need the second. Thinks it would be very difficult for anyone to live from agriculture in the arrière pays, the work is very hard and prices for their products do not reflect that. (Z)

The hippy epoch of '68 is over, pas sérieux. A lot of them came here but after 10 years 3/4 of them had left, they started off with a few goats, but eventually they wanted cars etc. They did not invest much here, they left the mas fall into ruin, now no one will rent to them, they were not workers. Cette epoch est fini. The neo-ruraux who survived may have kept the look like the Dutchman in Argelés, but they have become a lot more serious, he is now a 'Chef d'entreprise'. (U).

Thinks the neo-ruraux are only 'bricoleurs, ca ne va pas plus loin de ca, ils ne restent pas long temp, jamais stable. (S)

Does not think that the neo-ruraux, vont remettre le paye en marche. They stick the pace for the first five years, but after that they wants cars,- venette, assurance etc, and they have to return to the cities to find work that allows those things. They brought a lot of drugs to here, mal vue, now they are everywhere, even in the lycees. (T)

Agriculture is definitely finished here. The hippies tried to work the land, but they came from the city and knew nothing about agriculture, they have all failed and moved on. No future with them, they are not serious. (CD)

Agriculture in the Arrière Pays is definitely finished, the neo-ruraux are not serious, they will not succeed, all they did was brought drugs here. 'Les gens les regardent comme quelque chose qui faire rire'. (W)

Intolerance is also shown towards the neo-ruraux, they will not accept that they could use different practices to the ones they failed with. (UU)

There are two types of Neo-Ruraux, the extreme idealists who came here without any projects, and those who are 'plus sur terre', who come with well researched projects, they often succeed. (HH)

Between 1975 and 1988 the place was inundated by hippies/marginaux. The extreme marginals that took over Serrabonne caused extreme antagonism locally. With time the extreme marginals were eliminated, those who remained worked hard trying to make a living from goats cheese, pate, honey, etc always selling in local markets, 'circuit court'. Their products never reached the European or international market. They have done an important job for miserable results, he thinks the EEC should help them. (Y)

They try to pretend the neo-ruraux do not exist,- they will not stay long only temporary, passing through, no point in invest in schools or school transport for them, they will be gone tomorrow. The locals see them as a 'marche arrière'. (N)

Thinks the neo-ruraux are not serious, only one he knows is (A) (what about all his Catalan cousins, including himself and his sister?) and does not think he has succeeded, il ne sort pas des difficultié. He has the impression that these people do not work well, and often live from State aid, or have rich parents who send them a check every month. Le travail du mas est tres difficilé, tres difficile a reussir. Thinks they all move on eventually. Interestingly does not consider himself a neo-ruraux, even though he is doing something very similar and left the city for the same reason, but he says he is from this community. (P)

Did not know much about the neo-ruraux, called then hippies, said there were not many of them around here, but like every one else they were welcome? Had the impression that they were well educated and often came from rich families and came here for an alternative tranquil life. (R)

Ten years ago he believed in the Neo-ruraux, but not anymore, they are not serious, they are also pacifists who want a return to the past, et le reve de la terre. They are dreamers aided by drugs. (V)

Does not think the Mas Cane will succeed in the long term, OK for the first five years with Government aid, but after that what? He finds their enterprise very strange because they buy in their raw material, - ducks and grain, rather than producing their own. This reflects his own mentality, where everything forms part of a complete cycle. His self-sufficient ideas are far removed from the reality of present day market forces. (T)

Theme: Neo-Ruraux Philosophy and Reasons for Coming to the Aspre.

Comes from the épicerie in Llauro, studied history at university in Toulouse, but decided not to finish her studies as it was not for her. Herself and her husband made a conscious decision to return to the land, for the quality of life, and because they are very attached to their arriere paye. They live from polyculture and by working a lot for others to make ends meet, which is a struggle but is their choice and they have no regrets. (CC)

Leader of the neo-ruraux in Taillet, was studying philosophy in Montpellier for a while but realized it was not for him, found himself owning Mas Roque, with his girlfriend and 4 children and their main source of income coming from market gardening, which he claims is not really enough to live on. Both come from rich families, and some would say they could not live like this without family backing. They are a bit idealistic, but have the courage to live their dreams and very passionately. (QQ)

There are several types of neo-ruraux; (a) those who come to work and integrate well in the community, ils apportent quelque chose, (b) Those who don't want to integrate like (QQ), they want to remain 'contre la société', (c) the very marginal Babacool en chômage, qui vive grâce à l'Etat. (WW)

Were part of the hippy movement but with financial backing after selling house in Cornwall. Had the idea of living outside society without getting bogged down, admits it was a form of escapism, returning to the earth, working with goats. The reality did not always live up to their expectations, it is actually very hard to live here and a lot have failed and left. (FF)

Nationality of the Neo-ruraux is of no importance, what is important is their willingness to work the land and maintain an active presence in the 'arrière pays'. (CC)

Difficult to generalize about the neo-ruraux, some are very marginal, others manage to live from their products (U), others have white colour jobs in Perpignan. (QQ)

Thinks the solution is with the neo-ruraux, because the farmers children don't want to stay on the land; only one in eight farmers sons remain on the land in France. The nationality of the neo-ruraux is not important, if they are prepared to work here, learn the language and integrate. Les jeunes se mélangent bien. (WW)

Struck by difference in environment in Haute Aspre - St Marsal, garrigue here known as land. He describes himself as Spanish, born in Barcelona, but brought up in a village in the plain of the Aspre. Started out as a mason but could find no work in Perpignan, was a very difficult time, all his friends gone to work and everyday was like Sunday for him. His father, a mechanic, was nearing retirement, he had always kept 4 or 5 sheep and one day he told his son that he would help him get together a herd of sheep rather than being on the dole, so that is how he started out. (LL)

His parents are Catalan, but he was born and brought up in Paris. The family house and all their savings were swept away in the flood of 1940, after that his mother could not cope, and had to leave the place. His wife is half Israeli, half Catalan, she is a speech therapist in Céret and brings in half (if not more?) of the income. He used to work for the unions in Paris and still has big 'syndicate' connections. (WW)

Does not consider himself outside the system, he pays impot and tax and insurance for cars like every one else. (QQ)

He did not come here for the sun, but for the culture. He likes the chauvinist way society is organized here; women minding the children at home this is why the society is so wholesome (he is divorced). He was brought up in Cyprus, (his father was a high ranking UN military official there) and could never fit in England, which he considers a sinking ship. (YY)

The hippies who came here in '68 have mostly left except for a few artisans near Céret, because the realization of their dream was too difficult. (I)

Brought up in Paris but his parents are from Llauro, he returned there by choice to work the land. Himself and his wife (Catalan brought up in Perpignan, but whose family also come from Llauro), love their work and life here but find making ends meet very difficult. (H)

Brought up in Perpignan, but his parents come from Llauro and after trying several jobs and courses he returned there to work 8 ha of vines,- wanted to be his own boss and for quality of life, tranquillity, and to get away from the urban impasse. (P)

Seems very enterprising, started out with nothing, describes himself as a, 'nouveau neo-ruraux'. Comes from a village near the Aspre, and said he could not live in a city 'avec le beton partout'. (U)

Came here from Germany with her father as part of '68 back to the earth movement, and lived in a Mas near Bould d'Amont. It was extremely difficult to make ends meet, her father had to go and work in London for periods of time. Lived a sort of self-sufficient life for nine years, rearing ducks, rabbits, sheep, pigs, cherry trees and working for others, esp. vendage on the plain. It was extremely hard work, and said she could not do it now, but it was very satisfying. Before the locals only worked in the plain to earn money for coffee and sugar, but they needed electricity and a car, and for that have to have an outside salary. (X)

Came here twenty years ago as part of the hippy movement with the vision of a better world, but as he gets older is more and more pessimistic and does not like the way things are going, eg. the difference in pension for Gendarme and Farmer is not just.(A).

We were joined by a young English guy, her daughters boyfriend. He had the usual blaze answer, that it is better to live here than on the dole in London for £45 a week; if one is hungry they could always live from the forest, more of return to the good old days. He did not look as if he or his designer clothes would last long in the forest. (X)

Neo-ruraux live very difficultly, but they choose to come here because they are disappointed with 'l'impasse industriel et la manque de contact humain'. Those whose parents come from here, like (H), are more accepted by the community, but the locals still don't approve of what they are doing, nor do they want them to succeed, as they themselves were defeated by the Aspre. (N)

This neo-ruraux child (21 years), dislikes leaving the village and does not relate well to teachers and students at the University in Perpignan. She said they are not encouraged to think for themselves rather follow their teachers. I think she feels apart. (A)

Their vision of life is to live well mais vivre dans l'environnement.(H)

This Scotsman came to Boule d'Amont in the sixties as part of the hippy movement, has lived here twenty years. (GG)

What attracted them here was the feeling of freedom, anything seemed possible, also the attraction of somewhere foreign and in the sun. Stressed their financial backing gave them a certain security, unlike many of the other neo-ruraux who arrived with nothing. They did not really work the land, they were more interested in doing up houses. Moved to Mas Xatar 18 months ago, bought its 57 ha and house for 72,000 F. (FF)

Theme: Neo-Ruraux Experience of living in the Aspre.

Moved around a lot, before had restaurant in another village higher up in Aspre and also made cheese there, before that was in the market gardening (tomatoes) business, now doing duck pate. Moved to Oms to be nearer to the markets, Ceret, Thuir, le Boulu, Perpignan, even Paris. (U)

They had no problem with the local people, for the first few years they keep their distance and check you out, but when they saw that she was serious and working hard they accepted her. They were tired of seeing people coming and going, the hippies that took over Serrabonne caused a lot of local antagonism, but they did not associate her with those hippies. Eventually had to leave the mas as the owner wanted to sell it, usual story. (X)

The locals don't like marginals they consider neo-ruraux as hippies, they don't want them to succeed, see them as marche arriere. Their idea of progress is the American model. (N)

(WW) talks a lot, but on that Saturday morning it was his wife who after working all week in Céret, had to go to the market in Céret to sell their produce, eggs and illegal cheese. (WW)

The locals have nothing but contempt for the neo-ruraux, as they have nothing to offer them, besides they don't want them to succeed on their own land where they themselves have failed. (N)

Initially they were involved with a group of 11 people growing medicinal herbal plants, they had problems with the commercial side, were producing too much for local markets and not enough for big Swiss company. They also had problems among themselves, she thinks it is very difficult to work in a group, so they dropped the whole thing. They are now doing up this old farm house and hope to get into the Gite business with another English couple. Still very interested in alternative things. (FF)

Moved here for better quality life, initially worked the vines, then got a herd of sheep together. Their first herd had to be slaughtered due to brucellosis, both of them also contacted it, very difficult time, his wife thought of moving back to Paris. (A)

To survive here have to try lots of different things, started off with medicinal plants but that did not work due to concurrence with Africa. Initially she wanted to do élevage de vache, but there were too many problems with the locals, and also could not conform to EEC cheese making laws. (CC)

Thinks the reason the hippies failed in the Arriere Paye was because they were not cut out for the land, not physically strong and enduring enough. They dreamt of living in communes but in reality very few of them worked, someone had to dig the septic tank and grow food. Thinks the dreams of the hippies needed either a slave or robotic society to succeed. (GG)

Three types of people in Haute Aspre; a) Professionals who work in Perpignan, b) retired outsiders au soleil, c) neo-ruraux. They accept the first two better than the third, the locals wait for the moment they will fail and move on. They do not see them as the sign of the future. (N)

Hippies here were treated very tolerantly by the police, he used to grow marawana in Boule d'Amont, a lot of the old people used to make teasans out of it. He once had a box of seeds drying in front of the fire when the local Gendarme called, who just commented on the fact that he was planting his tomatoes early this year. Thinks the police in this Department are still tolerant. (GG).

Does not consider herself a neo-ruraux, that term is a bit pejorative. When she started out here the people treated her like an extra terrestrial, a hippy ecologist, and that what she was doing was not normal, even her family were not at all happy, wanted her to finish university and become a teacher. She was ignored at the cherry meetings in Céret for the first 6 years, treated as if she did not exist. (CC)

The neo-ruraux and indigenous population do not mix, but the neo's have a strong sense of community among themselves. (N)

The first few years were very difficult, it took him 3 years to find a mas en fermage, nobody wants to rent, one has to buy or nothing. The owner of his Mas is 'con', understands nothing, lives in Perpignan and owns the 'Cafe le Tour' enterprise, he comes here just once a year. There are 60 ha of land going with this Mas in Saint Marsal, initially there was only 4 ha of prairie, but he cleared another 12 - 13 ha and constructed a plastic bergerie. His lease is for nine years, after that he has no security, would like to buy, but don't know if owner will sell. Prairie agricole worth about 4,000 F/Ha and 'land' 2,000 F/ha. (LL)

His duck pate enterprise is thriving, we have got into the defeatist habit now of saying that nothing works, mais c'est pas vrai, il faut osser. (U)

In the end tout le monde s'en fou. They feel very alone and isolated here, they feel they can't beat the system. (H)

He was a neo-ruraux for 15 years and had a very successful goats cheese business, now thinks that is all 'pie in the sky', dreamers. He now regrets not having sent his children to school. Thinks the schools here are very good, emphasis on intellectual excellence. He almost killed himself working with the goats, trying to prove something to his father. (YY)

THE PAST

Theme: Agriculture.

In the Middle ages Boule d'Amont was famous for its 'boeuf grass', (fat beef), because of its rich grass. After that there was a change in climate. (WW)

Avant c'était le paradi, the houses were full of rats because the harvest, animals, food and people all lived under the one roof. Produced all ones own food, meat, sausages, pain de ble. At night played cards with neighbours. (BB)

In the past we were content with 'peu de chose, c'était l'autarchy, un peu de maize, pomme de terre, siegle (rye), olives, et elevage de vache et mouton. (MM)

When he arrived here twenty years ago all along the river was full of house gardens. (HI).

Desertification in the Aspre started with the arrival of the train in the valley of the Têt in 1865, that provoked a change in agriculture from olives, cereal, and sheep in irrigated parcels to market gardening and fruit trees. By consequence the change in cropping caused the break up of the large Mas system in the plain into smaller parcels with increased need for labour, which was supplied by the Haute Aspre. (V)

When first arrived here 20 years ago they were paid for work in vineyards by wine and lodgings. People in Tordères and Llauro were very poor, lived on 6 or 7 goats, garden and seasonal work. The viticole villages were more prosperous. (A)

Before could live well from 3 ha of vines, now need 20 ha. Must admit that before one lived modestly, there has been a change in values. Now everyone wants to live like the Gendarmes en retraite. (Z)

In 1870 there was a 'crise agricole due aux premiere air industriel, the arrival of the railway, the agricultural crisis was pushed by the First World War. After which there were less men, unmarried women moved out, exode rural. In XIX century there were ten times more people here than now, c'etait dur partout. Agriculture in the plain was the same as here before the arrival of the train, after that the Aspre could not compete with the plain. (Y)

Between the wars there was an extraordinary evolution here. Before people here were not rich, lived from 3 - 4 ha vines, le potager, olives, poultry, it was autarchy. A cette epoch le vin fait parti de l'alimentation, meme les enfants le bouvaient avec l'eau,- le vin rouge ordinaire. (EE)

In the eighteenth century viticulture came to the Basse Aspre, the intermediate zone specialised in cork and the Haute Aspre in chestnut trees (stakes and casks for the vines), and elevage. 'C'etait un economie d'echange'. The arrival of the train had also a big impact on the spread of vines on the plain. (V)

Serrabonne/Casafabre (550m) is at the limit for vines and olives. Before around here there was a lot of irrigation along the rivers, used for the household vegetable garden and maize, but there were no irrigation canalization due to strong slopes. Good use was made of all the water sources, rivers, springs etc in the past. (Y)

The 1914 war was not the cause of desertification, it just accelerated it. The French Revolution 1789, left no trace, there was simply a change in hands of ownership but the agricultural system and structure remained the same. The labourer 'journallie' remained because there were no other possibilities. The arrival of the train in the irrigated valley of the Têt transformed all that, for the first time the people of the Aspre could make a living elsewhere. (V)

Theme: Society and Family in the Past.

He started fantasising about the past, 'Avant c'etait le paradi', there was a strong sense of community, the village was one big family, ploughing the wheat and oats fields with horses, the fantastic gardens by the river now covered in swimming pools. Eleven children used to attend the school in Tordères, they always irrigated the gardens after school. There was respect for girls then, had to court them 5-6 years before asking their father for their hand, one dare not flirt or take advantage of them. The husband was normally 3 -4 years older, and had done the military service, which lasted 3 - 4 years. (BB)

Avant il y avait l'esprit Arab, comme dans toute la Méditerranée, - les femmes au travail. Le marie etait bien macho, it would be a dishonour for him to help his wife. The women worked outside and inside. The husband was the boss, first a woman belonged to her father, after to her husband and if he died the sons dominated, women

were always submissive to men. There were often three generations under the one roof, the grandfather remained the master, on his death the property was handed down to the oldest son. (EE)

Religion was more important then, it was mal vue de ne pas allay a l'église and scandalous to present oneself for marriage without having been baptised. The place of religion has, like the role of the family, also changed, now our ideas come from TV and its urban model of progress. (EE)

Said when he arrived here 20 years ago, the village was in ruin, a few old people hanging on to die, living off autarchy. People now talk about a recession, but they forget where they are coming from. There has been a big change in values, cars are now seen as a minimum necessity, 20 years ago did not have bicycles. He wonders if we can sustain our present standard of living here. (VV)

Before the second world war they started le vin de Granach, V.D.N, and thus sales improved. At the same time l'exode des enfants a commence, those with a little education joined the Customs, Gendarmerie, Post Office, Railways, looking for a better life in town. Les villages restaient rempli sur eux meme, the people of Fourques got married to the people of Terrats. La modernization etait un grand eclatement pour le village. (EE)

Remarked on how times have changed. In their youth they worked the land and the mines in La Bastide which was very difficult, they were often submerged in water and worked only with a crow bar. The ore was transported by over head pulley to Arles sur Tet and from there by train to the middle of France. After the 1914 war the mines were closed, not economical. (CD)

Avant c'était manifique, maintenant tout est pourri, chacun est egoist. It hurts him to see Tordères now days with swimming pools over les belles jardins. Ce n'est plus Tordères pour lui. He sold the family house, half owned by his sister, and part of their field for the construction of a maison secondaire. I noticed right next to that house is the family tomb, if he is so attached to the land, family and past why did he do that? Dream about the past but profit from the present (XYZ). (BB)

It is not good to remain too much in the past, things have to evolve, si non la nostalgie est un manque de libertie. Il faut passer au tamis les valeurs et gardent un cadre de vie. If he remained in the past with his work he would be still making the traditional rustic black ceramics, which is the only one the Catalans appreciate. But his work has evolved, now he makes very fine delicat art, plein de suppress. (RR)

There was an interesting life here 20 years ago and a strong sense of community. There was always a difference between the people of the plain and people of the mountains. Llauro is still influence of the plain, Oms is a mountain village. (II)

In the past the house and children were the domain of the women, but she could not write a cheque until recently, and it was very rare for her to own anything, the land passed to her descendants. Divorce was a dishonour for her and the children, besides only women from rich families could divorce, otherwise she had no means of supporting herself. (EE)

In 1792 there were 603 people living from the land in Oms, In 1982 there were 220 of which less than twenty worked the land. (T).

About 20 years ago 150 ha of Oms was bought by ten ex-congo Belg, most of the new houses now in the village are owned by Germans & French. There are two families on RME (dole), before the unemployed were not liked. (T)

The causes of change in the Aspre are in general not interior but exterior. (a) In the middle ages (600 years ago), here was a frontier between Islam and Christianity, forests surrounded the castles, and the forests were exploited to smelt iron ores. When there was no more forest, the Aspre was turned into prairies and sheep put on them, which in turn were transformed into wool and fabrics. Forest transformed into iron knives, prairies into shirts, none of which was consumed 'sur place', they were for external markets. (B) When Louis XIV went to war with Philip IV of Spain, Spain lost and the Aspre became part of France with grave economic and cultural consequences. Il y avait une crise et un déplacement de population où il trouve du travail. En partant le paysage de nouveau se modifie, la forêt a repris. What we see today is the result of all those past happenings. (V)

Thinks we worked better before, life was better before, better quality, plus libre, plus calme, plus tranquille. (R)

When asked if their vision of the past was a bit idealistic, they admitted that there was a lot of poverty and ignorance and disease then, but they believe in the values of the past, because if they don't work in harmony with their environment, what else is there for them but le chômage. (See the past agriculture as harmonious). (H)

Before in the village every one knew every one else, (face to face society), they knew the hypocrites, those who stole etc, they were accepted in the sense that every one had a place and they were controlled by the community. (T)

Avant l'esprit de famille était très fort, l'honneur de porte le non de famille était très fort. Women normally never complained, were expected to suffer in silence and the affairs of the family were secret, never to be discussed outside the house. (EE)

Origin of desertification here is Latifundium, the large fortified estates of 300 years ago (see notes). The Treaty of Pyrenees has had a big impact. We have passed from the Seigniorial Feudal system to capitalism, with the same affect, the same power structure. (V)

A cette epoch ils vivaient comme les ignorants, sans education, avec l'esprit tres renferme et etroit. C'etait l'enfer pas le paridi. Il y avait beaucoup de movais esprit, une fille ne peut pas traverse le place du village (sauf le dimanch, fete) a cause de bavette. If she saluted or spoke to a man they would say they were having an affair. Even herself when she started going to Perpignan without her mother to see a bit of the outside world, the gossip around the village was that she was going to meet a man. There is still some of that 'mauvais esprit' left. People lived too much on top of each other, there were too many restrictive habits. TV has opened up their minds to the outside world. (EE)

The family was normally self sufficient in labour except for the 'vendage' (grape harvest) when they got the help of a cousin or hired a work man. Three or fourth cousins considered themselves of the same family, and for deaths, marriages, baptism they would all show up. (EE)

Thinks the quality of life was better before, one could live well from 120 h/lit of wine a year, bien sure il n'y avait pas de voitures, mais les gens etaient contente. (T)

First people left for the Plain, Thuir Ille sur Tet, Bouleternère, some bought land there, as some people from those small towns had moved towards the city, Perpignan, Le Boulou. It was the generation after that went further afield, towards Montpellier, Toulouse, Marseille, Paris. Donc ils ont ete poussent les unes par les autre. After the rural exodus the Aspre returned to 'un etat sauvage', but not all at once. Those who remained were of two types, a) those who lacked imagination, and (b) those who were too attached to their to their land and place. (Y)

Must never forget that life in the Aspre before was very poor and difficult, it was far from the Paradise, Adrien Cazeilles writes about. She thinks life is better now, 'il faut vivre dans son temp'. (EE)

Life in the past was especially difficult for women, there was a lot of infant mortality, women often had 11 children of which 5 might survive into adulthood. Mother commonly died at 44 years of age. Doctors were never called, they were too expensive, the people used herbal medicines. If one saw the doctor at a house it was the sign that someone was going to die. (EE)

THE FUTURE

Theme: Agricultural Future.

For the place as a whole the future does not look good; the viticulteurs will be forced to make quality wine or sell everything to the estate agents. Big proprietors are also condemned, the future is with le petit de qualite. Thinks the arrière pays will stabilize much as it is, but there is no question of agriculture there. The neo-ruraux are courageous, they will continue to do a little, but will never have a big impact there. (DD)

Future is with Europe they will be forced to sort out their problems.(G)

He thinks the future is 'pourri', we will be obliged to return to certain values. La terre est la pour nourrir l'homme pas pour son loisir. (BC)

His young nephew said he had absolutely no idea what the future in agriculture at Mas Daloum was going to be like for him. Said he decided to work the land because he enjoys it and also 'les villes sont noir maintenant', and his friends there have to fight their way to the top and trample others, he would hate that sort of competition. Pour l'avenir je ne sais rien'. (T)

The future is in mechanization, the viticulteurs will have to adapt to the 'machine à vendage', labour is too expensive. (W)

Thinks that the future here in the Haute Aspre will be very difficult, inspite of all her efforts, she has the feeling that it does not depend on her, feelings of powerlessness /impuissance. Thinks the future here will ultimately depend on decisions taken in Brussels by people who neither understand life or agriculture here, will not even depend on French Ministry of agriculture. (CC)

Now they must give a chance to the young like her, qui va reprendre les chose en gardant leur patrimony. The Catalans are very selfish, they have no vision of the future for their children, they no longer understand the world, they are lost in the instability of the present. (CC)

She has no idea as to what the future holds, if one has their health it is the most important thing. Ce n'est pas l'agriculture qui va faire vivre les gens ici. (MM)

The future in viticulture is definitely with the 'chef d'entreprise'. There will be less people on the land, but they will be better trained. There will also be more land abandoned in the Department. Subsistence farming out, capitalist enterprise in. (GH)

Definitely sees a future in viticulture,- continuation of the present for him. (F)

Thinks the future here must be a mix of everything, but not uniquely tourism. monoculture in any form cannot work here, it will have to be polyculture and always élevage here. (WW)

Thinks there is a future for agriculture in the arrière pays, but they must create their own system, biological produce and sell direct. (GG)

Thinks the only future for the Arrière pays is productive agriculture and he sees the neo-ruraux playing an important part in that. (A).

Thinks things will stabilize in the future, Europe will react to US competition, there will have to be a recovery or else outright war. (I)

Times are very difficult, we are saturated here, between tourism, agriculture, unemployment, nothing works well, everything is difficult. We are saturated, I fear for the future, my sons are only doing odd jobs around the village, as there is nothing but unemployment for them in the city. Fears the future. (Z)

Sees the future of agriculture in Europe with farmers being given a 'Carte Professionnel', allowing them to produce so much and they will be paid to stay idle or care for the environment the rest of the time. (I)

She sees the future with 'double emploi', women working outside the home, or else big mechanized vineyards, requiring a lot of investment. (EE)

Thinks the future will be difficult, agriculture in the arrière pays is finished, there is a living to be made from élevage, but the young don't want to work so hard, and the townies have neither 'la force ou connaissance'. (NN)

Says he is very pessimistic about the future. There is no future for profitable agriculture here, it is desertification and more depopulation that awaits the place. (T)

Thinks the viticole villages of Terrats and Fourques will eventually become like the Haute Aspre, 'en friche', due to the uprooting of the vines - its's inevitable. (G)

The indigenous population sees the future of the Aspre as total desertification, and the neo-ruraux efforts as meaningless. (N)

Thinks future in viticulture is going to be more difficult for large exploitants, the future in wine is in quality rather than quantity. Viticole as a sole full time occupation will not exist in the future, need a complement to it, but there is absolutely no other outlet to it in the Aspre. Predicts a lot more 'arrachage de vignes' in the future (G\$).

The future is with the machine, men are tired of physical work, they avoid it if possible, thus there is no point in putting H-Aspre in production when better, mechanizable land remains idle on the plain. (S)

'Les gens ne croient pas eux meme dans le pays', they themselves have condemned the place. (N)

Theme: Future for Tourism and Society.

Thinks the future here will be linked to the future of everywhere else. There will be small entrepreneurs without knowledge of how to export their products, wine of different qualities, but especially tourism and the retired. Values have changed we are too bogged down in consumerism, profits, money, quantity rather than quality. (II)

Is pessimistic about the way society is going, but thinks the young will be better equipped to cope with it. We need to be educated for the leisure society we are creating. (GG)

Thinks there is a good future here for quality tourism. Thinks farmers will have to adapt to the 'gardien de l'environnement' system, si c'est necessaire pour vivre il faut le faire. (KK)

This English neo-ruraux believes agriculture in the arriere pays is finished, he is now going into the tourist industry, trying to sub-let his house. Most of his friends are bourgeois outsiders. (YY)

This English neo-ruraux couple see the future for here as unfortunately a lot more tourism, they themselves are entering that business, building swimming pool to attract international tourists. (FF)

Thinks the future will be uniquely tourism and 'les étrangers', unless there is a 'bouleversement'; if people were hungry and needed food they might return to the land. (AB)

Sees no future for agriculture in H-Aspre, the future is solely with tourism, here will become like the coast. (P)

The future for the Aspre will not be in agriculture, ca fait parti de la vie souvenir, but in maintenance of the environment, and the visual consumption of the landscape. (V)

Thinks tourism and holiday homes are all that are evolving here, values have changed. Thinks the future for Montauriol will be that of a delux residential and holiday village,

without local activity. (S)

Future for the Arriere Pays is with tourism, holiday, retirement and commuter homes. It is they who repair all the abandoned houses in the villages. (W).

One has to be realistic, history shows that evolution is about change. The mentality and way of life of the people who lived in the Aspre 200 years ago is not the same as those who lived there 100 years ago, which in turn is not the same as those who live there today. One has to adapt to survive whether one likes it or not. For the moment agriculture is finished here. (V)

Things are changing too fast to speculate on the future, 'nous sommes a telle niveau de changement que on ne sait plus rien'. Thinks that here will probably become a place for the retired, 'les villes sont dange maintenant'. (AA)

Life was hard in the past especially in the mountains, but now with unemployment we cannot maintain the standard of living we have become accustomed to. (D)

He commented on how everything is becoming so unhuman, everything is automatic - rail tickets, paying for parking etc. He hates going to Perpignan, he has problems finding parking, (which he refuses to pay for), besides the people there frighten him, so rude to each other, they are all stressed and all looking for an advantage to make a penny. (A)

Times are very difficult, it could not be worse unless there is a rise in violence. Thinks the best option is double emploi, with a bit of agriculture, pay less impot fonciere and the woman working outside the home in administration. (Z)

They are optimistic about the future, think things will stabilize much as they are. Thankful the villages are not falling into ruin, they are much cleaner and more prosperous than before. (TT)

LOCAL POLITICS.

Theme: Outsiders Involvement, 'The Vote'.

The outsiders also create a political dilemma, in Conseil Municipal in Terrats there are 7 farmers and 4 non farmers, so the agriculturalists still have the deciding power, (at which he smiled). (R)

This German, who lives from renting holiday homes in the Aspre pays his impot tax here, 25% of the revenue from his houses, but he is not a resident and cannot vote here. (VV)

There is high unemployment in the Department, most of which he thinks comes from outside. There is a big problem with those Northerners who come here to live their misery in the sun. 50% of the Department's budget is spent on social security, 80% of which comes from the Government, but the remaining 20% is a burden for the Department. (Y)

This Belgian couple who have had a holiday home in the Aspre for the last twenty years, are not involved in local politics and have never voted here. They do not have the right to vote, they are not French citizens. He thinks if one owns the land here they should have the right to vote, Maastricht may change that; 'Si les chose sont laissent au gens du village rien bouge'. (II)

Said there are lots of Spanish Catalans or their descendants in all the villages around here, who came during the civil war of 1936. The Catalans were very disappointed the T.G.V from Madrid went to Seville rather than to Barcelona, purely due to politics. (DE)

The history of here has been permanent opposition to the state. (FG)

No problem with outsiders taking over village politics in Calmeillas, even though most of the houses in the village are outsider holiday homes. There are only two people they consider outsiders on the Conseil Municipal, both of whom have lived here for over 25 years and are Catalans from Perpignan. (note the outsider definition). She said they don't want women on the Conseil Municipal, they are actively discriminated against. (X)

In Llauro there are 255 people of which 190 are strangers. There are 11 people on the Conseil Municipal, 6 from Llauro and 5 outsiders. The day that the outsiders will gain the majority on the Conseil Municipal 'il faut se mefier'. As Mayor she finds her role of mediating between the two camps very difficult. (Z)

The locals resent very much when the outsiders, who make up a substantial part of the Communes population get involved in local politics. The elections for the Conseil Municipal are very important. Here in Llauro the outsider vote is important and the Mayor has to play all sides. The result is that a lot of people on the Conseil Municipal are not known in the village, even though they are supposed to be representing us, we never see them. (P)

A lot of the outsiders cannot vote in Llauro, because they are not nationalized in France. La vote exterieur n'est pas vrai, meme si il y a un proprietaire de terre sur la commune, il ne peut pas vote sauf si il est inscrit dans la commune et paye les impot à Llauro. (Some of the Perpignan intellectuals talking about the 'external vote' would appear to have their fact wrong). (Z)

Theme: Local Corruption and Incompetence.

The administration treats the big and small investors very differently, when this Frenchman returned from Africa ten years ago and tried to start up the Gitotel in Tordères, he had tremendous problems with the administration, even with the Mayor of Tordères. He believes his problems were due to the fact that his is only a small enterprise and that he does not give bribes (pour boir). The village Mayor welcomed a German who wanted to construct a large tourist village in Tordères, because there was a lot of money involved, where as he was constantly harassed. He was called to the justice tribunal in Perpignan 3 or 4 times. Also when building the Gitotel he had several visits from social security personnel, checking that he was not using Black Market labour and that he was paying social security for the workers. He knows that all the big construction firms on the coast use black market labour, even the new prison in Perpignan was built on the black market. (DD)

This English couple bought this site as building land from someone in the village, but then the administration changed their mind and refused them planning permission. They think it was a tactic to get 'L'Homme Nouveau' out. (They are a sect that bought land in Llauro with a view to constructing large landing pads for extra terrestrials they believed were about to land there at any moment). So they camped on their site for years and had a long battle with the local administration, eventually with decentralization in 1984, the Mayor of Llauro granted them permission to build their holiday home. (TT)

There are a lot of political scandals here, everything is under hand and done on the black market. 'They treat you as stupid if you are not prepared to join in their illegal doings'. This English couple were initially shocked and scared, when they tried to declare their plant syndicate and have everything legal, the Chambre de Metier in Perpignan, a Government body advised them against it, because they said their enterprise was too small and the tax would be so high it would not be worth their while going into business. An obvious cultural, mentalité clash. (FF)

The communal land in Llauro was sold for lotissements; a stupid decision because the land is on a steep slope, not appropriate for building houses, all the services such as water and electricity cost a lot. (P)

Noticed in the administration a maximum of Catalans and a lot of irregularities in local administration and politics. (DD)

Gypsies and Arabs are mixed in quartier Saint Jack, in Perpignan. The two groups hate each other, but the Gypsies vote for the present Mayor and are favoured, Arabs have no vote, they are discriminated against and a lot of them end up in prison. (A)

Estate Agents and Building Contractors are often combined, they are dreadful to deal with, the Catalan Mafia, very underhand and dishonest. They only declare about half the price the property was sold for, no one knows what they do with the rest, this also works to the benefit of the seller, because the State tax on property is so high, 10% on houses and 20% on land. (FF)

Often the people here do not see the value in their patrimony, eg. the Mayor of Tordères wanted to cement the little cobbled path in front of his house. he considered that a proper clean solution, along with widen roads, and the new place publique which is very ugly. (VV)

It is common knowledge that the prison in Perpignan was built on the black market.

Thinks public services have had a large role to play in the depopulation of the Aspre, those who stay are punished, 'Tout est centraliser au nom de rentabilité'. First started by closing down schools and post offices, now even complain of the 'ramassage scolaire à Ille sur Têt. The young children from the Aspre having to spend all day there and cannot come home for lunch, would it not be better to 'déplacer une institutrice'. (Y)

Thinks the strong hunting clubs in the Aspre have too much power, they are strongly represented in all local elections. If one is trying to collect mushrooms, or work in the vineyards the same time as they are hunting, one has to give up or be bombarded with bullets. (Y)

To change the Plan d'Occupation du sol il faut l'accord du Mayor, du Conseil Municipal et une enquête extérieure. But it is possible for the Mayor to 'détourner les lois'. Every one especially those on the Conseil Municipal want their land to be designated as 'terre à abattre'. (T)

The reason this Department is marginalized and get no advantage from the EEC is because we have always been represented by incompetent easily corrupted politicians. He is very Right winged, thinks the unemployed should be forced to work. (M)

Thinks it is a mistake that with decentralisation so much power is given to the local Mayor, they get around the law forbidding construction outside of village. (H)

The only public service remaining in these village is 'le service démocratique de la Mairie'. It represents the minimum skeleton of democracy, and even at that they tried to join some communes together in the 1980s, e.g Passa, Llauro, Tordères, but it did not work. 'C'est quoi la vocation d'un service'. (Y)

Theme: Law Enforcement.

Due to decentralization in France in 1984 the village Mayors gained a lot of power. (P)

The Mayor cannot enforce the law stipulating the clearance of 50 m around houses in fire sensitive areas like the Aspre. It is politically sensitive the people don't like to be 'embetter', besides the law is rarely enforced here, people would not complain if someone built a house or septic tank without planning permission. It is the tradition here never to co-operate with the law. (W)

Enforcement of 50 m clearing around houses is difficult to enforce for political re-election reasons. (P)

The title of Mayor is mostly just prestige, they want holiday homes and outsiders, because if there are more than 50 inhabitants in a village they qualify for a lot of benefits, roads etc. (LL)

The imposition of the law obliging the clearing of 50 m around the house is politically very sensitive, the Mayors do not want to upset their voters. (H)

The law restricting building houses only within the village is open to interpretation, by local politicians and village Mayors. It is to their advantage to have large populations, because it increases taxes, and they qualify for more facilities, eg schools, post offices, roads, gymnasiums etc. (G)

The 50 m undergrowth clearance law cannot be implemented. The Mayor of Montauriel tried, he called in an enterprise to do the job when the owners refused to do it, but in the end he could not recuperate the money from the house owners and the Mairie ended up paying the bill. Besides when it is done by a machine the work is not good, it just breaks everything. (Z)