



Larzac, land of resistance

In 1971, the population of Larzac suddenly found itself facing a project of the French State which threatened its existence: the extension of the military camp.

Faced with this decision, imaginative and popular nonviolent resistance was organized for ten years around a small group of farmers supported by a vast national movement. After the rejection of the project in 1981, the largely rehabilitated local population remains vigilant in meeting the challenges of our society.



Through the struggle they led from 1971 to 1981 against the government's proposed extension of the military camp of the Cavalry, the Larzac farmers proved that a minority group can resist an authoritarian state decision. At the announcement of the expansion project, they decided to take their future in hand, and supported (but never recovered) by both the professional agricultural community and the disparate ideological forces yet converging on the theme of self-determination (self-management, anti-military, non-violent, Christians, environmentalists, regionalist Occitan), they engaged in a struggle that lasted until 1981 and ended with the abandonment of the proposed extension.

Typical for its duration, and its epilogue, but especially for its own characteristics (practice of civil disobedience, non-violence, solidarity, self-management and derision), the Larzac struggle has given the area a symbolic strong power that remains very active today. For if, for many, the story of the Larzac seemed to end with its victory in 1981, it actually continued, more discrete,

thanks to the vitality of a community that knows how to remain faithful to its original commitments. The story continued, first of all, in the 80's by planning the "liberated" land then in the 90's by designing a project by targeting management overtime, and hence allowing the Larzac to add to its point of reference with regard to "popular resistance", the "political and social laboratory".

A pilot experience

The establishment of the Civil Society of the Larzac Lands (*Societe Civile des Terres du Larzac SCTL*) and the provision of the Larzac lands from the state to the farmers and inhabitants of the plateau in April 29, 1985, allowed formalizing the end of the struggle against the extension of the military camp after announcing the shutdown of this project by President Francois Mitterand in June 1981. The original formula of the lease between the government and SCTL, guaranteed the secure use of the space for farming and peaceful ends over 99 years. Thanks to this transfer of responsibility, SCTL ensures all costs of ownership, except the right to sell.

SCTL consists of all farmers and residents, and is administered by a board of directors of 11 members which assigns operations, determines the amounts of rural leases and develops management rules between different land users (agriculture, hunting, tourism, etc.).

By its geographical location in 12 towns, it is one of the planning tools with local councils, the Regional Park of the "Grands Causses" and the civil society associations.

Conducted for 28 years, the experience of this "land lab" as imagined by Bernard Lambert is unique in France. In accordance with the acquisition of "the experience of the struggle" (1971/1981), the inhabitants of Larzac showed that the collective management of land use was not only desirable but also possible on a large scale. By allowing the revitalization of the farms (+25% of farmers), and the encouragement of installation with long-term leases, SCTL foreshadows tools that may emerge to fight against desertification and / or the artificialization of the lands.

Land assets

Located on the territory of 12 towns and 4 cantons of Aveyron

Managed area: 6378 hectares

Roads :	3 397 hectares	53,25 %
Arable lands :	816 hectares	12,80 %
Grazing woods :	2 157 hectares	33,82 %
Structures (houses and exploitations):	8 hectares	0,13%

Real estate management:

- 56 rural rentals of which 20 farms with operating headquarters
- 28 ready-to-use (provision of buildings for non-farmers)
- 11 hunting leases signed with municipal associations.

For any inquiry, please contact: SCTL - Montredon - 12100 La Roque Ste Marguerite,
sctl@larzac.org , Tel. : 05 65 62 13 39