

## Submitted Abstract

ID IMC22-FSAbstr- 227

<b>First Author</b> First Name Last Name	Irmtraud Hubatschek
<b>Submitting Author</b> First Name Last Name	Irmtraud Hubatschek
<b>Correspondence</b>	irmtraud.hubatschek@gmx.at
<b>Co-Authors</b> >> E-Mails will be not listed	
<b>Organisations</b>	Edition Hubatschek, Austria
<b>Country</b>	Austria
<b>Region</b>	Western Europe
<b>Title</b>	Corsica - A Shepherd'S Island? Characteristics And Evolution Of Ancient Mediterranean Transhumance.
<b>Keywords</b>	Corsica, Pastoralism, Transhumance, Alpages, Cheese-Fabrication
<b>Type</b>	List Of Focus Session
<b>Focus Session ID</b>	50

## Abstract

Corsica, in size comparable to Carinthia in Austria, has always been an agro-sylvo-pastoral society. The high summer temperatures have made transhumance a vital necessity in the Mediterranean, where the risk of malaria persisted until the 1960s.

An outstanding characteristic of Corsican transhumance is its “doubleness”: the summer transhumance leads up to the mountains with an intermediate stay in a “root village” during spring and fall. For the winter, the animals are moved back down into the coastal lowlands, where they hardly need any shelter thanks to the moderate climate. Most shepherds only used to need a day or two, although the scarcity of pastures meant that some had to walk for a whole week.

In the second part we see the transformations of the transhumance since the 1980s on, where the number of shepherds dwindled due to harsh living and working conditions, where motorized transhumance on forest roads took over, or the flock could even be on its own in the mountains for approx. four months. This ended the tradition of milking and cheese-making in the mountains.

My presentation also includes a chapter about recent developments: what is the price of continuing transhumance in Corsica today? There are different degrees of cooperation with tourism - from the sale of dairy products to the total immersion experience; some alpages/bergeries still function today thanks to the income from tourism.

My introduction to this topic was through spontaneous immersion: I have long been familiar with the Corsican mountains and was invited in the late 1980s by an old shepherd (J. Luciani, \*1927) to spend a month each summer with him and his family up in the mountains. My inclusion in this very traditional rural community allowed me to gain first-hand experience. Later, I conducted interviews with a number of different shepherds, old and young. I lived in Corsica for 25 years and during this time I participated in several transhumances throughout the island, wrote a book about Corsican shepherds, and co-produced a documentary film about the transhumance (excerpts could be shown).

Little research has been done into the transhumance in Corsica, apart from a substantial thesis published in 1985 (G. Ravis-Giordani). This contribution now retraces the history of a major Corsican “way of life” in ancient and recent times.