Adjusting deficiency to nature tourism: the case of a contemporaryexperience of expeditions using all-terrain wheelchairs (ATW)

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Abstract

This article looks into All-Terrain Wheelchair (ATW) expeditions carried out in high-mountain environments and the ways of making these possible despite many barriers, both natural and social. Using the life and practices narrative of Jean-François Porret (JFP), the pioneer of ATW in France, this work presents an individual and original experience of nature tourism. Basing ourselves on his personal life story, we will show how JFP adapted his equipment, innovated, but also how he socially adjusted expeditions to disability. JFP was led to reconsidering the practice of mountaineering so as to experience again the old feelings in his ATW, becoming conscious of his "new" body and of the limits associated to his new deficiency. The ATW thus becomes a tool for social interaction in extreme environments where expeditions favour disabled/abled integration in order to overcome the constraints of disability.

Keywords: accessibility, tourism, nature activities, expedition, All-Terrain Wheelchair.

1. Introduction

Living an unusual adventure is becoming increasingly possible for all thanks to special equipment and dispositions (monitoring, security standards, labels, …). The field of disability is significant on this subject[1]. For several years now, "(handisport) adventure raids have been multiplying and are evidence of the recapture of a natural environment often seen as inaccessible" (Marcellini & Villoing, 2014, p. 117). The numbers of the French Federation for Handisport (FFH) show that close to a third of license holders[2] are regular practitioners of nature sports. Among the most practiced activities, the following can be found: skiing, canoeing/kayaking and sailing. The attraction of nature sports is such that, since 2008, national nature sports conferences have been taking place. The first edition, which assembled "180 actors of handisport nature sports" aimed to "find answers

[1] The national label "Tourism and Handicap" created in 2003 promotes an « integrated tourism» in order to bring reliable information concerning the accessibility of touristic sites and equipment while taking into account every form of disability in order to alert the professionals of this sector as to the access issues for the leisure of "people with specific needs" (Reichhart, 2011).

[2] Numbers of the FFH 2015/2016 in Handisport le guide 2016 – 2017.

to concrete issues (equipment, monitoring, training, …)". In this way, as if as an answer to this concern, the second edition, in 2009, presented a "terrestrial and mountaineering equipment fair" (Handisport le Mag, n°136 May/Oct 2009, p. 28). The national study carried out by Mele and Bissonet (2010) showed that 48% of disabled practitioners placed equipment as the main criteria of influence for sporting activities.

Reflection concerning the place of technology within the sporting movement of disabled people has strongly increased over the last few years (Kleinpeter, 2013). The new possibilities open to them through this technology highlight a certain fascination that can generate controversy. On this point, the case of Oscar Pistorius is a telling example. Indeed, in 2007, the sporting institution questioned the legitimacy of this athlete's participation to non-disabled competitions. This questioning unfolded within the context of a metrological controversy organised around the theme of the supposed advantage his equipment would grant him (Issanchou et al., 2018; de Léséleuc and Issanchou, 2016). The numerous discourses born from this case led to the progressive appearance of a surprising figure, the "advantaged disabled", which testifies of the continuous renegotiation of the frameworks of handisport experience. In this case, prosthetic innovation necessitates a radical rethinking of principles, notably those relating to categories, that organise the conditions of sporting competition.

In addition, there is a multiplication of discourses aiming to question the classical distinctions between the living and the non-living, the natural and the artificial, etc. Andrieu (2008) even went so far as to reject the divide between the same and the other, in favour of the elaboration of thoughts along the lines of the mixed and the "hybrid". The question of "becoming hybrid" covers, in this situation, the question of the means of action. It concerns an extension of the body which creates the conditions for the possibility of social participation. Hybridity could thus be thought as a re-humanisation process of the impaired persons when they engage their bodies differently, certainly within otherness, but also in reconfiguring the disabled situation in order to create handi-capable conditions (Richard, 2017).

This finding is all the stronger in the context of distant expeditions using all-terrain wheelchairs. Promoted by the FFH within its "Nature Sports" section, the number of expeditions has been increasing for more than twenty years and they involve very important means. What is more, Georges Déjonghe (National Technical Counsellor for Handisport in charge of winter and nature sports for the FFH from 1983 to 2004) described expeditions as "high level leisure activities"[3].

This is the case of All-Terrain Wheelchair (ATW) mountaineering, which appeared in the 1990s. More than a simple means of transportation, ATW grants access to high-mountain environments while procuring new sensations, close to those felt while using mountain bikes. Depending on the model, they are equipped with three or four wheels bearing all-terrain tyres as well as disc brakes, and can be either piloted using handlebars or with human[4] assistance. By strengthening the possibilities of overcoming obstacles, ATW reduces disability situations and increases autonomy.

In a general manner, mountaineering is not always accessible to everybody. This type of adventure, which consists in ascending up to a high-altitude mountain top, facing rocky

[3] An interview was carried out with Georges Dejonghe on 4/06/2018 concerning the place of nature activities within the FFH.

[4] The non-disabled pilot stands at the back of the wheelchair.

terrain or even glaciers and snow, involves important risk taking (De Léséleuc & Raufast, 2004) but most of all it requires time, means, and certain logistics that have a cost. It is therefore mainly individuals with a wealthy background who would be able to take up this practice which, de facto, is permeated with norms and values which are their own (Rambaud, 1961). In spite of the budgetary constraints, more and more "adventurers" with disabilities seek to conquer high-mountain environments. The first case observed was the one of a young Englishman, G.W. Young, amputated of one leg, and who achieved, before the First World War and "accompanied by the Swiss guide Knubel, a remarkable series of world firsts" (Jaeger, 1979, p. 232). Some time later, the Frenchman Jean-François Porret (JFP) was to be the first quadriplegic to conquer high mountain terrains in May 1993. He led an expedition in the Kula Kangri range (7554 metres high) located in Tibet and thus managed to achieve a height of 5600 metres in an ATW. This renowned old mountaineer became the precursor of a new form of mountaineering using wheelchairs and attracted in his wake other practitioners. From this point onwards, how was this experience of disability in a high mountain environment organised, overcoming the limits of an extreme environment and, in consequence, those of our entire society? Similarly, how can the adjustments (technological, technical and/or human), that are necessary for carrying out these expeditions, be extended to the rest of society in order to enable social participation?

Using JFP's life narrative but also the story of his practice, this article seeks to evidence how the expeditions carried out in ATW in high-mountain environments are made possible despite the numerous obstacles, natural or social, which can present themselves. Through his double experience – the one linked to his disability and the one relating to his practice of mountaineering – JFP proceeded to make adjustments (Winance, 2006), turning the ATW into a tool for social interaction in an extreme environment. In order to do this, he needed to adapt the equipment, innovate on the basis of his experiences as an abled mountaineer and socially adjust his handicap to an ATW expedition using the notion of sharing.

We will show just how, through these expeditions, JFP became aware of his body, as well as of its limitations, and in this way how he experimented with a new form of nature tourism in France. In seeking to regain his "former sensations", he became a "valid interactant" (Ville, 2014), educating disabled people, but also abled ones, to overcome the constraints of disability.

2. Method

Basing ourselves on a case study, we will show how expeditions are possible for a quadriplegic, by highlighting the relation between the practitioner, the contraption (the ATW) and the environment (high-mountain). The data collected with JFP allowed us to study this relation in the closest possible manner[5]. To this end, several interviews were carried out with JFP during which he was asked to retrace his personal story. In this way,

[5] Lahire indicates the rarity of personal journals by: 1) "their culturally and socially marked nature"; 2) "their gendered nature"; 3) "and the fact that they associate more with certain ages during life than with others". These factors diminish the probability of having access to them and explain why they are set aside by researchers (2008, p. 166).

a first interview took place on December, 20th 2014, lasting 3 hours and with a particular focus on the period concerning his practice of ATW. On May, 28th 2016, a second interview took place, lasting 4 hours and aiming to explore his story and grasp in greater detail the changes pre- and post-accident, as well as the evolution of his experience as a mountaineer. Both these interviews, of a "life story" type, were carried out in his home in Grenoble (France). This type of interview, which involves spending time with the interviewer, is also called "in-depth interviewing" by Bogdan and Taylor (1975) who describe it as "(…) an encounter or series of encounters in a face-to-face situation between a researcher and his informants, with the aim of understanding the perspective of the interviewed people concerning their lives, their experiences or their situations, as expressed in their own words" (Lapassade, 1991, p. 38). Between December 2014 and May 2016, contact with JFP was maintained through the regular exchange of emails, upholding a close link with the researcher. During the second interview, JFP did not hesitate to hand the researcher four "private journals" or "self-written narratives" (Lahire, 2008)[6] which he kept updated before and after his accident (in 1989) during his expeditions:

1) ascension of the Huascaran in 1972 in Peru (77-page booklet);
2) ascension of the Biaho in 1974 located in Pakistan (116-page booklet);
3) ascension of the Kula Kangri in 1993 in Tibet (143-page booklet);
4) ascension of the Minya Kongka in 1995 in China (69-page booklet).

These private journals, illustrated with photos, reveal the experiences lived by JFP during his expeditions as a non-disabled person, and then allow us to perceive the transformations in his experience and his way of conceiving high-mountain environments after his accident. We focused on the aspects relating to the use of technology (and the techniques developed), on environment management and on the social interactions described within them.

The advantage of a personal document (logbook) is that it "provides, for equal time and effort, a much richer material than most other technique used in social sciences could yield" (De Dampierre, 1957, p. 444). What is more, administrative documents, sorted into binders and concerning the 1993 expedition to Tibet, were also presented to the researcher. These technical documents, notably concerning his expedition equipment, will both complete and provide precision concerning the information given by JFP during the two interviews. They are also evidence of the place of technology, as well as the importance of innovation, as facilitators for an expedition with disabled people. All this data together (discourses and written inputs)[7], once combined, give us the opportunity to better understand the changes that took place following the advent of the French mountaineer's situation of disability.

[6] Lahire indicates the rarity of personal journals by: 1) "their culturally and socially marked nature"; 2) "their gendered nature"; 3) "and the fact that they associate more with certain ages during life than with others". These factors diminish the probability of having access to them and explain why they are set aside by researchers (2008, p. 166).

[7] JFP's own words and the written inputs will appear, in the text, in italics and within quotation marks.

3. The organisation of the first French expedition using ATW based on a "former practice"

JFP was an avid practitioner of physical outdoor and nature activities (rock climbing, caving, skiing, parasailing, paragliding) but, as "a mountain dweller to the heart", mountaineering remained his main passion. As an abled man, he accomplished "some of the nicest big trails of the time", in the Mont Blanc range and the Himalayas, some of which were over 8000 metres high. The success of the expeditions in which he took part granted him the respect of his peers on a national and international level. In 1972, he integrated the High Mountain Group (GHM)[8], "which is a group that more or less selects the best mountaineers of the moment, it's a little elitist" according to JFP. The expeditions in which he partook aimed to reach zones which were as yet unvisited (distant destination organiser of a space in time), to open a new path to them or to access a virgin summit. A high-level physical condition was required in order to face the difficulties of ascending to a summit, notably generated by hypoxia linked to decreased oxygen availability.

Everything changed when this recognised impassioned mountaineer became quadriplegic in 1989 following a paragliding accident. He was 44 years old at the time, working as a computer engineer for Hewlett Packard, in California in the United States. During his stay at the health centre, he met Jon Castellano, an American engineer working for NASA who had come to demonstrate his new wheelchair: the *Cobra*, one of the first commercialised ATW. Castellano had been inspired by mountain bike technology as well as wheelchairs used for athletics tracks and had developed a contraption giving the opportunity to "offset the (functional) limitations of traditional city (wheel) chairs" (*HM* n°99, 1999, p. 40). JFP brought it back to France with him upon his return in 1990, thanks to his friends who clubbed together in order to buy it for him. It is through this initiative that ATW made its appearance in France. JFP started out practicing mountain hiking "alongside close friends, hikers and mountain-bikers, who can pull him up hills so that he can then enjoy going back down in an autonomous fashion" (Villoing et al., 2017: 4). Rapidly, his "enculturation to mountaineering" (Corneloup, 2004) pushed him again towards high mountains.

For JFP, ATW appeared in priority as a means to continue his "former practice", high mountain expeditions, in spite of his disability. For this, he repeated the logic of preparation that he followed when he was abled. Since the expedition in ATW to Tibet in 1993 had already been prepared before his accident, the necessary administrative steps with the Chinese authorities had already been completed, as well as a certain amount of technical reconnaissance. Thence, the organisation concerned equipment and human-related aspects.

3.1. Developing the material innovations for ATW expeditions

The vast experience of JFP in the field of expeditions allowed him to anticipate difficulties and thus to better manage unforeseen events. Before leaving for Tibet, he

[8] A prestigious institution whose mission is to regroup the elite of French and international mountaineers.

tested his equipment as well as his physical and mental capacities during two treks in Spain and in Morocco (Sierra Guara in 1991 and M'Goun in 1992). He experimented with specific equipment that he had made. With a high risk of developing pressure ulcers for instance, he asked a company to develop a specialised mattress, a mattress that had the specificity of not presenting any "bulges". He also requested them to modify a sleeping bag for it to be partitioned around the legs, as well as numerous other elements of equipment[9]: commode chair made out of carbon, covers, thermal equipment, hydration system, etc. These various technological innovations, for the most part prototyped under the direction of JFP, allowed him to regain access to high-mountain expeditions.

Specific logistics are just as fundamental as specific equipment. The expeditions were to take place in regions which are for the most part remote and the equipment needed to be delivered to the starting point. For the expeditions in which JFP took part both before and after his accident, the means employed remained the same. Indeed, it was first conveyed by plane, and then by truck or 4-wheel drive. Once in the correct location, local bearers would help the team carry the equipment to base camp.

Conveying the ATW, in addition to the standard wheelchair, as well as a long list of equipment specific to his quadriplegia, led to non-negligible excess weight compared to the expeditions carried out when he was still abled. He meticulously noted (in an Excel spread sheet) the weight of each element he brought from his first expedition in ATW onwards. In this way, he could do "a simulation, with one click of the mouse, of the weight you'll be carrying, because you always have too much … to see where you need to make cuts", because as he emphasized, "it depends, of course, on the nature of your project, that is to say if you are high up in altitude or something else, you'll have to bring equipment for heat, for sleeping…". However, he explained that "there are some pieces of equipment on which I will make no concession because they relate to survival as a quadriplegic and they add weight". He noted in his journal, concerning the Kula Kangri expedition (Tibet) in 1993: "320 kg of baggage, I account for a third of this weight just for myself". The bulk of an ATW can also be problematic, even if the *Cobra* is one of the smallest on the market: "my *Cobra*, I practically always manage to take it by plane. […] I have to negotiate an authorisation first, but up until now, I've always managed to do so".

With this information, we can see that, from a transport point of view, the changes were minimal and mainly linked to unforeseen elements encountered upon arrival. However, the movements made in an ATW will of course be different from those made on foot. The ingenuity of JFP in finding solutions enabling him to climb mountains can be observed (Expedition Tibet Figure, JFP, 1993). Indeed, he resorted to using animals to pull him along: "the ATW was pulled by a donkey, with the help of two local bearers" (China log book, 1995). He then listed the different species: horses, yaks, oxen, buffaloes, mules, donkeys, camels, … to which he was attached using a release system[10] (*whishboard* type) that he bought in marine equipment shops. This method thus allowed JFP to access high-altitude zones in a secure manner. The ATW would then allow him to go back down in an autonomous manner, depending on the accessibility of the terrain. These material modifications were the condition for the success of the expedition in Tibet in 1993. His goal was to "climb as high up as possible with my chair", he wrote in his journal during the Kula Kangri expedition.

[9] See the sections "raid equipment" and "annexe equipment" on JFP's website: ftt.free.fr

[10] See the Cobra release system on the site www.ftt.free.fr

Beyond these technical aspects, he also needed to contend with the reluctance and warnings of the medical world. "For this expedition to Tibet, there was a great parameter to consider: can 'quadris' live high up in altitude? And so one of the re-education doctors told me that I would not survive, that it was impossible, so that was a real issue". The capacity for quadriplegic individuals to survive in extreme conditions due to high elevation was in question. These concerns led him to consider the human technical assistance necessary to completing this expedition.

3.2. Essential human technical assistance

The negative view of a doctor is mainly linked to the lack of knowledge concerning the capabilities of "quadris". This therefore encouraged JFP to make contact with a research laboratory in the field of sport physiology. He offered to serve as a "guinea pig" by participating in a research protocol, set up for the occasion, in order to test the effects of altitude on the physiological capacities of quadriplegic individuals. "I managed to get the support of two profs, professor M. and professor G., and the latter helped me a lot, he had a sport physiology lab. And so they put me through whole series of tests, breathing capacity, all that, and they had elaborated a high-altitude preparation, and then they sent me here some high-altitude balloons to work with my physiotherapist's secretary, because my physiotherapist didn't want to, believing that I wouldn't survive. We then went to the Aiguille Du Midi where they did many tests to see how it was going and finally, he gave me the green light to go." (JFP)

This expedition worked through the support of human intervention with technical skills. During his first ATW expedition in Tibet, not only did he go with two mountaineer friends, but also with a doctor and a nurse. JFP was strongly dependent on external help as a result of his quadriplegic condition: "whatever I do, there is no chance for me to do something alone, my disability does not allow this". Medical monitoring was essential. The number of people involved[11] was not without consequences on logistics, quite taxing but necessary to the expedition: employing local pushers/bearers, a *cook*, drivers, but also a liaison officer imposed by the Chinese government.

Thus, in May 1993, JFP managed to reach 5600 metres: a performance in an ATW which has still not been equalled today. He was pulled by a "small Tibetan horse" up to a base camp located at 4400 metres high. He stayed at the bivouac for ten days, at this same altitude, using his adapted and tinkered-with equipment. To finish, he ascended to a height of 5600 meters in the Kula Kangri range[12] after which he came back down "totally alone, with the help of this marvellous all-terrain wheelchair, back to basecamp. Moments of happiness too rare, these few minutes of absolute freedom, lived intensely at the other end of the planet. […] Intense feeling of fulfilment". The ATW allowed JFP to rekindle his passion for mountaineering, the sensations of the past felt again.

[11] He gave the expedition a scientific aspect by integrating a geologist into the team. JFP explained that he also wanted to bring a scientific aspect to the expedition in order to strengthen the request for authorisation made to the Chinese authorities.

[12] The idea of completing the ascension of the Kula Kangri took shape with a black and white photo of the summit: "I see becoming real in front of my own eyes something that I had imagined from photos since 87 […] moment of happiness – mountaineering seen from a wheelchair…"

In this way, all the technology and techniques listed above allowed JFP to preserve a certain amount of autonomy within his condition as a quadriplegic, thus giving him the opportunity of accessing again "places where no one goes!" The interaction between the practitioner, the wheelchair and the environment (Winance et al., 2007) during expeditions, provided for JFP a "normalisation" process (Marcellini, 2005) that allowed him to return to a certain form of mountaineering, hiking up mountains with relative autonomy. He regained a certain amount of freedom in an environment perceived as hostile thanks to adapted equipment, but also through human technical assistance (doctors, scientists, mountaineers, etc.).

4. Continuing his mountaineering practice after the accident: rediscovering feelings from the past and "educating" the abled

The manner in which JFP was involved in the expeditions in which he took part both before and after his accident remained calculated and controlled. As a mountaineer, JFP is opposed to the one-upmanship that would lead to mindless risk-taking. In high mountains, the environment is particularly dangerous, a fact proven by the many disappearances among the mountaineering community[13]. However this is also the reason for the renown of and excitement procured by this type of extreme adventure. "A description of expeditions shows the incontestable danger of these high altitude play-areas. But the voluntary engagement within this perilous environment is mainly interesting in that it is recognised, qualified and faced in ways that are as singular as they are varied by the athletes" (Boutroy, 2006, p. 2). For JFP, even when he was abled, the difficulty needed to be calculated and the risks taken should not be forced: "When we went to Makalu, that's an 8200 metre-high summit, with Pierre Bergac, Pierre froze his feet. We had been led to taking a level of risk which I did not find reasonable. Because there had been commitments made before, because there were constraints, the federation was expecting success, to be able to identify who would go to the national expedition to K2, there were constraint and I did not want that anymore. (…) Things that are imposed in fields relating to security: no". JFP was not searching for exploits at any cost, and many are the expeditions which he can classify as attempts. Exploration presides over his way of methodically approaching mountains, as is attested by his analysis sketches and the commentaries in his log books.

A profound respect for his environment (the mountain side) can also be observed in JFP and his appreciation of risks when organising expeditions after his accident. JFP searched and found again those sensations of high-mountain experience by mingling calculated risk-taking and discovery of the unknown. The expeditions were thus a way of reaching

[13] The experience of the mountaineer Nicolas Jaeger (60 days at 6700 metres on the summit of the Huascaran), was marked by an accident. One of the bearers "Alejandro abandoned his charge on the bergschrund; contrary to everything that was planned, he tried to go back down alone. A fatal error! We found him dead 200 metres below." (Jaeger, 1979, p. 23). What is more, JFP himself mentioned the friends that he has lost in the mountains. He also told the story of his own misadventures: "I was belaying my friend who was going down and then I started climbing down to meet him. He was down in the corridor and then he heard a great noise coming from above. And then an enormous mass of snow arrived, it hit me and carried me away. Thankfully, my friend had just stabilised himself like that and was able to compensate for the shock on the rope attached to his belt […] Otherwise he would have been carried away too and that would have been the end of the story."

out to his "old life", with a stronger link to natural environments and local populations as a result of his quadriplegic situation. The high-mountain exploit was thence experienced in the same way as before, without contemplating risky individual performances but in favouring prospects of discovery and proximity with nature and local populations. This contemplative outlook, an inherent component of the finality of an expedition for JFP, took the upper hand in the face of his disability and thus became a common goal (disabled/abled) for remote expeditions.

4.1. Favouring the contemplative logic of exploits in high-mountain environments

Rock climbing and the other ways of moving around which he was in the habit of using were no longer accessible to him. He needed now to call for outside help in order to reach his goals. He would thus be transported and pushed by his friends or by additional bearers during his expeditions, creating true moments of shared emotion which were nevertheless laced with melancholy: "the absence of my legs is hitting me hard, locking me here in this Sunday picnic instead of being able to gallop up the summit of the Dzong where the view of the KK ([Kula Kangri] must be fabulous […] more sadness than frustration" (logbook of the Tibet expedition, 1993).

It was then that JFP really became aware of his body. He explained during an interview that he had gone from a body "that was there for my convenience and that's it" to a body that "I had to listen to, that I had to know what it was capable of". "Before, I needed to have the physical and technical ability, just like any other athlete. Here (Today) I found myself with a constraint which was my disability and which I needed to get to know closely in order to overcome it". A process of adjustment then took place, during his ATW practice, allowing him to go from "a body in its wheelchair" to "a body with its wheelchair" (Winance, 2006, p. 53). As he emphasized in his logbook (Tibet – 1993), after the accident, "my bipedal life is over. I have reincarnated in a wheelchair". For JFP, the aim was not to follow a dynamic of denial, but quite the opposite, to fully accept this new condition. As JFP asserted, being confronted to the reality of one's disability right after the accident is brutal, but for him, "it saved time". Going back to a social life was facilitated.

Of course, the risk that was perceived as an abled mountaineer would not be the same as the risk perceived after his accident, but the sensations linked to risk-taking would well and truly be there. Indeed, due to his disability, he was subjected to many complications relating to his health (especially so far from any medical structure): bladder infections, bowel problems, pressure sores, high altitude, breathing problems and difficulties with thermal regulation… JFP confided, while he was preparing the expedition to Tibet in 1993: "I was convinced that it was possible, but I didn't know quadriplegia. At the bottom of it all, I was confident because I had already been there several times […] I knew what I was going to feel, however, I didn't know at all whether the new Jean-François could do this".

To these doubts relating to his new condition as a "quadri", a source of risks, were added the dangers originating from the mountain itself. He wrote in his journal what had happened to him when he was descending alone down to basecamp, when a rift appeared in his way: "a glimmer of hope appeared in the form of a thin sliver of earth linking both edges. But it wasn't wide (1/2 a chair), it goes upwards and ends in three round rocks – if

I go past too fast, they will knock me into the breach where I will never be found, and if I go too slowly then I will stay stuck without being able to reverse for fear of ending up in the previously-mentioned situation. I concentrated intensely, launched myself, arriving with decreasing speed to the rocks – a little push on the back wheels, it's done! What an immense joy was this victory with no one to witness it". The fact that he was able to overcome obstacles in his environment in a similar manner to when he used to practice mountaineering before his accident reproduced in him the same sensations[14] and allowed him to forget his disability. For him, finally, between the before and the after, "globally it's life as usual that carries on, with the same types of joys and difficulties, but without change. So in a manner it's a certain form of erased disability. Giving an extreme outline". He also regained his former sensations as an expedition leader. He was responsible for each person, he needed to ensure the proper unfolding of the adventure even if this sometimes turned out to be complicated: "often, in the evenings, we would hold a meeting, I was in my duvet because of the cold, the other three were in my tent and that's how we took the big decisions for the days to follow. And that was exhausting, it was hard, and at the same time it was interesting…". This social dimension of the expedition took on all its meaning after the accident. The fact that it was his friends who gifted him the ATW was not a small matter and added to the desire to resume his "former practice", but by accepting to roam across the mountainside in a different manner; between sharing and risk management.

4.2. "From the mountain of performance, to the mountain of sharing"

For JFP, the aim was right away to go back to the high mountains and to complete projects with his mountaineering friends, just like before. As he said so himself, "I was going out with my mountain friends, we were going back to the mountains. I could make projects again, so I did make projects of going to foreign destinations, expeditions …". During these expeditions, he emphasized the fact that the sporting effort and the difficulty of the adventure both helped to strengthen the social link between them: "the fact that there was disabled and abled people, there was a super atmosphere, mutual aid, that's just magical. There was a whole wonderful atmosphere". The realisation of these expedition projects seemed to be closely associated with the notion of sharing and mutual help. Mountaineering is a practice where "risk-taking is only possible if it can lean against a collective experience of joint responsibility and of the duty to rescue" (Simond, 2007, p. 16). JFP was very specific concerning the importance to him of the "rope team"; each one literally taking care of the other's life. The spirit of mutual help is central in mountaineering. This social dimension of the activity is always very present, through the notion of sharing the effort and the feeling of fulfilment once the goal is reached, even if disagreements can sometimes appear within the groups (Bourgeois, 2013).
For JFP, between "the before and the after, globally there was really before a mountain of performance, and after, a mountain of sharing, (…) I really feel it in that way, that doesn't

[14] These former sensations also include "feeling again a level of discomfort that forces me to brace myself just as I had to before, a level of discomfort which finally is quite similar… to being linked to the elements and the uncertainty of the weather, just like before, trying to go as high up as possible just like before (…) And this, I really felt it again, more than 100%".

mean that there was no sharing before, nor that there is no performance after". He insisted on the fact that before "I didn't necessarily live it directly, but it was nevertheless what I was looking for. It was a performance, not compared to the others but compared to myself (…) a certain aim to overcome my limits". Whereas after, the will to overcome was "still there too, but different, that is to say that we saw the rise and I saw the rise of the sharing component with the others. Living a common experience, accepting to not leave just all by yourself or with one other person, but with a small group, not too big so as not to get caught in something that you aren't really in control of anymore". For him, these "are human experiences just as much as technical ones" and his adventures were made possible first of all through this group, as he made evident in his logbook (China, Minya Kongka, 1995): the adventure "would not have been possible without the constant concern of the whole team and its ability to adapt to the constraints imposed by the ATW". The success of an expedition was finally linked to the team, when the disabled and the abled were mixed together; just like in Morocco: "the fact that there are both abled and disabled people, there is a lot of solidarity, mutual help, no one complains, that is quite magical". The most important above all was to live social experiences, a manner for JFP to live again the pleasure of the mountain, but in a different way: "the sharing mountain as opposed to the performance mountain". Even if "this notion of sharing existed a lot before (…). I really enjoyed organising, leading the people to the mountain. But it was not, in my personal practice, it wasn't the first goal whereas now, on the contrary, somehow it has become a necessity of course but it is also a pleasure that I have really discovered or at least felt more strongly". Here, JFP was not "in a dynamic of discovering something new in the sense of a new practice. It is an old practice which has been adapted" with the necessity of finding pleasure in another way than with the reaching of a summit.

In this manner, JFP wanted to "make it so that those who came with me fulfilled their own passion, for their own project to come to term. A little bit like before when it was a collective project for a common aim (…) now, when I go off in my ATW, the goal is not necessarily a common one. My goal is necessarily something to do with the ATW, which is somehow to find again the sensations of an expedition in my legs". The concept of sharing and fulfilment of a specific goal involved adapting expeditions to the goals of the team. His family, in its true sense (wife and relatives) as well as figuratively speaking (his mountaineering friends), who were part of the team, played an important role in the continuity of his outdoor and nature activities. During his expeditions, his wife was his number-one support, accompanying him throughout all his adventures, with only a few exceptions (a nurse accompanied him during his first long-term expeditions in the Himalayas). It was only later on, during less engaging travels, lasting a shorter time, that he allowed himself to go with her as his sole companion. Later still, he shared his ATW outings with his son-in-law: "we follow an itinerary where he furnishes the energy. And in that way we can share together. And in this we find, we often discuss this, a bit of what we were talking about, a part of the idea of being roped together" (here, we come across mountaineering jargon). It is this family environment that allowed him to experience once more "expeditions like before".

The time before was also sharing in "a certain form of adventure, of discovering populations which, on the surface, do not seem to have been polluted by tourism, that have remained the same, amongst which there is always a bit of suspense and not just a little bit, an exploration-type of suspense. What sort of welcome will we receive? How can

we communicate? […] And managing to come out of situations that are totally unexpected, and the capacity to overcome physical discomfort which is important…".
Whether it is through his expeditions or his travels, JFP always managed to "lose" himself within a particular environment (high mountains, mountains, dunes), at the closest to nature and local populations. His condition as a quadriplegic drew him even closer to this desire of discovering local populations, as can be seen in the following photographs.

Figure 1. Expedition in Pakistan (JFP, 1974)

Figure 2. Expedition in Tibet (JFP, 1993)

He spent more time with the locals and this allowed him to "meet people, go to places […] where there are no buses, no possible tourism. That is where we can find the most authentic people". JFP went in search of human adventures above all else, seeking to make contact with a population. The point here was "to have an adventure, not in the sense of being an adventurer, but in the sense of making contact with people, feeling that extraordinary human warmth". As an example of this, we can quote an extract from the logbook of the Minya Kongka expedition (China, 1995): "More than 1.000 rooms are linked together by steep staircases, or even by ladders: a pure example of wheelchair inaccessibility. Nevertheless, in a great move of solidarity linking together the strong shoulders of my friends and the extraordinary goodwill of the Tibetan monks, my chair and I (sometimes separately) will have the unique opportunity of going through the palace up to its roof. 'French Dalai Lama', was what the monks announced as I entered the prayer rooms". Through these different social experiences, JFP roamed across mountains in a different manner and moved from the "mountain of performance to the mountain of sharing".

5. Conclusion

Ultimately, two main periods can be observed: pre-accident and post-accident. In this way, we can understand who JFP was before his accident and how he overcame his disability by organising high-mountain expeditions. JFP's experience allowed us to understand just how much the high-mountain expeditions using an ATW were facilitated by his previous high-level mountaineering experience. We also realised that he was brought to reconsidering the practice of mountaineering in a different manner so as to be able to feel once more the sensations he used to experience, but with his ATW, by becoming aware of his "new" body, of the limits imposed by its disability, right up to the point of becoming once again a figure of reference in the field in France.

He recovered some previously experienced sensations with his ATW, going from "a body in a wheelchair" to "a body and its wheelchair". Technology allowed him to develop new techniques for approaching high-mountain environments. In this way, he overcame the limits of his impairment through an adjustment process which took place during his ATW practice. Expeditions thus become possible and a space for sharing is instigated, in which his close circle (friends and family) also adapted themselves to his condition of "paraplegic person" and integrated his ATW practice.

The mix of abled/disabled people is finally a gift/counter-gift situation in which everyone helps one another. JFP went from "the mountain of performance to the mountain of sharing", turning the ATW into a tool for social integration in extreme environments. Indeed, the ATW became the vector of a social experience, whether it be within the group or through the populations met during each adventure. In this way, the expeditions themselves were true social experiences, thanks to the encounters that took place during each adventure. Going from a practice which tied him, before his accident, to the group of "hedonists", JFP redefined his conception of high-mountain expeditions, thus linking him more to the group of "contemplatives" (Urbain, 2002). This tendency of a more contemplative approach to nature is a phenomenon which Bourdeau (1994) evidenced by speaking of "an intimate sensoriality with nature and cultures". By favouring an abled/disabled integration, JFP was able to feel once more the sensations of mountaineering from his ATW and developed this practice in which a positive social experience is at play, enabling the people involved to forget the disability.

In re-setting his expertise, JFP became a "valid interactant" who led to modifications on several different levels (medical, associative, administrative, legal, …). In this way, the ATW became a tool for social integration and a new practice within the framework of outdoor and nature tourism in France. As an ATW pioneer on the French soil, JFP's role was central in the development of ATW in France, up to the point where the handisport movement also integrated it. Through his remarkable work mapping the trails that are accessible in an ATW, as well as with his travels to each corner of the globe, he proved that it is possible for a person with reduced mobility to participate in outdoor nature activities and to thus be part of a situation of social participation. Ending up in a disabled situation did not separate JFP from the community of mountaineers and explorers. Quite the opposite, the exploits of JFP and his team in the Himalayas strengthened his links with the world of mountaineering, and particularly so because of his status as a pioneer of

ATW practice in high-mountain environments, which allowed him to enter the prestigious *Club of French Explorers*[15].

In favouring integration and sharing, practicing ATW is a new form of engagement (mediated by innovating and adapted equipment) for people in situations of disability, both for tourism and for fun, becoming a leisure open to difference. To what extent is this integration – co-presence of abled and disabled individuals within a common practice – part of a deliberately obvious way of refusing discrimination and the setting aside of these "different" people? In other words, in what way does gaining access to outdoor and nature activities participate in singular performance and removing the stigma for these people?

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[15] With the congratulations of Françis de Noyelle, mountaineer of the time *« of the first 8000 » metres*.

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