Equity, power games and legitimacy: dilemmas of participatory learning processes

Cécile Barnaud[a] and Annemarie Van Paassen[b]

[a]CIRAD, UPR GREEN, F-34398 Montpellier, France; and Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.
  cecile.barnaud@cirad.fr
[b]Communication and Innovation Studies (CIS), Wageningen University, Netherlands

Abstract: *Participatory approaches are nowadays widely used, but their designers are facing dilemmas, especially in heterogeneous social contexts. On the one hand, some of them stand accused of being naively manipulated by the most powerful local stakeholders; while on the other hand, others are accused of intervening on social systems to empower some particular stakeholders without having the legitimacy to do so. This article examines the testing of a critical companion approach which recognizes the necessity to take into account local power asymmetries to avoid the risk of increasing initial inequities. The paper draws on the experimentation and reflexive analysis of a companion modelling process conducted with such a critical approach in the highlands of Northern Thailand. The process aimed at facilitating dialogue between a national park being established and two surrounding Mien communities whose livelihoods depended on land and forest resources located inside the park. We show that local power asymmetries express themselves in participatory processes and that some of them might be obstacles to the emergence of an equitable concerted process. We also demonstrate that, through his methodological choices, the designer of a participatory process is able to overcome some of these obstacles, but to a certain extent only. Far from being neutral, the designer adopting a critical posture should attempt to make explicit all his underlying assumptions so that stakeholders can choose to accept them as legitimate or to reject them. However, this attempt faces limits in several situations, in particular with stakeholders who refuse to participate.*

Keywords: participation, power, inequities, negotiation, critical systems, legitimacy

Introduction

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 endorsed the concept of sustainable development as a guiding principle and the concept of participation as a main mean to achieve it (UN, 1993). Since the early nineties, numerous participatory approaches have been developed to promote more dialogue between researchers, local stakeholders and decision-makers, in particular in the fields of natural resource management and rural development (Chambers et al., 1989; Berkes et al., 1991; Pretty, 1995). The World Bank defined participation as a "process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them" (Bhatnagar et al., 1996). The concept of participation intrinsically holds an objective of social and political equity (Cornwall et Gaventa, 2001). However, recent lessons from the past tell us that more attention needs to be paid to achieving equitable impacts (Eversol, 2003; Agrawal et Gupta, 2005; Munoz et al., 2007; Sikor et Nguyen, 2007). Indeed, participatory approaches take place in heterogeneous social contexts with conflicts of interests and power asymmetries among stakeholders. They are more and more criticized not only for their lack of understanding of the complexity of these contexts, but also for their lack of clarification of their position and objective regarding this social context (Moity-Maïzi, 2000; Edmunds et Wollenberg, 2001; D'Aquino, 2007).

If a consensus is starting to emerge regarding the necessity to take into account power asymmetries among stakeholders, there is no such consensus regarding the way to take them into account. When addressing the issue of the way to deal with power asymmetries among stakeholders, the designers of these approaches are facing a dilemma. One the one hand, designers claiming a neutral position regarding power asymmetries will stand accused of being naively manipulated by the most powerful

stakeholders (Cooke et Kothari, 2001; Edmunds et Wollenberg, 2001). Their neutrality is considered illusory. But on the other hand, those who claim a non-neutral position and openly empower some particular stakeholders are accused of intervening on a social system to modify it without having the legitimacy to do so (Innes, 2004). This dilemma is related to a theoretical debate opposing tenants of dialogical and critical perspectives (Faysse, 2006), inspired respectively by soft-systems (Checkland, 1981) and critical systems theories (Ulrich, 1983; Jackson, 2000). The first ones emphasize the differences of perceptions and the lack of mutual understanding among stakeholders. They consider dialogue and communication as the main drivers to focus on to achieve better collaboration among stakeholders (Pretty, 1998). Critical approaches were developed in reaction to limits of dialogical approaches when dealing with too conflicting or coercive situations (Leeuwis, 2000). The tenants of this approach consider that because of power asymmetries among stakeholders, dialogue is not sufficient to achieve equitable impacts. According to them, the designers of participatory processes should strategically intervene on the multi-stakeholder settings to ensure that the less influent stakeholders have a chance to voice and assert their interests (Edmunds et Wollenberg, 2001). While these approaches are sometimes seen as antagonists (Faysse, 2006), several authors see them more as complementary (Jackson, 2000; Leeuwis, 2000; Ulrich, 2003). The objective of this article is to address the issues related to equity, power games and legitimacy in participatory approaches by questioning the potential and limits of a critical companion posture based on such complement-tarities.

The paper draws on the experimentation and reflexive analysis of a participatory process conducted with such a critical companion approach in the highlands of Northern Thailand. The process aimed at accompanying a learning and negotiation process between a national park being established and two surrounding Mien communities whose livelihoods depended on land and forest resources located inside the park. The main principle of the chosen Companion Modelling (ComMod) method was to build a model integrating the various stakeholders' perspectives (including the researchers' ones), and to use this model to explore and discuss the desirability of different scenarios. This experiment has been analyzed through a conceptual framework combining, among others, learning and negotiation theories. The objective of this analysis was to address the three following questions: (i) what are the dynamics of power asymmetries in participatory processes? (ii) what is the influence of methodological choices on these power asymmetries to achieve equitable impacts?, (iii) what does it imply regarding the designers' posture and legitimacy?

A critical companion posture

The way to deal with power asymmetries in a participatory process is not only a methodological issue, but mainly a matter of posture, or the general attitude of the designer of the participatory process towards the socio-political context. This attitude is being driven by norms, values or ideologies which are rarely made explicit by practitioners. The critical companion posture which is made explicit below has been inspired both by the companion modelling approach (Barreteau et al., 2003) and by the critical systems thinking (Ulrich, 2003). More precisely, it is a critical systems thinking's version of the companion modelling posture.

The companion modelling (ComMod) approach is a participatory approach aimed at facilitating collective learning processes among various stakeholders (including researchers) about a common problem in complex socio-ecological systems (Bousquet et al., 1999). The ComMod method is based on the co-construction of simulation models integrating various stakeholders' perceptions, and the use of these simulation models to explore and discuss collectively possible future scenarios. However, the ComMod posture is not really linked to the use of models. It is more a way to consider stakeholders' participation in a research process. The researchers who develop this approach have written a chart synthesizing the deontological implications of their posture (Barreteau et al., 2003). They adopt an iterative approach alternating lab and field work so that their assumptions and the knowledge they produce are voluntarily and directly submitted to refutation at each interaction with the field. This means that ideally, they should have no implicit assumptions. Moreover,

acknowledging that they are themselves stakeholders of the processes they study, they consider that the impact of their research in the field has to be taken into consideration as soon as the first steps of the approach. However, if several ComMod researchers reflected on various aspects of the socio-political contexts of intervention (Daré et Barreteau, 2003; D'Aquino, 2007; Becu et al., 2008), very few have reflected specifically on the way to deal with power asymmetries among stakeholders (Barnaud et al., 2010). Moreover, a recent study has shown that there is a diversity of postures regarding this issue among the ComMod researchers, some opting for more dialogical postures while others opt for more critical postures (Barnaud et al., sous presse). In this study, we define and test a critical companion posture based on their complementarities.

Like critical authors such as Leeuwis (2004) or Ulrich (2003), we consider that dialogical and critical approaches are more complementary than antagonist. This point of view relies on a specific perception of the theory of communicative action of Habermas (1987). Habermas argues that under ideal circumstances, the outcome of a concerted process should be based on the better argument and not on any constraints or power relations. Only then a true and stable agreement can be reached (Jackson, 2000). He formulated several conditions which should be met to reach such an 'ideal speech situation', in which every one is allowed the same opportunity to participate in discourse. His critics argue that the 'ideal speech situation' is a utopian idea which minimizes the existence of asymmetries in real situations. However, one can consider on the contrary that this concept is useful to unmask factors that prevent the reach of such an ideal such as power asymmetries or coercive situations. Habermas speaks of factors that distort communication. Dialogical and critical approaches can then easily be reconciled. A critical approach dealing with power asymmetries is necessary to unmask these distortions and favour the emergence of dialogue leading to better mutual understanding.

Our critical companion posture recognizes the necessity to take into account power asymmetries to avoid the risk of increasing initial social inequities. This is a non-neutral posture. We believe that claiming a neutral posture is problematic not only because of the risk of overlooking power asymmetries and reinforcing them, but also because if a designer does not explicit his biases, he risks to impose them unconsciously. However, if one claims a non-neutrality, it is necessary to address the issue of legitimacy. The main risk is to adopt a militant attitude in favour of a given group of stakeholders without questioning ones hypotheses and objectives. To avoid such a risk, Ulrich (2003) suggests considering emancipation as a methodological necessity to promote a given mode of exchanges and not a given group of stakeholders. Contrary to the militant attitude, this implies to make explicit ones objectives and hypotheses. In our critical companion posture, the explicit objective is the facilitation of an equitable concerted process, that is, a process in which all stakeholders have an equal chance to voice and assert their interests. The equity is here defined like defined by Rawls (1997) as an equality of chance. Like Habermas' ideal speech situation, this is a theoretical ideal which is useful to unmask the existence of obstacles to reach it.

Method: a critical companion modelling process in Northern Thailand

To test the pertinence of this critical companion posture, we adopted an action-research methodology, i.e. we conducted a companion modelling (ComMod) process adopting a critical companion posture. This experiment was conducted in Northern Thailand in the context of a conflict between a National Park being established and two Mien communities located near the future boundaries of the park.
Ethnic minorities living in the highlands of Northern Thailand have long been accused of degrading the upper watersheds of the country's major basins (McKinnon et Vienne, 1989). In the nineties, the government reinforced his environmental policies and further restricted their access to farm and forest resources (Hirsch, 1997). In the meanwhile, the policy framework also favoured decentralization and public participation (Arghiros, 2001). This contradiction resulted in an increasing number of conflicts over land-use between local communities and state agencies, like the conflict addressed in this article between two Mien communities and a National Park in Nan province. This

conflict raised both ecological and social issues. On the one side, the national park aimed at protecting the upper watersheds of the country from deforestation and loss of biodiversity. But on the other side, villagers' livelihoods were dependent on forest products, in particular the poorest ones for whom non-timber forest products are a major source of food and money. According to the Thai law, no human activity except tourism is allowed within a national park, but in practice, local informal arrangements are possible. In this case, the key questions of the future boundaries of the park and the management rules to be enforced had not been discussed yet beyond a limited circle of village leaders. In a highly conflicting situation, there was a risk for the chief of the national park to make unilateral decisions or at best, after consulting a few village leaders only.

In this context, the ComMod process aimed at accompanying the on-going negotiation by facilitating a concerted process across institutional levels between villagers and national park officers, while taking into account the diversity of interests among villagers. This last remark is particularly important in the context of Northern Thailand because most participatory approaches which were conducted in this area failed to take into account heterogeneities within communities and were captured by local elites (Neef, 2005; Becu et al., 2008). The "myth of a homogeneous community" is indeed very strong among researchers in the cultural context of ethnic minorities (Guijt et Shah, 1998). Some authors speak of "ethno-romanticism" (Neef, 2004). In our context, three main types of farming households were identified within the communities, characterized by different socio-economic constraints and farming strategies and having consequently contrasted interests regarding the national park issue (figure 1). Type A households were very vulnerable landless or near landless households, highly dependent on non-timber forest products (NTFP) for the generation of cash income and family consumption. Without access to NTFP, they would have to leave the village and work as urban wage earners. Type B farming households earned their main income from agriculture and were mainly concerned by the risk of loosing land while NTFP were also a concern as a complementary source of cash to compensate for fluctuating farming incomes. Type C farming households had enough capital to invest in rather profitable off-arm activities allowing them to invest in large plantations. Therefore, they did not feel threatened by the national park issue. Most villager leaders belonged to this latter type.
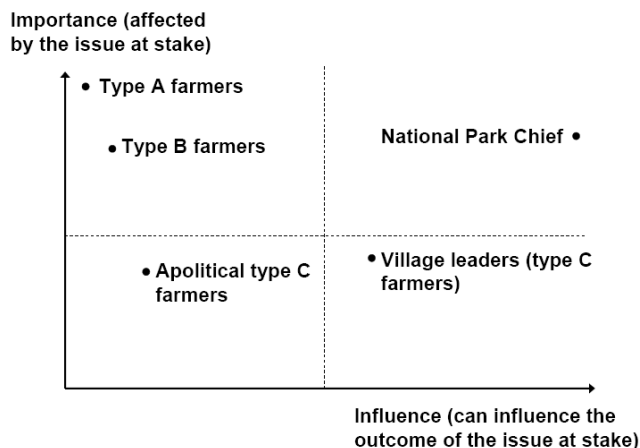

Figure 1. Simplified matrix showing the key stakeholder's relative influence and importance in the National Park issue, Nan province.

Between February and May 2006, the ComMod process started with an in-depth analysis of the initial agrarian and institutional situation through individual semi-directed interviews (app. 30 farmers, village leaders, national park officers, foresters, etc.). The objective was (i) to analyse the key natural resource management problem, the key stakeholders and the constraints towards an equitable outcome of the process, and (ii) to get a picture of the stakeholders' initial perceptions and interactions regarding this problem (Barnaud et al., 2008).
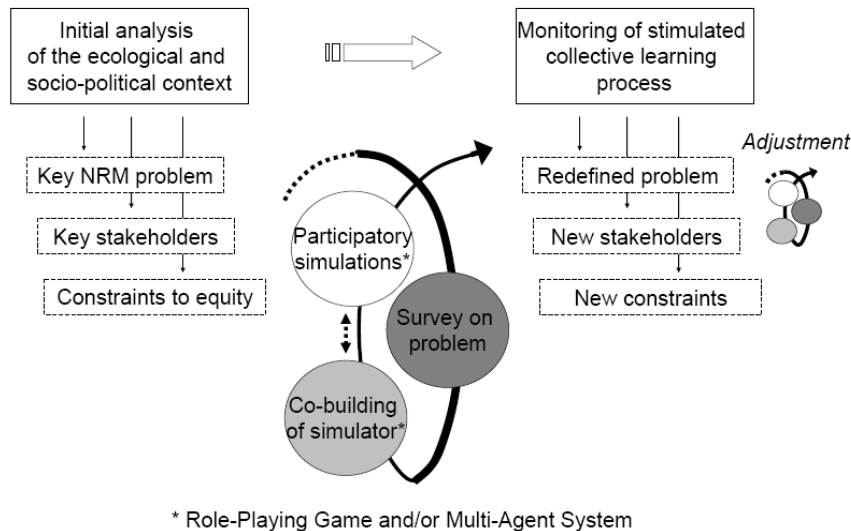
* Role-Playing Game and/or Multi-Agent System

Figure 2. The Companion Modelling process conducted in Nan Province between February 2006 and February 2007.

This initial analysis was followed by a series of participatory workshops combining two main kinds of simulation tools (role-playing games and computed multi-agent systems) representing the observed situations (figure 2). Between June and November 2006, several workshops were conducted in each village to help villagers reflect among themselves about the establishment of the National Park. These workshops combined the following activities:

-   role-playing games sessions in which the participants (12 farmers representing the diversity of farming situations within each community) played their own role and could interactively examine the complex systems they were part of,
-   plenary and sub-group discussions in which they exchanged about their perceptions of the problems encountered in the game and about the possible solutions,
-   multi-agent systems computer simulations to explore longer term effects of these solutions and to enlarge discussions at the village level (more than 50 participating villagers).

In the meanwhile, several meetings were organized with national park officers and forest officers to allow them to discuss among them about the conflict with the villagers. Computer multi-agent simulations were used to present them the results of the village gaming sessions and sensitize them to the villagers' situations and perspectives. In December 2006, a last ComMod workshop was organized with villagers from both villages and national park officers to achieve better mutual understanding and to explore and discuss collectively the economic, social and ecological impacts of various sets of possible forest management rules. All along the ComMod process, individual interviews of participants were conducted right after and in between the workshops to monitor the effects of the process in terms of changing perceptions and modes of interactions. The results of this monitoring were used to adjust the process in an adaptive way (figure 2).

The reflexive analysis of this experiment drew on a conceptual analytical framework combining five main theoretical insights (figure 3). This framework is presented in more details in (Barnaud et al., 2010).
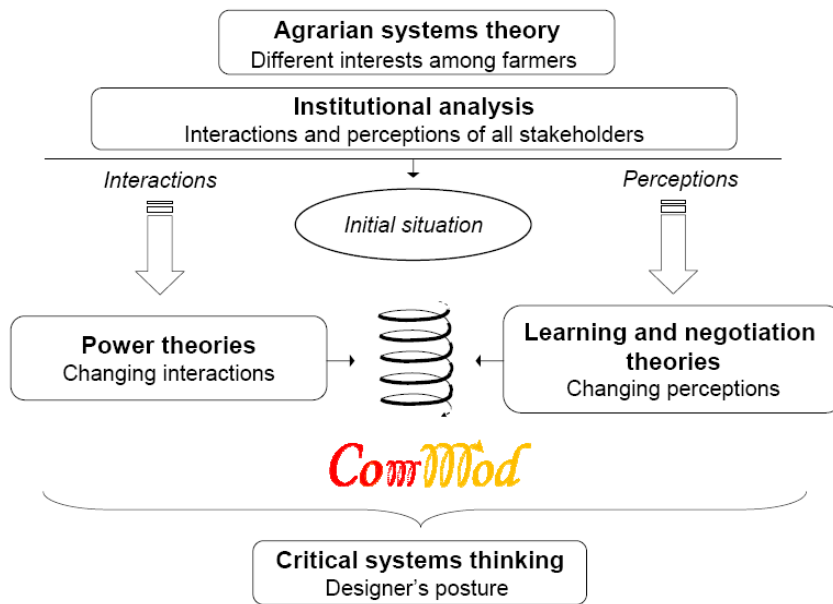
Figure 3. Conceptual analytical framework.

Results: dynamics of power games in the participatory process

Our analysis shows that local power games express themselves in participatory processes and that some of them might be obstacles to the emergence of an equitable concerted process. Two kinds of obstacles were observed: horizontal obstacles (interactions among villagers within a community) and vertical obstacles (interactions between communities and administrations).
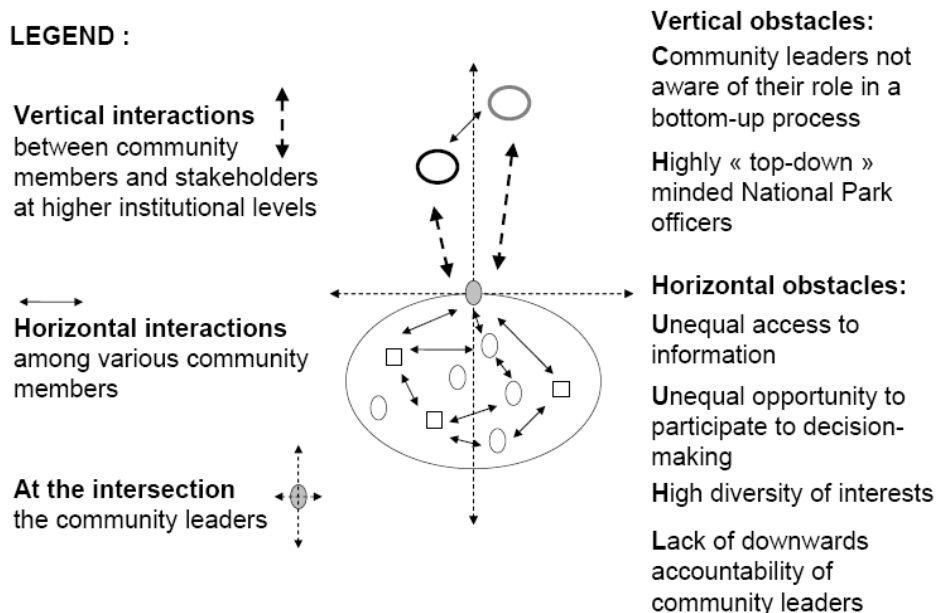

Figure 4. Identified obstacles towards an equitable concerted process

At the horizontal level, we observed that villagers who were potentially the most affected by the National Park issue (type A farmers dependant on NTFP) were also the ones who had initially the lowest capacity to defend their interests (figure 1). Moreover, these stakeholders with low levels of political influence in the village were not supported by the village leaders (mostly type C farmers), either because the village leaders had their own (and different) interest to defend, or because they

were not sufficiently aware of the situations of the type A farmers of their village. This is what Ribot (2001) calls a lack of downwards accountability of villager leaders. We also observed vertical obstacles. First, villagers and village leaders were not aware of the pro-active role they could or should have played in the negotiation with the national park. After several decades of highly centralized management of natural resources, in which local people only had a very passive role, they had little trust in their own capacities to participate to local politics. Moreover, on the National Park's side, in spite of the recent decentralization policies and the adoption of a discourse promoting participatory approaches, the National Park officers remained very top-down minded, and finally hold in their hands the power of decision. Like many administrators in Thailand, the chief of the National Park had strong prejudices against ethnic minorities, seeing them as forest destroyers "who always want more and with whom it is impossible to discuss, because they don't understand anything".

Those obstacles expressed themselves in the ComMod process. At the horizontal level, village leaders used their influence in several ways. They tried in particular to use their power to include or exclude some particular stakeholders. Indeed, when discussing with them the list of participants to be invited to the workshops, they would systematically consider that it was pointless to invite poor (type A) farmers with low levels of education. Moreover, during the workshop, they would use their relation of patronage with those poor farmers to influence their say. For example, during the first workshop, after explaining that NTFP for food were more important than those for sell, two poor women were "invited" by a village leader to say the contrary in public. At the vertical level, the chief of the national park used his power not to join the negotiation table and to block the negotiation process. Indeed, although he had supported the idea of a meeting with villagers, he did not join the final workshop, sending young officers with no power of decision to replace him. In the negotiation theories, this is typically the strategy of a stakeholder with a strong BATNA (Best Alternative To Non Agreement) (Fisher et Ury, 1981).

Our analysis reveals that some of these obstacles were overcome, at least to a certain extent. Indeed, the ComMod process had the following effects: (i) villagers' increased awareness of their interdependences in the National Park issue and of the necessity the debate it collectively, (ii) exchanges of points of view among them and better mutual understanding, (iii) reframing of the issue at stake to explore more integrative modes of negotiation with the National Park, (iv) villagers' formulation of a suggestion integrating all villagers' interests and submission of this suggestion to the National Park officers. Indeed, the village leaders realized along the process that it was vital for poor farmers to show to the National Park officers that they had community rules that avoided over-exploitation of forest resources, in order to negotiate the right to collect NTFP in the National Park area. They also realized that it was in their own interest to discuss with the National Park officers about the NTFP issue. Indeed, in the middle of the ComMod process, the negotiation had reached a standstill because of a frontal confrontation between village leaders and national park officers over the issue of the boundary of the park. They just fought to "share the cake" in a zero-sum process. This is what scholars in the field of negotiation call a compromise or a distributive negotiation process, in opposition to creative or integrative negotiation processes in which stakeholders creatively reframe the problem at stake to "enlarge the cake" and identify "win-win" solutions (Follett, 1940). In our case study, several village leaders realized that by changing the focus of the discussions from the boundaries to the rules to be enforced inside the park, it was possible to start a dialogue with national park officers, in other terms to move from a distributive to an integrative negotiation process. Calming down the conflict would increase their chances to obtain more flexibility from the national park officers. At the end of the final workshop, the villagers and the national park officers collectively wrote and signed a "memorandum of understanding" stipulating that both parties had common interests (to avoid over-exploitation of forest resources, to limit forest encroachment and to control forest fires) and should reflect and discuss about it collectively in the future. Since the chief of the national park officer did not joint this workshop, this agreement had no short-term effects, but as a forest officer said, "the ComMod process sowed a seed". The process contributed indeed to a double process of empowerment: empowerment of the poorest villagers

whose voice was finally heard at the village level (increased self-confidence and capacity to express their interests), and empowerment of the village in the negotiation with the park (mobilisation and organization for collective action).

We identified several methodological factors that helped to level the playing field: (i) initial analysis of power games, (ii) careful and strategic choice of participants, (iii) tools accessible to all, (iv) tools highlighting diversity and conflicts of interests, (v) tools favouring integrative negotiation processes, (vi) alternation of individual interviews and sub-group discussions with plenary sessions, and (vii) iterative approach to take into account changes occurring between workshops. For example, to illustrate the fourth point, the role-playing games were voluntarily designed to highlight that type A, B and C farmers had different problems in the National Park issue. Playing the game raised the NTFP issue of the poor farmers which could have been otherwise easily overlooked since influential village leaders did not consider it as an important matter.

Discussion: potential & limits of the critical companion posture

This paper argues that a participatory process is far from being neutral. Local power asymmetries express themselves in these processes and can be obstacles towards the emergence of equitable negotiations. However, a designer adopting a critical companion posture can contribute through his methodological choices to overcome some of these obstacles, at least to a certain extent. The non-neutrality of this posture implies a continuous and critical reflexion on its legitimacy. We suggest that to question and reinforce his legitimacy, the designer of such a process should systematically make explicit his underlying assumptions and objectives (an aim for equity in our case), so that local stakeholders can question and reject or accept them as legitimate. Legitimacy is here seen as a constantly evolving product of a co-construction process between the designers and the participants of the participatory process.

However, this critical companion posture has its own limits. First, it is illusory to believe one can make all our assumptions explicit. It is at best a very subjective attempt. Second, in many cases, local stakeholders might not dare questioning and rejecting these assumptions. That means that it is very important to monitor the reactions of the participants and to detect in their behaviours all signs of disagreements with the process. Third, and this is the main limit of this posture, since the posture builds its legitimacy over the participants' approval, this means it can't deal with situations that are so conflicting that stakeholders refuse to join any discussion. We have already mentioned the case of the chief of the national park: although we tried to convince him (and thought we did), he did not join the final workshop. Even more illustrative is the case of a few families who refused to join the process because they had opted for an intimidation strategy towards the national park (threat of violence and forest fires). The rest of their community did not approve this strategy since it reinforced the hostility of the national park towards them and reduced their possibility of negotiation. These families never accepted neither to meet us nor to come to the workshops. Some critical authors suggest that in such situations, there is a need to adopt a very strategic posture and to set up mechanisms to exert pressure over reluctant stakeholders (Leeuwis, 2004). Such an option goes against the key deontological principle of the companion posture which says that the participants of a participatory process should be aware of the objectives of the process and accept them as legitimate. We recognize here that the critical companion posture can't deal with situations where stakeholders refuse to participate. More precisely, the objective of the critical companion posture is to propose a given form of communication, an arena of discussions lying on principles of equity and voluntarism, even if this arena does not lead to any concrete decision or action. The critical companion posture refers to a post-normal approach which aims at improving the quality of the social interactions leading to a decision, rather than the decision itself (Funtowicz et Ravetz, 1994).

To sum up with, dealing with power games in a participatory process is like being an equilibrist in a situation of permanent instable equilibrium, driven by two antagonist forces: the will to let the stakeholders lead the process and to accompany them only, taking the risk that the most influent

stakeholders dominate the process, and the will to intervene on the discussion arena to empower the less influent stakeholders, taking the risk to weaken the process' legitimacy. Walking on such a ridgeline, the designer of a participatory process should at each step question and reinvent the conditions of his equilibrium. The lessons from this paper can be helpful to keep balance. They give a theoretical and methodological support to face with rigor the dilemmas of participatory learning processes.

References

Agrawal, A. and K. Gupta (2005) Decentralization and Participation: The Governance of Common Pool Resources in Nepal's Terai, World Development, 33, 7, 1101-1114.

Arghiros, D. (2001) Democracy, Development and Decentralization in Provincial Thailand, Richmond, Surrey, Curzon & Nordic Institute of Asian Studies.

Barnaud, C., P. D'Aquino et al. sous presse, La gestion des asymétries de pouvoir dans les processus d'accompagnement : une diversité de postionnements, in La modélisation d'accompagnement: une démarche participative en appui au développement durable, M. Etienne, Paris, Quae.

Barnaud, C., G. Trébuil, et al. (2008) Area Study prior to Companion Modelling to Integrate Multiple Interests in Upper Watershed Management of Northern Thailand, Southeast Asian Studies, 45, 4, 559-585.

Barnaud, C., A. Van Paassen et al. (2010) Dealing with power games in a companion modelling process: lessons from community water management in Thailand highlands, Journal of International agricultural and extension education, 16, 1.

Barreteau, O., M. Antona et al. (2003) Our companion modelling approach, Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Simulation, 6, 2, 1.

Becu, N., A. Neef, et al. (2008) Participatory Modeling to Support Collective Decision- Making: Potential and Limits of Stakeholder Involvement, Journal of Land Use Policy, doi:10.1016/j.landusepol.2007.11.002.

Berkes, F., P. George et al. (1991) Co-management: the evolution of the theory and practice of joint administration of living resources, Alternatives, 18 2, 12-18.

Bhatnagar, B., J. Kearns et al. (Ed.) (1996) The World Bank Participation Sourcebook, Washington, DC, The World Bank.

Bousquet, F., O. Barreteau et al. (1999) An environmental modelling approach. The use of multi-agents simulations. , in Advances in Environmental and Ecological Modelling, F. Blasco and A. Weill, Paris, Elsevier, 113-122.

Chambers, R., A. Pacey et al. (1989) Farmer first: farmer innovation and agricultural research, Londres, Intermediate technology publications.

Checkland, P., 1981, Systems thinking, systems practice, Chichester, John Wiley and Sons.

Cooke, B. and U. Kothari (Ed.) (2001) Participation: the new tyranny?, London, New York, Zed Books.

Cornwall, A. and J. Gaventa (2001) Bridging the gap: citizenship, participation and accountability, PLA Notes, February 2001, 40, 32-36.

D'Aquino, P. (2007) Empowerment and Participation: How Could the Wide Range of Social Effects of Participatory Approaches be Better Elicited and Compared?, The Icfai Journal of Knowledge Management, 5, 6, 76-87.

Daré, W. and O. Barreteau (2003) A role-playing game in irrigated system negotiation: between play and reality

Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Simulation, 6, 3.

Edmunds, D. and E. Wollenberg, 2001, A Strategic Approach to Multistakeholder Negociations Development and Change, 32, 2001, 231-253.

Eversol, R. (2003) Managing the pitfalls of participatory development: some insight from Australia, World development, 31, 5, 781-795.

Faysse, N. (2006) Troubles on the way: an analysis of the challenges faced by multi-stakeholder platforms, Natural Resources Forum, 30, 219-229.

Fisher, R. and B. Ury (1981) Getting To Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In., Boston, Houghton Mifflin.

Follett, M. P. (1940) Constructive Conflict, in Dynamic administration: The Collected Papers of Mary Parker Follett, H. C. Metcalf and L. Urwick, New York, Harper, 30-49.

Funtowicz, S. O. and J. R. Ravetz (1994) The worth of a songbird: ecological economics as a post-normal science, Ecological Economics, 10, 3, 197-207.

Guijt, I. and M. Shah (1998) Waking up to power, conflict and process in The Myth of Community: Gender Issues in Participatory Development, I. Guijt and M. Shah, London, Intermediate Technology Publications.

Habermas, J. (1987) Théorie de l'agir communicationnel, Paris, Fayard.

Hirsch, P. E. (1997) Seeing Forest for Trees: Environment and Environmentalism in Thailand, Chiang Mai, Silkworm Books.

Innes, J. E. (2004) Consensus Building : clarifications for the critics, Planning theory, 3, 1, 5-20.

Jackson, M. C. (2000) Systems approaches to management, New York, Kluwer Academic.

Leeuwis, C. (2000) Reconceptualizing Participation for Sustainable Rural Development: Towards a Negotiation Approach, Development and Change, 31, 931-959.

Leeuwis, C. (2004) Communication for rural innovation. Rethinking agricultural extension, Oxford, Blackwell publishing Ltd.

McKinnon, J. and B. Vienne (1989) Hill tribes today., Bangkok, White Lotus-Orstom.

Moity-Maïzi, P. (2000) Méthodes et mécanismes participatifs dans un programme d'écodéveloppement: l'altérité à l'épreuve des faits, in Les enquêtes participatives en débat. Ambitions, pratiques et enjeux, P. Lavigne-Delville, N.-E. Selamna and M. Mathieu, Paris, GRET - Karthala - ICRA, 91-118.

Munoz, I., M. Paredes et al. (2007) Group Inequalities and the Nature and Power of Collective Action: Case studies from Peru, World development, 35, 11, 1929-1946.

Neef, A. (2004) People's participation in natural resource management in northern Thailand - Paradgm shift or old wine in new bottles? . 4th EUROSEAS Conference, Paris.

Neef, A. (Ed.) (2005) Participatory approaches for sustainable land use in Southeast Asia, Bangkok, White Lotus.

Pretty, J. (1998) Participatory Learning for Integrated Farming, in Integrated Bio-Systems in Zero Emissions Applications. Proceedings of the Internet Conference on Integrated Bio-Systems, E.-L. Foo and T. D. Senta.

Pretty, J. N. (1995) Participatory learning for sustainable agriculture, World Development, 23, 8, 1247-1263.

Rawls, J. (1997) Théorie de la justice, Paris, Seuil.

Ribot, J. C. (2001) Integral local development: "accomodating multiple interests" through entrustment and accountable representation, Int. J. Agricultural Resources, Governance and Ecology, 1, 3/4, 327-350.

Sikor, T. and T. Q. Nguyen (2007) Why May Forest Devoluton Not Benefit the rural Poor? Forest Entitlements in Vietnam's Central Highlands, World development, 35, 11, 2010-2025.

Ulrich, W. (1983) Critical Heuristics of Social Planning: A New Approach to Practical Philosophy, Bern, Haupt.

Ulrich, W. (2003) Beyond methodology choice: critical systems thinking as critically systemic discourse, Journal of the Operational Research Society 54, 325-342.

UN (1993) The Global Partnership for Environment and Development: A Guide to Agenda 21, United Nations.