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The “Garden Management” of Landscapes. Reflexive feedback from the ParcLAB experience conducted on the right bank of Bordeaux metropolis (France)

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Abstract:

This article revisits a doctoral research project (2015-2018) carried out via an industrial agreement for training through research (CIFRE) for a public interest group located on the “right bank” area of Bordeaux metropolis (Grand Projet des Villes Rive Droite, GPV), in France. It draws theoretical and practical lessons from the conduct of a landscape project aimed at “greening” the gardening practices of a group of public/private parks, “Parc des Coteaux”. The ParcLAB (Laboratoire du Parc des Coteaux), an experimental action mechanism set up by the landscape researcher, constituted the main field of research. Based on a reflexive approach about the conditions of this experience, the author puts forward a hypothesis about the concept of “landscape garden management” and discusses its principles and orientations. Such gardening management of landscapes is based on double cooperation involving human actors cooperating among themselves, and involving the cooperation of these actors with non-human actors.

Keywords :

landscape management # landscape project # landscape practice
Landscape ethics # Landscape mediation

Introduction

The notion of “garden management” of landscapes is at the core of this article. It aims at considering the landscape project as a long-term process that takes into account the interrelations between ecological dynamics and social practices. Based on this principle, the objective is to renew the action, whether public or private, carried out on landscape at the scale of local territories. This gardening management of landscapes is situated at the interface of the idea of planetary gardening, understood as an ethic of cooperation with nature

¹, and the idea of landscape identified as a political field open to initiatives based on cooperation between human actors, and between humans and non-humans². In fact, “gardening” landscapes is not so much a practice reserved for a specific profession as an action involving all the actors concerned. This proposal is based on existing scientific works carried out in the field of landscape³. It is bolstered by theoretical and practical explorations from other disciplinary fields: ecology, sociology, psychology, philosophy and management sciences⁴. Therefore, this reflection stands firmly at the crossroads of several scientific fields and at the meeting point of the worlds of research and action. Moreover, it is based on the reflexive feedback drawn from an experiment conducted from 2015 to 2019, as part of a doctoral thesis in architecture and landscape, carried out via an Industrial Convention for Training through Research (CIFRE)⁵.

As an employee of a public interest grouping (GIP) composed of four municipalities located on the “right bank”⁶ area of Bordeaux metropolis, the PhD researcher's mission was to carry out a landscape project concerning a group of public/private parks, which can be considered as a contemporary park system⁷, called “Parc des Coteaux” (240 hectares, about 593 acres)⁸. The initial objective of this project was to redirect the actions of the municipal gardeners towards more environmentally friendly practices (discontinuation of phytosanitary treatments, implementation of differentiated management, etc.). Over time, the landscape project opened up, taking the form of a cooperative process involving not only gardeners, but also elected officials, department heads, city and GPV project managers, landscape architects, urban planners, ecologists, residents and “users”⁹. This acceleration of the project was embodied in particular by the creation of the ParcLAB (“Laboratoire du Parc des Coteaux”). The main objective of this laboratory is to improve the management of this large urban park by involving all the stakeholders concerned, taking into account its ecological qualities as well as the social purposes that develop around it. Initially considered as a simple tool for the reorganization of the eco-spatial components of the Parc des Coteaux, the ParcLAB quickly became an indicator of the need to take into account the socio-cultural interactions between the different actors involved, directly or indirectly, in this large-scale inter-communal project. The difficulties encountered often stemmed from interpersonal blocks caused by conflicting views of what the “Parc des Coteaux” is at the moment, and contradictory expectations regarding its future. These difficulties show the need to build a collective in the long term, combining different professional cultures and practices. In fact, besides its eco-spatial dimension, the landscape project has a relational dimension that needs to be taken into account. This observation made during the experimentation process prompted us to pay particular attention to the community (human and non-human), which includes much variation and requires support for all parties to cooperate, in order for the “Parc des coteaux” project to be implemented. It is on this cooperation between “humans” only and between “humans and non-humans” that garden-based landscape management is based. Formulated on the basis of a reflexive approach on observed situations, whether intentional or not, proposed throughout the experiment conducted over 4 years¹⁰, the garden management of landscapes allows us today to question the ethical references underlying the landscape practices, and to put them into perspective.

In order to provide information on the context of the study, the first part of this article specifies the nature and the interplay of the actors involved in the “Grand Projet des Villes Rive Droite” and the “Parc des Coteaux”. The second part is dedicated to a reflection on the practical implementation of landscape management through the formulation of four ways of being and acting, which are put forward to constitute the theoretical and practical foundations of an ethics applied to the landscape.

1. 1. The ParcLAB: an experimental mechanism used as research field

The public interest group “Grand Projet des Villes Rive Droite” (GIP GPV) was created over fifteen years ago under the aegis of the 1999 law on land use and sustainable development. It was set up as an attempt to remedy the negative socio-environmental externalities produced by the urban development of the Bordeaux conurbation from the 1960s onwards (fig 1). Its actions include urban renewal, economic development and employment, social cohesion and living together, fight against discrimination and involvement of local residents. The four municipalities making up the GPV Rive Droite have seven priority neighbourhoods identified as per the urban policy, representing 35% of the total population. The GPV intervention area is also concerned by public policies for the preservation and management of environment and landscape. In this regard, it provides fertile ground for potential contradiction between actions undertaken to protect/restore “ecological continuities”, on the one hand, and a desire to create a wide range of green spaces open to all, on the other hand.

The scope of this research focuses on “Parc des Coteaux”, one of the major inter-municipal “projects” carried out by GPV since 2002. It is mainly composed of ten public parks, spread over 240 hectares (about 593 acres) on the hillsides of the right bank of Bordeaux metropolis (fig. 2, 3). The ecological importance of the Parc des Coteaux is now recognised, especially owing to the presence of several Natural Zones of Ecological, Faunistic and Floristic Interest (ZNIEFF). Their existence is mainly due to dry grasslands and other calcareous habitats (juniper heath, holm oak forests) as well as associated floral and faunistic processions. Local political commitment to preserve the park and its fulfillment into the field through the implementation of ecological management has also made it possible to recently classify part of its territory as sensitive natural areas (ENS). As such, the Parc des Coteaux can benefit from the implementation, by the department of Gironde, of a policy of protection, management and access to the public. Furthermore, the Parc des Coteaux is thus recognised for its architectural and landscape heritage. All of its constituent parks reflect a rich architectural and plant heritage associated with the eighteenth century establishment of wine estates, facing the city of Bordeaux and overlooking the Garonne valley, opposite the port and the city of Bordeaux. With their breathtaking view, these estates are both a holiday destination (leisure estates and landscaped park) and a production area (cultivated land, mainly vineyards). They are staged both ways, from and to Bordeaux. Finally, the Parc des Coteaux is located in an area with high social stakes. Promoting access for residents and other users to this park is one of the main focuses of its development and management.

In order to take into account all of these ecological, heritage and social issues, an experimental system was set up in 2013 by the landscape researcher. Called ParcLAB (for “Laboratoire du Parc des Coteaux”), this system allowed local actors (elected representatives, department managers, project managers, municipal gardeners, landscape designers and local residents) to get involved in a long-term territorial cooperation process. The ParcLAB is mainly based on an annual series of four meetings during which the managers and gardeners of the green space departments of the four cities concerned meet on the field to exchange knowledge and know-how (fig 4). It is on these particular occasions, in the park itself, in places selected for this purpose, that issues are debated, questions are raised and proposals are voiced. The latter may also emerge from more informal exchanges in connection with various types of opportunities (educational workshops, artistic events, etc.). In fact, the ParcLab is in no way intended to produce a management document that is fixed once and for all. Based on listening, sharing and experimentation, the process of the project is meant to be sustainable, and built upon individual and collective experiences in order for it to develop and reinvent itself. The objective is to ensure that the actors involved become more competent, and allow for the pooling of resources, in order to take concrete action at the scale of “Parc des Coteaux”¹¹, which is an inter-municipal park system. It is the reflexive approach on the very conditions of this project-experiment that allowed me to formulate the hypothesis of a gardening management of the landscapes, the ethical principles and orientations of action of which are discussed below.

2. 2. “Garden management” of landscapes, general proposals for an ethics applied to landscape

Four ways of being and acting are the theoretical and practical foundations of the garden-based management of landscapes, as it has been implemented at the “Parc des Coteaux”. This is a first combination, stemming from the ParcLAB experience and inspired by other experiences¹² put forward for discussion and debate, but also for individual and/or collective experimentation. These four proposals are conceived as tools allowing for landscape gardening management to be put into practice. However, not all tools are useful as such, and some of them may even need to be modified or adjusted. The “wisdom of the gardener” as formulated by Gilles Clément¹³, which is at the very source of this research project, calls for the freedom to think and act in order to serve the values mobilised in context. Putting this combination to the test constitutes, for the landscape researcher himself, a perspective for future landscape projects, in other locations and other social and environmental contexts.

Experiencing the garden

“Experience the garden” is a proposal formulated by Cyrille Marlin in the context of his doctoral research¹⁴. It is about living and feeling what can constitute the act of making one or more gardens, while giving full consideration to diversity. In order to do this, he believes that it is necessary for us to renew our vision of the garden. It must be dissociated from the idea of ownership and be envisioned beyond fences and boundaries, in the way that this notion is in fact historically and culturally considered according to Western thought: “To raise the issue once more properly, let us put it this way: the fact that there are gardeners, land and cultivated plants is enough to consider these [spaces] as gardens.”¹⁵ In like manner, a garden can thus be a relatively small space, potentially as ephemeral as a flowerpot on a window sill or a plant growing at the foot of a tree (Figs. 5, 6), or be considered at the global scale.

Experiencing the garden makes it possible to appreciate social, ecological and spatial dynamics at work. This way of conceiving gardening as a “sensitive experience”¹⁶ is one of the tools able to activate a process of landscape management. To do so, it must actively take into account the ecological, political and economic dynamics in place. From the scale of a plant or a group of plants to that of a territory, this posture makes it possible not only to live and to be mindful of social interrelationships between human stakeholders, but also to take into account, as shown through parcLAB experience, those between humans and non-humans, for which landscape dynamics are interdependent.

Taking the time to meet or even to garden with the gardeners working on a particular area enables us to be mindful of everyone’s representations and expectations, as well as associated human, ecological, spatial, political and economic dynamics, and use them as support for the management of the landscapes concerned. Throughout my own research, by working closely with city gardeners in their daily activities, I have been able to immerse myself in the complexity of the interrelationships at work (fig. 7). Likewise, during an inventory of “gardener-inhabitant” practices undertaken by students from the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture et du Paysage de Bordeaux (ENSAP Bx), the identification of diverse existing garden forms in the neighbourhoods bordering Parc des Coteaux highlighted the integration of gardening practices into a wider network of stakeholders, as well as various management methods (fig. 8).

Planting at the foot of a tree is, for instance, associated with individual gardening practices (fig 6): some residents enjoy doing it. This practice is now recognised and valued by the community. Financial aid is actually dedicated to the perpetuation of these practices in what can be called landscape commons. This financial aid is “eco-conditioned”, according to the community's normative system. In the same way, city gardeners can provide material support for gardening in communal areas. The individual act is integrated into a network of heterogeneous actors involving the individual resident, the tree, the plants, the life of the soil, the border edging, the co-owners, the elected representatives, the financial assistance scheme, and the city gardeners.

Experiencing the garden can be put into practice by elected representatives, department heads, city gardeners, residents and other professionals in landscape planning and management (landscapers,

ecologists, urban planners, architects). However, being mindful of everyone's representations, expectations and more broadly to the landscape dynamics in place, does not go without saying for everyone. To achieve it, it has been necessary to eliminate “a number of biases and habits”¹⁷. This is why other tools must be put forward in order to reinforce this approach. Deploying a genuine ability to listen is one of them.

Listening and sharing

Listening can be conceived both as a passive and as an active attitude. It can be considered as passive because it is primarily about letting others play a part, express themselves and take action. It can also be seen as active because it contributes to the evolution of the interrelations between oneself and the other¹⁸. This way of being and acting mobilises one's body, gestures, words and mind but it may also be an opportunity to use “dispositive benevolence”¹⁹, a mobilisation of places, time or objects, fostering “benevolence” towards the expression of the other. Listening to the other, or to others, is not as easy as it seems, because truly listening to someone requires more than merely hearing what he or she says and formulating one's own understanding of it. Herein lies a pitfall, as one might be caught up in one's own interpretation of words and observations of reality. In addition, one's approach may not actually give full attention and full consideration to the words being said. Listening thus contributes to generating new scientific knowledge and enriching individual and collective experience. Applying this operating mode as an experiment proved beneficial for me, as a ParcLAB facilitator. In fact, it has been one of the most efficient tools to activate socio-cultural mediation processes. Finally, as a landscape gardener, I have placed myself in a position allowing me to listen to animals or plants, and to be mindful of socio-ecological dynamics, as much as possible²⁰. This way of being gradually gained in importance. It has become a skill, a specific know-how, as I was capitalising on my personal and professional experience²¹ as a landscape gardener-researcher.

During meetings with technical and financial partners, or during daily activities on the field, attitudes of kindness and sharing were important resources for the relational dynamism of the project. On a number of occasions, a kind word or a thoughtful gesture was sufficient to demonstrate one's commitment to this collective approach, which was often weakened by tensions and social conflicts experienced on a daily basis (fig 9, 10). Experiencing the garden corresponds to this intention as well. It is about sharing experiences, sharing different views. However, sharing can either be about “being together” or “being divided”²². It is therefore necessary to adequately assess this approach and make the intention as well as the ethical positioning that underlies it very clear. At this point a question arises: is the intent to actually “act together” or “divide to rule”?

A number of elected officials have, at times, contributed to fuelling conflicts between green space managers and gardeners. The formulation of new injunctions directly to a manager regarding the maintenance of such and such area despite the fact that the manager and his teams had initially committed themselves to extensive management via a new work organisation, gave rise to a negative feeling about the consideration of their collective dynamics. Standing between the elected representative and the gardeners, the manager must be attentive to both the directions of the elected representative and the feelings expressed by the gardeners. This uncomfortable position has sometimes resulted in decreasing the motivation of the manager and that of the gardeners.

The activation of a principle of sharing, such as the one set up through the ParcLAB experience, engages the action in the field of landscape and gives it a political dimension. Our actions as landscape designers, elected officials, service managers, city gardeners or simply as citizens can thus be guided by our willingness to act together in the creation, evolution and management of landscapes. I argue that this political goal provides fertile ground for the implementation of landscape ethics. And yet, it is still in opposition with the attitude of a number of elected representatives, service managers and professionals working towards the planning and management of the territories. They are committed to a sectoral approach favourable to the division of tasks and ways of thinking. This has been demonstrated throughout my research, by revealing the lack of consideration given to urban gardeners as well as the limited role they are allowed to play in the planning process. Hence, the intention to act collectively is

set in a renewal process of public action conducted in the field of landscape, which can be reflected in landscape garden management.

Taking care

“Taking care”, “being attentive”, seems to go without saying for many of the stakeholders I have met. In certain cases, it is actually a key element of their speeches. Nevertheless, taking a closer look at their actions, it appears that respect for living beings often turns out to be of secondary importance compared to personal or collective interests. As such, the latter are therefore dissociated from the interests of the “land community”²³. Recent redevelopment of a car park in one of Parc des Coteaux parks illustrates this. Despite the involvement of various professional landscape planning and management stakeholders (elected officials, service managers, landscape designer), this project has had irreversible effects on ancient oak trees. One of them, a centenary tree, now appears to be gradually dying out (fig. 11). This project was carried out in 2014. At that time, the will to establish a cooperative approach through the parcLAB emerged with a view of amending the role of service managers and city gardeners in landscape development and management projects. In the end, service managers and gardeners of the cities participating in the parcLAB believed that this experience has had a negative impact on people’s minds.

As in Martha Nussbaum’s argument, many other authors, including Aldo Leopold, express the need to develop people’s ability to give empathy and be able to receive it through education. When education serves ethics, responsibility and solidarity can get stronger. Also, individual ethics are brought closer together with that of the city. Aldo Leopold argues for an ethic of “the earth”. The latter is similar to pragmatic environmental ethics, resolutely turned towards action while having a capacity for reflexivity²⁴. As it focuses on gardening practices, this ethics could even become “landscape ethics”. The act of gardening and the place where it is expressed (the garden) are intrinsically linked to social action. The act of gardening as well as the garden itself are the result of the social and cultural dynamics that they generate. It is therefore possible to state, in keeping with Gilles Clément’s perspective, the need to “take care of the planetary garden”:

Everyone should behave towards the planet with the same “wisdom”, which means the same sense of dedication and responsibility as that of the gardener who is entrusted with the smallest plot of land in the world.²⁵

Listening to and caring for others can be viewed as resources for the development of landscape ethics. However, in order to activate and develop them, the lessons learned from parcLAB experience show the importance of the ability to mobilise these resources in the paths that we follow, in our training and our education, as well as our individual and collective experiences. Landscape designers, city gardeners, elected officials, other professionals involved in landscape planning and management as well as the residents-users are concerned. From this perspective, I believe that “experiencing the garden” takes on its full meaning. This practical philosophy calls us to go beyond what is visible, through the experience of socio-ecological interrelationships. Those who have designed the parking spaces with little regard to these ancient trees, may not have been fully aware of the harm they were causing. Perhaps there was no “ill intent”. Yet, experiencing the garden and listening to the city gardeners and/or the head of the municipal green space department might have helped them understand that taking care of the roots of these trees was important. In my opinion, a conscious landscape ethics would have been very appropriate in this case.

In addition to the principles of action that I have just outlined, others have revealed their importance in the context of the parcLAB experience, in relation to the act of gardening. The ability to “deal with”, which is intrinsically linked to the reflections and practice developed by Gilles Clément, is one of them.

Dealing with &/or *laissez faire*

“Going along with nature is not about spending unnecessary and polluting energy, while actually going in the opposite direction. Going along with others means building a project based on a combination of differences.”²⁶

“Going along with nature” requires patience as well as the ability to deal with uncertainty. As for uncertainty, it can be seen as a reminder of the living, processual and interrelated nature of garden and landscape making. The ecological as well as the social dynamics at play between living and non-living actors may resist any attempt of “programming” or “streamlining”. Such a situation can be experienced as destabilising, trying and/or enriching. Whatever the situation, whatever the project undertaken, one should anticipate the need to adjust.

... a gardener knows that every morning he has to go and take a look at his leek bed to observe the unforeseen events that happened during the night and to which he will have to adapt.²⁷

In parcLAB experience, the “go along with”²⁸ attitude has shown certain limitations in a context that urban gardeners deemed overly devaluing. These gardeners claimed that they were willing to endure the difficult conditions inherent to their profession, provided that they received encouragement and support in return. For this to happen, it seems necessary for elected representatives and residents to be able to adapt their expectations, pursuant to the requirements regarding the evolution of gardening practices. For the gardeners and their managers, such requirements require time for rehabilitation and experimentation. Elected representatives and residents alike must “go with” current societal dynamics, and be able to understand the necessary conditions for change. The ethics of “going with”²⁹ applied to landscape gardening management must therefore be extended to all human stakeholders: gardeners, elected officials, residents and users, as well as external professional contributors.

In Bassens town for instance, a gardener’s will to allow a grove of trees to develop in one of the parks making up the Parc des Coteaux (fig 12) contributed to the evolution of specific ecological environments. A lawn area gradually evolved into a meadow, a shrubby area and then undergrowth. These changes have had an impact on spatial qualities, open and closed spaces, perspectives and paths. This “no mow” move, which is part of a long-term process, has activated social, spatial and ecological interrelationships, but it has also contributed to enhancing technical and political choices. This afforestation, which is currently being restored, gradually turned into potential support for the ecological management of public spaces initiated by the community, in general. Throughout the municipality, a number of strolls have been organised in this park in order to commend the know-how of the gardeners as well as the communal (or even inter-communal) management initiated a few years ago. The “gardening posture” adopted by this qualified gardener impacted landscape evolution and management way beyond the originally designated grove of trees.

The ability to “go along with” is coupled with an ability to “let do” (from French “laissez faire”), the latter suggesting “letting go”. It means providing space for ecological and human dynamics as part of the action undertaken. It is about letting the other (or others) act their own way, by initiating dynamics of cooperation or symbiosis. Letting go can be achieved in several ways: letting act, letting adapt, letting experiment. This principle of action can also be applied to the non-living actors of the process. Objects or spatial configurations can trigger beneficial interactions which may not have been anticipated. For instance, at Parc des Coteaux, a small ditch collecting runoff water from a car park eventually proved to be an interesting refuge for amphibians and reptiles. Nevertheless, the outcome of the interactions between living and non-living actors does not always match our expectations. These interactions must therefore be monitored and regulated in certain cases.

Although the objective formulated above is to let “the other” do experiments in order to start an emancipation process, it seems nevertheless necessary to bear in mind the context and the means available for the materialisation of this “power to act”. In fact, “letting go” requires the emergence of a

monitoring role. It also entails that support be provided with regards to personal and professional development. City gardeners have often acknowledged the importance of a number of friends, relatives, neighbours and colleagues who not only assisted them as they were learning the trade, but also helped them develop a passion for the “world of plants”.

To me, this is what can be missing at times: communicating one’s love for their profession. Bernard knew how to pass it on to us. I have made this profession my own. Thanks to his technical and human qualities, I was able to enjoy learning. I never felt compelled to do so. People like that are true gems. It’s a solid investment for municipalities because it is truly beneficial down the road. (Service Manager, May 2017)

Over the course of this research, the importance of a caring human management has been repeatedly referred to. In fact, the management of other dynamics, whether they be ecological, spatial, political, or economic heavily depends on it. This stance thus contributes to the emergence of landscape ethics, alongside the other tools previously mentioned. The intent is quite clear: let others do as they please while adopting a listening posture, taking care of them, accepting their limitations, but also imagining their ability to go beyond them.

Conclusion: Towards a landscape ethics

Landscape garden management serves as a guide to the actions carried out in the field of landscape. It appears to be at the source of the formulation of an ethical stance adapted to landscape projects: a landscape ethics. Based on the parcLAB experience, I was able to demonstrate the plurality of actors (human or not) being active in the daily interrelationships participating in the landscape management process of Parc des Coteaux. Permanent evolution observed in the networking of these heterogeneous actors is part of the dynamics of this project. The social, cultural, ecological, technical and political interrelationships at play with regards to the diversity of the actors engaged in the network equally contribute to the fruitfulness, complexity and fragility of landscape dynamics. In practice, it is not always easy to maintain these ways of being and acting, and to ensure that dynamics of solicitude are maintained over time and everywhere. What the ParcLAB experience shows is that the landscape project does not end when the site is handed over or when the deliverables of a landscape study have been delivered. It takes shape over time, according to different time frames. The challenge is to be able to set up the conditions for a permanent transformation and to become aware of the diversity of the time and space scales of a landscape action immersed in long-term social, ecological, spatial, political and economic interactions.

Gardening together, sharing one's knowledge, know-how, passions but also one's doubts, as well as taking the time to make and share a cake, to pass on a gardening tip or a recipe, taking the time to chat, to listen to each other, these are little things, little courtesies and collective moments that contribute to the implementation of landscape garden management. It is about ensuring that the choices made and the decisions taken are rooted in an inclusive ethical approach. This garden-based landscape management has a strong political and ethical dimension: a shared and benevolent management of landscape dynamics and the plurality of actors related to them. It can be applied to many fields of landscape practice.

However, as the research project presented in this paper shows, the activation of this approach is not self-evident. The four ways of being and acting outlined, constituting the theoretical and practical foundations of this process of landscape management, presuppose that one works on the evolution of one's ability to listen, to be open, to understand, to mediate and to care. The gardening management of landscapes thus requires to extend one’s learning of landscape ethics on a daily basis. In fact, it has to do with the ability to garden one's own “practical wisdom”. One of the stakes is to contribute, by a mirror effect, to the evolution of the ethical posture of all human and non-human actors involved in the project.

Figure 1: Aerial view of the right bank of the city of Bordeaux. This view shows the dense urban development carried out on the plain and the plateau within which the fringe of the hillsides marks a gap. Source: IGN - 2000.

Figure 2. View of the city of Bordeaux from Palmer Park; one of the ten parks making up the Parc des Coteaux. City of Cenon.

Source: Benjamin Chambelland Droite - June 2021.

Figure 3: Location map of the Parc des Coteaux.

Source: "La Sagesse des Jardiniers. Guide de gestion écologique du parc des Coteaux" [Gardeners' Wisdom. A Manual for Parc des Coteaux Ecological Management] p 4 - October 2017.

Figure 4. ParcLAB meeting with the gardeners and the managers of the green space services of the four member cities of the GIP GPV Rive Droite. Source: Thomas Saint Upery - November 2013

Figure 5. A "balcony garden" in a city of Lormont district.

Source: Benjamin Chambelland - June 2021.

Figure 6. A "garden at the foot of a tree" in a town of Floirac district.

Source: Benjamin Chambelland - June 2021.

Figure 7. Participating in a gardening session with James Tastet and Francis Demarty, gardeners of the town of Bassens, in the Panoramis park, one of the parks making up the Parc des Coteaux. Source: Benjamin Chambelland - August 2015.

Figure 8. Elsa Tustes and Julien Virlovet, students at ENSAP Bx, take part in a gardening workshop with residents, organised by Lormont neighbourhood authority.

Source: Elsa Tustes and Julien Virlovet - March 2017.

Figure 9. "Apple and Raisin Cake Recipe" published in the records of the joint steering committee #4. Source: Benjamin Chambelland - January 2017.

During each meeting with the members of the ParcLAB and the institutional partners, I made a "home-made" cake in order to activate a benevolent and sharing attitude towards the people involved in the project. The idea was to "please" them and to "give something in return", for their collective involvement. This approach had previously been implemented with city gardeners in the context of "field conversations". I continued it and extended it to all the participants during these collective meetings.

Figure 10. Sowing tomato seeds. Source: Elsa Tustes - March 2017.

Shortly before the beginning of Spring, I sowed tomato seeds harvested the year before. Then, I gave the seedlings to the student landscape gardeners working at the Parc des Coteaux and its surroundings. This idea was for them to use these seedlings as tools to help identify the gardening practices of the local residents they met while at work. The students transplanted the seedlings into pots for them to grow and be eventually distributed individually to the residents. These tomato seeds from my garden have thus become a tool for dialogue and sharing with the residents of the right bank. With a little care, some of these seeds may even have allowed them to enjoy fine tomatoes.

Figure 11. This layout illustrates the little attention paid to these trees and, more generally, to the socio-ecological dynamics associated with them. Source: Benjamin Chambelland - June 2021.

Figure 12. A grove of trees being developed at Rozin Park, in Bassens. This grove is the result of a gardener's desire to "go along with" natural dynamics at work. Source: Benjamin Chambelland - June 2021.

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- ¹ Gilles Clément, *Jardins, paysage et génie naturel* [Gardens, Landscape and Natural Engineering] (Collège de France : Fayard, 2012).
- ² Michel Callon, 'Éléments pour une sociologie de la traduction. La domestication des coquilles Saint-Jacques dans la Baie de Saint-Brieuc' [Some Elements of a Sociology of Translation. Domestication of the Scallops in St Brieuc bay], *L'Année sociologique*, n°36, (1986). Bruno Latour, *La Science en action* [Science in Action], (Paris : La Découverte, 1989). John Law, *A Sociology of monsters : essays on power, technology and domination*, (London : Routledge, 1991). Dominique Vinck, 'De l'objet intermédiaire à l'objet-frontière. Vers la prise en compte du travail d'équipement' [From intermediary object towards boundary-Object. Accounting for the work of equipment], *Revue d'anthropologie des connaissances*, 3/1 (2009), 51-72.
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- ¹² From 2009 to 2015, Benjamin Chambelland worked with Stéphane Duprat, a landscape designer, in a workshop called "Alpage", which was a shared landscape design workshop. This workshop was specialised in setting up and accompanying landscape projects described as "participative".
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