This PhD dissertation explores from a spatial point of view, the life work of Ogawa family ligneage with in the Japanese art of landscaping gardening. In concrete the thesis focuses on the interval time comprising the Meiyo era, Thirty and early Showa. Therefore it covers the period of maximum production of the seventh generation of the lineage, Ogawa Jikoshoji VII. Together with him, his son Hakuyo, Ogawa VII and his grandson, Jiro, Ogawa XiX and the employees of the landscape company called Ueji, will rush the work of shaping a renovation project for the city of Kyoto through the construction of gardens for the second residencies of the most important political figures and the new bourgeoisie of this time.

The city of Kyoto, due to the capital transfer to Tokyo, is going to face a period of economic and political decline. Seen from nowadays, the impact of the life work of Ogawa will exceed their own expectations. As a result nature will go back to the city. These gardens will become a cultural, professional and social stimulus to lend and cohesive a new type of tea ceremony, reflecting the spirit of the epoch. This party will be more open to the whole sectors of the society. Its ideal will be the crystallization of a pure and luminous relationship with the beautiful landscape where these gardens are located, Higashiyama, the eastern moun- tains of Kyoto.

During the course of his work, while Ogawa is achieving fame, he expands his philosophy to other Japanese cities such as Tokyo, Osaka, Kanazawa etc. The gardens built in different physical and social contexts far away from Kyoto, offers a chance to compare the particular distance that he took from the rest of his contemporaries, more Kikō in reflection it new coming influences in their designs. The nature of Ogawa was free to adapt in different styles, either with the symbolic meanings and themes from traditional Japanese Garden. For him the tradition in which is deeply rooted needs a renewal, for that renovation Ogawa rely in the place.

Therefore, this thesis examines how visual, spatial and functionally, the anchoring of the garden to the place is achieved by Ogawa. This new approach to Ogawa gardens has been decided in order to complete previously researches done about his works by Japanese. They have not investigated in depth about these aspects. Neither the life work of Ogawa is almost unknown, partly because generally West fixed interest toward more conceptual gardens such as dry gardens done by stone and gravel. To address this spatial point of view chosen for this thesis, two concepts MA and OKU are selected. MA concept, reflects the distance and the relation that Ogawa takes with each one of the objects that are placed in the garden, the place is achieved by Ogawa. This new approach to Ogawa gardens has been decided in order to complete previously researches done about his works by Japanese. They have not investigated in depth about these aspects. Neither the life work of Ogawa is almost unknown, partly because generally West fixed interest toward more conceptual gardens such as dry gardens done by stone and gravel. To address this spatial point of view chosen for this thesis, two concepts MA and OKU are selected. MA concept, reflects the distance and the relation that Ogawa takes with each one of the objects that are placed in the garden, the way he builds the landscape and not a mere sight that happens passively. This both concepts will be materialized in the gardens by using various Japanese design techniques. These are shakkei, meigakure and jikoshoji, they organize the areas of the garden. These areas are classified in the dissertation as archetypes such as the clearing, the veil and the flow, which are defined by their essential substances, light, shade and murrum, respectively. These archetypes create various types as thresholds, mounds, coniferous trees, groves, forests, ponds, streams, waterfalls etc. Ultimately these elements are the legacy that any landscape designer inherits from Ogawa gardens. Legacy for the practice of those who choose to define its position about nature. In this, Ogawa teaches his ideal of nature.

Regarding to the structure of the thesis, firstly it holds on the traditional Japanese garden in order to introduce to a less accustomed western reader to the Japanese aesthetics, secondly it studies how Ogawa develops a new approaches from tradition. Finally the thesis analyses how the tracings spaces generate with the landscape of the place. In doing that the dissertation will show how Ogawa creates a real continuity with the landscape. To understand this continuity it has to be explained a very important detail, he built over more than thirty gardens under the same mountains within a very reduced space domain, so for him each new development is a opportunity to refine his previous approaches and to experience new solutions, getting closer to the nature, rather than to the symbolism of the Japanese Garden.

The thesis is divided into five chapters, the first one is a prologue, the second, a walk to nine of his gardens. These nine gardens are included in this chapter because in my opinion they are the best ones that showed the standpoint selected for the dissertation to reflect the impact of the life work of Ogawa in the city in nowadays. The third chapter reflects on the paradigm shift that occurs in the Japanese landscape gardening of the Meiyo period. The fourth is the core of the thesis, it will be discussed in depth the MA and OKU of its gardens. Finally the fifth one observs the gardens as a whole and its impact for the city and the landscape.

Therefore this thesis a spatial matrix constructed from the existent gardens, it explores the roots of a tree. The gardens are the tree, these roots have different primary and secondary leading lines. The table of contents reflects these collection of varied items that the dissertation will be accumulating one after another with the reading. Some of these paths will get ended or will derive in other successive branches, others ones are left suspended at one certain point willing to be continued and complited in the future of this thesis with a better understanding of Ogawa life work. Therefore this dissertation is never the Ogawa’s own vision of his own work, something unfinished, but the influence that his work has had on my own thinking contrasted with what other researchers have equally done on in their researches. So in my opinion, once a work has been constructed, its importance lies in the inspirational role and its influence to lead towards a new future. 

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