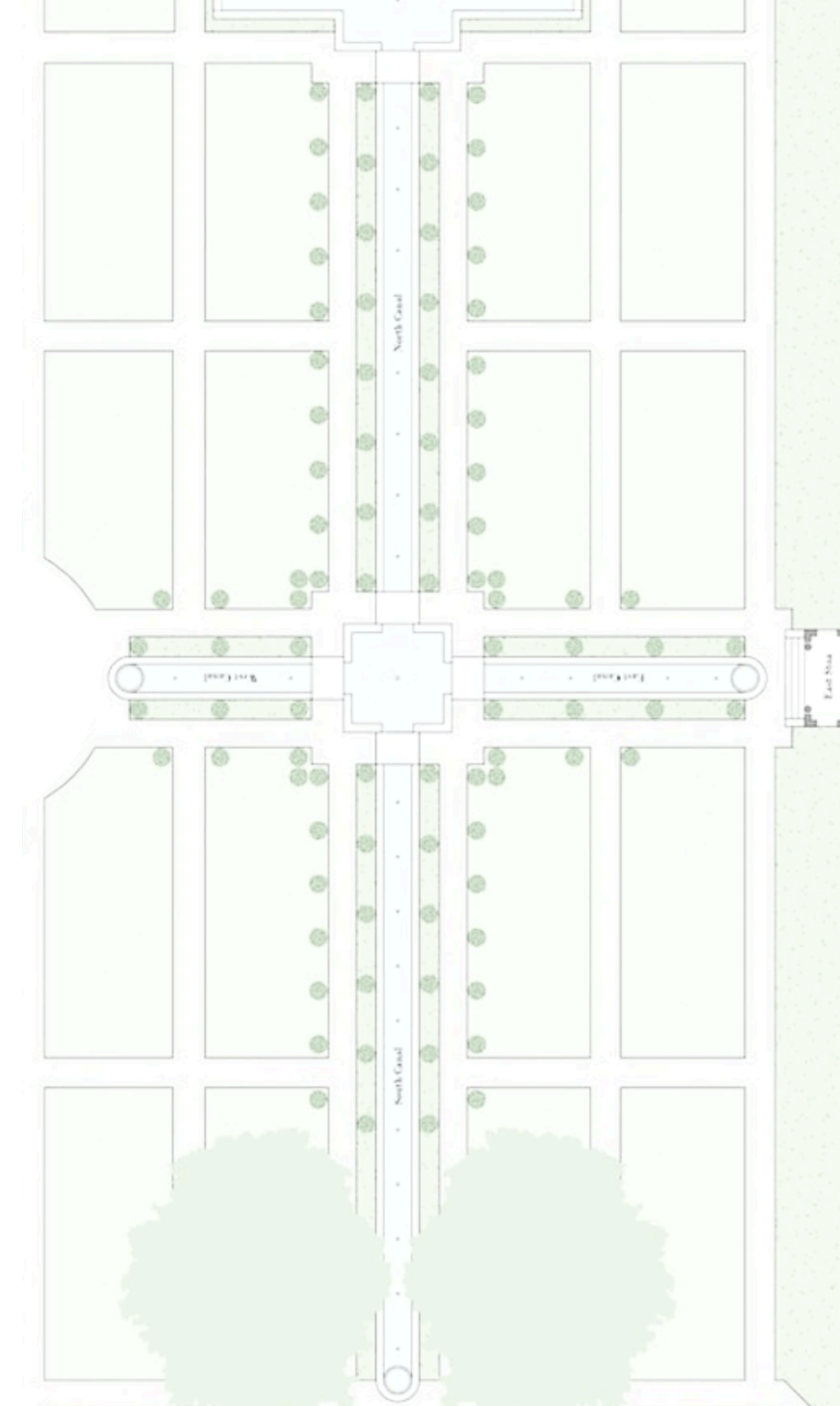


Landscape and Islamic Gardens

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Introduction

A journey from the middle east to Al Andalus

*"The description of Paradise which the righteous are promised is that in it are **rivers of water** unaltered, **rivers of milk** the taste of which never changes, **rivers of wine** delicious to those who drink, and **rivers of purified honey**..."*

The Islamic garden is far more than an aesthetic arrangement of plants and water. It is a **philosophical construct** of Jannah itself.

Defining Element	Significance
Water	Symbolizes life, <u>purity</u> , mercy, and paradise: described in the Quran as " gardens underneath which rivers flow "
Axiality and Geometry	Four quadrants representing the four rivers of paradise
Enclosed private space	The garden as a protected paradise
Integration with architecture	Palaces, pavilions, and gardens as a single visual and spatial composition (frame)
Productive function	Not purely aesthetic: edible, medicinal, etc...
Sensory experience	Water sound, fragrance, shade, color,reflection – all elements for pleasure and spiritual reflection



America

● **Al Andalus-Spain**

Southern Italy

● **Persia**

North Africa

Egypt
Libya
Tunisia
Algeria
Morocco

Bilad el Sham

Syria
Lebanon
Palestine
Jordan

	Architecture	Water	Vegetation	Form&Function
Persia	- strong axial geometry → Chaharbagh (four part layout) - the pavilion acts as the visual and spatial focus	- core design element → channels, pools and fountains - symbolizes life and community	- ecological and symbolic - used to provide comfort and evoke paradise	- geometric and enclosed - climate moderation - ceremonial use - aesthetic experience whitin a controlled environment
Arab Region	- framed by the building of the garden, creating a private courtyard - luxurious residential and palaces - strong dominance on luxurious hardscape tiling and shading structures	- purity symbol- water as cleanser - divider of hierachy of accessibility - leisure and pleasure - axial direction - multifunctional - sign of life-production and settlement - climate regulation - white noise and refletive	- softscape is minimal - drought tolerant-xeriscaping - edible and aromatic function (rosemary,lavender,olive...) - pruned and maintained	- axial around water feature - enclosed by homes to ensure enclosure and privacy - sign of leisure and superiority - symbolism of paradise and life - edible, aromatic, aesthetic - fenced and protected
Italy (Sicily)	- Soli-Asymmetric and integrated pavillions - Muqarnas and fountains - shaded porticoes and loggias	- salsabil - peschieri (massive basins) - Qanats	- citrus trees - agricultural utility - layered canopy design	- geometric layouts - axial alignment - sunken parterres - climate regulation - leisure-> sensory experience - political propaganda
Spain	- enclousure - roman patio+ idea of oasis - architecture as a display of vernacular materials-> rammed earth, whitewashed walls, use of ceramic	islamic influence-> spiritual approach, aesthetic use of water elements, to generate sound and visual effects	- christian garden-> medicinal use, utilitarian - islamic garden-> sensory experience - both focused on wellbeing, different approach	- enclosed but more related to the environment - intimacy - reflection - protection
América	- Ceramic and mosaics - Internal patios inside architectural structures - Residential and religious purpose (Church, monastery and convent)	- Used as ornamental/aesthetic element - Helped to create microclimates and different uses in gardens	- Local and exotic (brought from Europe) especies. - Use of local resources and take advantage of fruit trees.	- Mix of uses, the garden was used to keep the architecture isolated from the sun. - Religion, residence, leisure. Uses changed within years

persia- origin



Persian Garden:

The Persian garden is a traditional landscape design that combines geometry, water, vegetation, and architecture to create a harmonious and climate-responsive environment symbolizing paradise. Originated around the 6th century BCE.

Chaharbagh:

Chaharbagh ("four gardens") is the fundamental layout of the Persian garden, where two main axes divide the space into four quadrants, often organized around a central water feature or pavilion.

Architecture

The Persian garden is organized around strong axial geometry, often a chaharbagh (four-part layout), with symmetry and a central pavilion that acts as the visual and spatial focus

Vegetation

Planting is both ecological and symbolic. Shade-providing and fruit trees such as cypress, plane, and fruit species are commonly used to create comfort and represent paradise

Form and function

The form is highly geometric and enclosed. Its functions combine climate moderation, leisure, ceremonial use, and aesthetic experience within a controlled environment

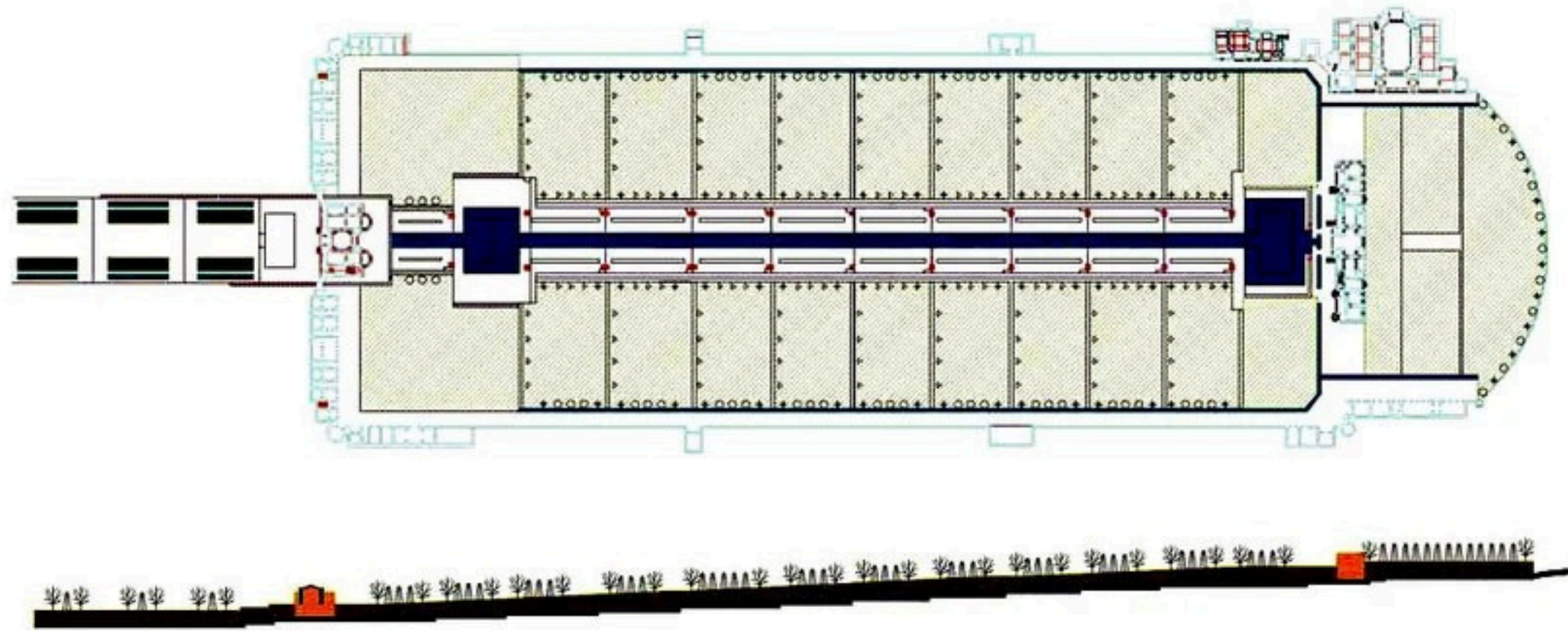
Water

Water is a core design element, expressed through channels, pools, and fountains. It provides cooling, organizes the spatial axis, and symbolizes life and continuity.

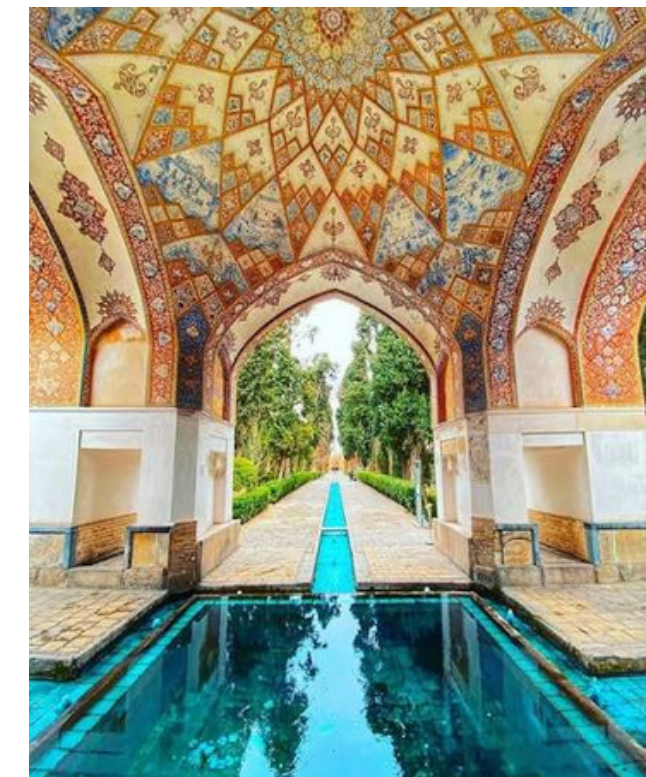
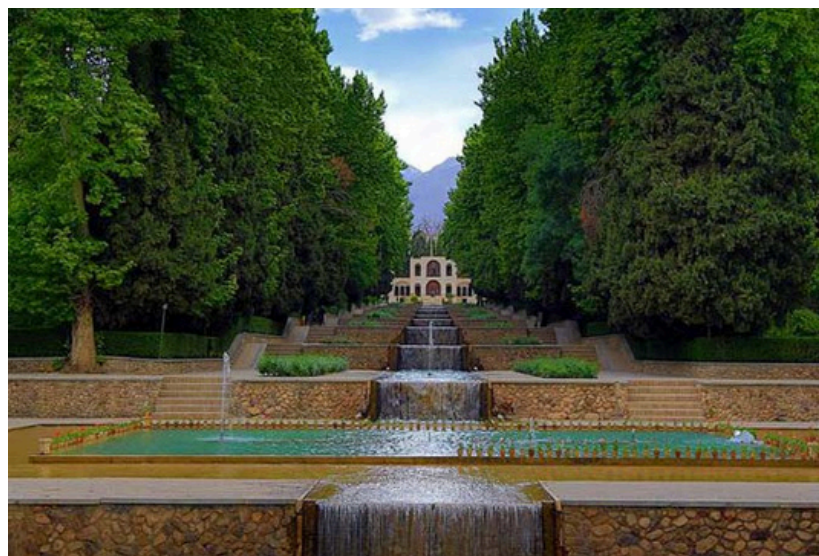
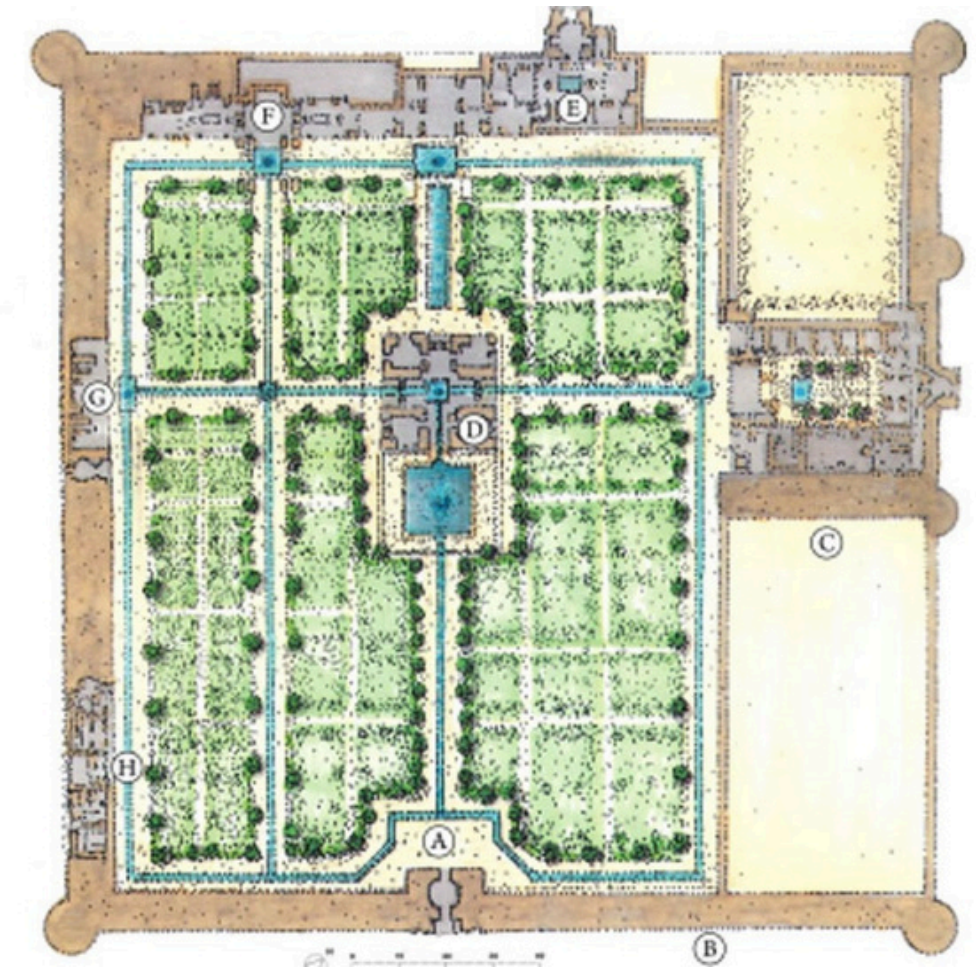


Case Study

Shazdeh Garden



Fin Garden



Courtyard in Persian architecture

Iranian house, Kashan with courtyard



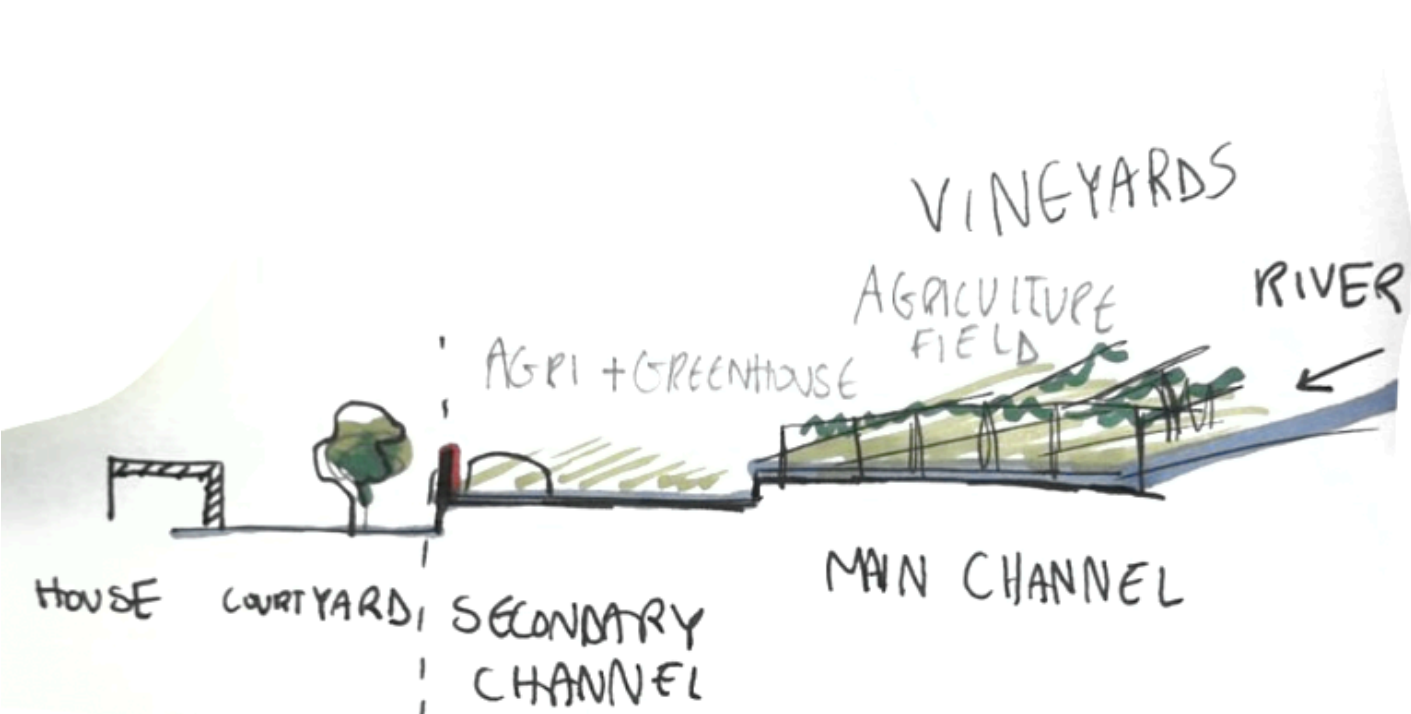
Aerial view of Yazd city



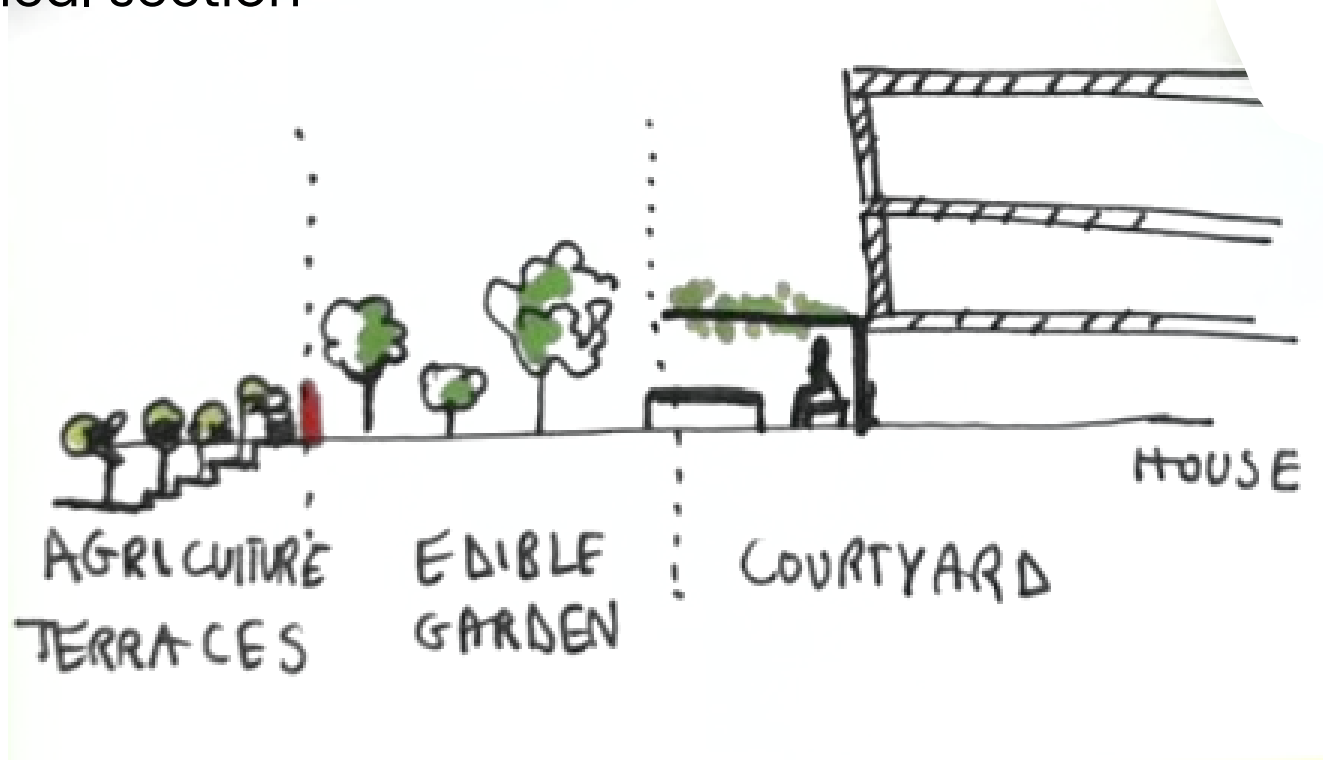
Arab Region



Bilad al Sham- Greater Syria

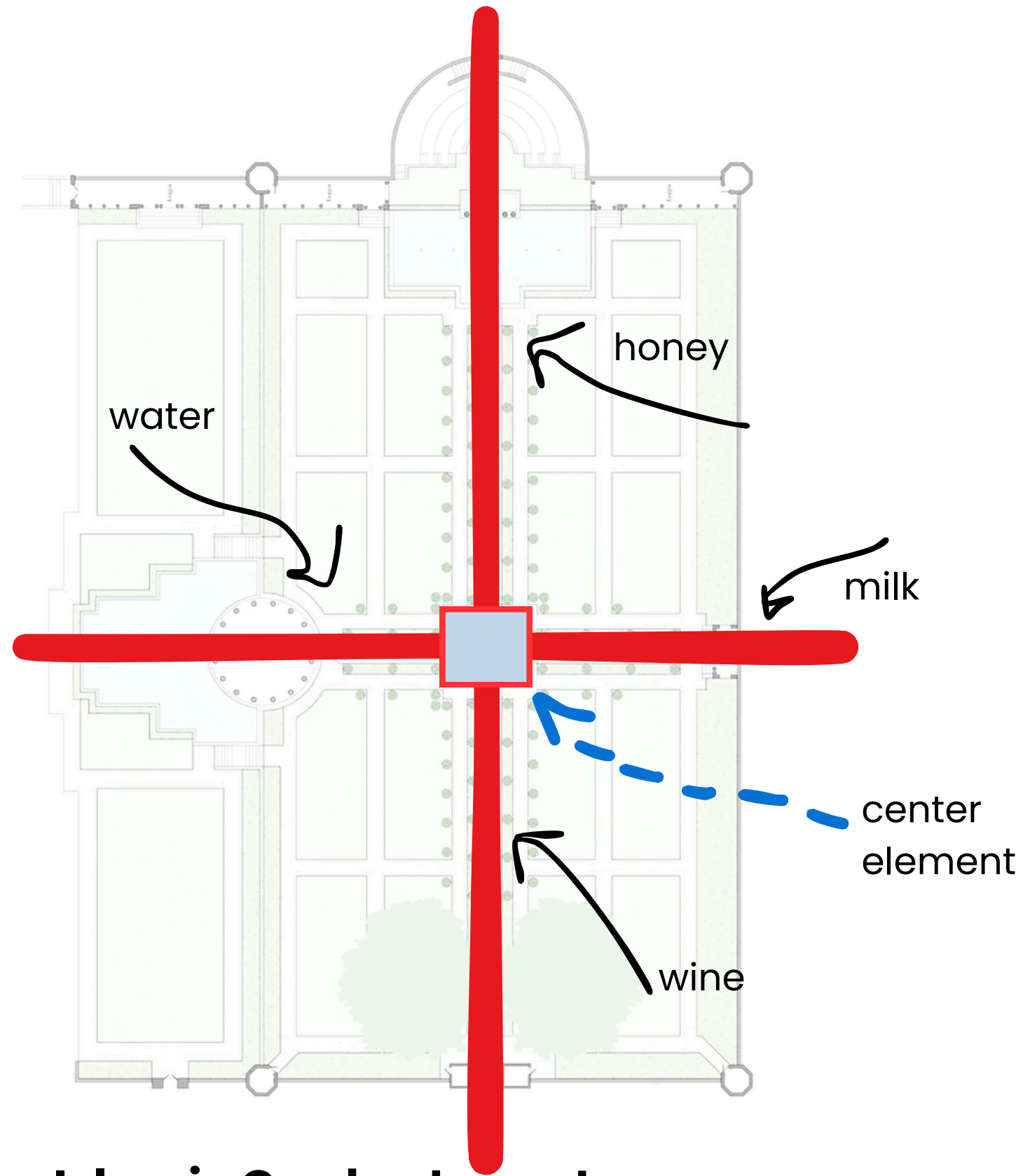


Bekaa Valley
typical section



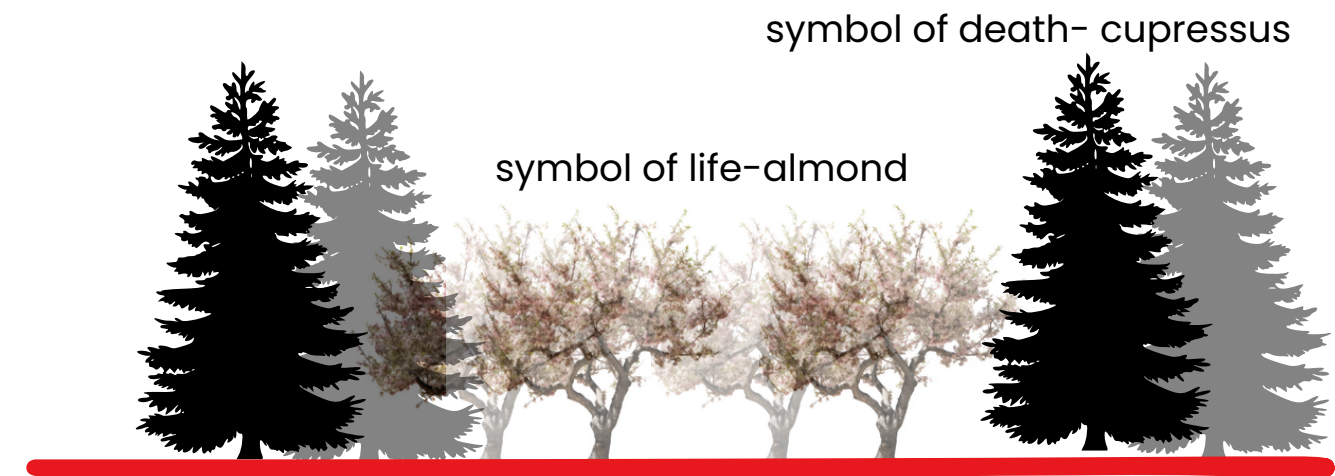
Mount Lebanon
typical section

Arab Region



Islamic Garden Layout

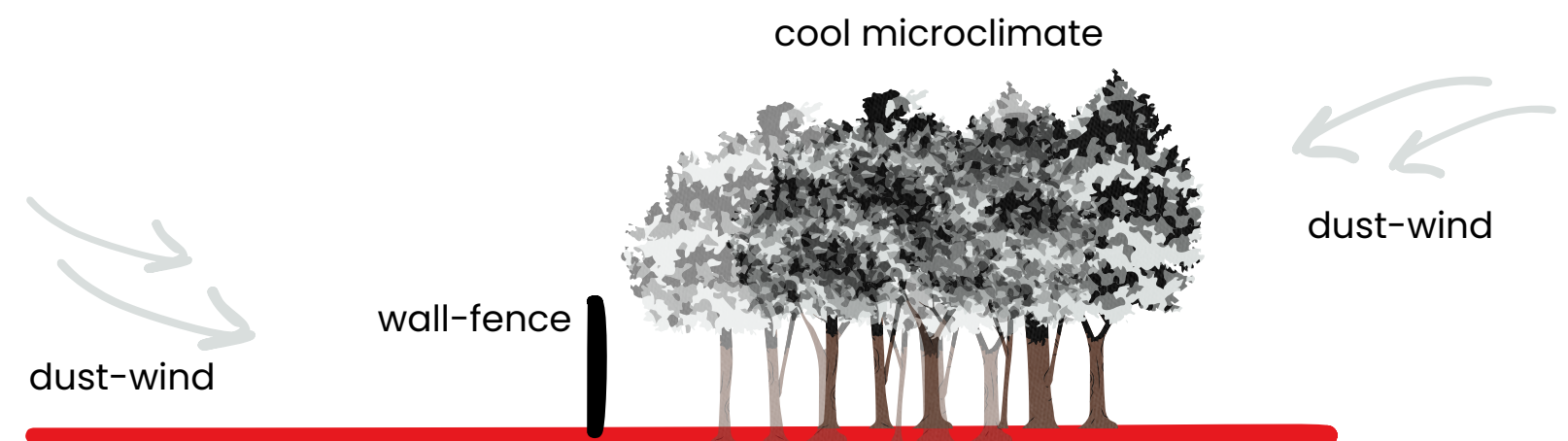
Certain plants were included for symbolism – the cypress, symbol of death contrasting with almond, for life and hope.



Vegetation symbolism

typical section

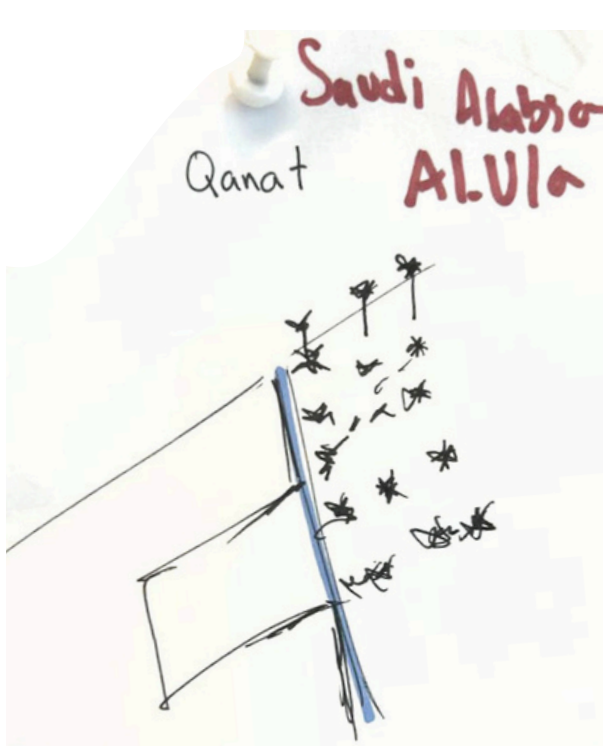
The paradise garden of Islam was essentially an oasis, a secluded retreat protected from the desert winds and dust.



Form and Function

typical section

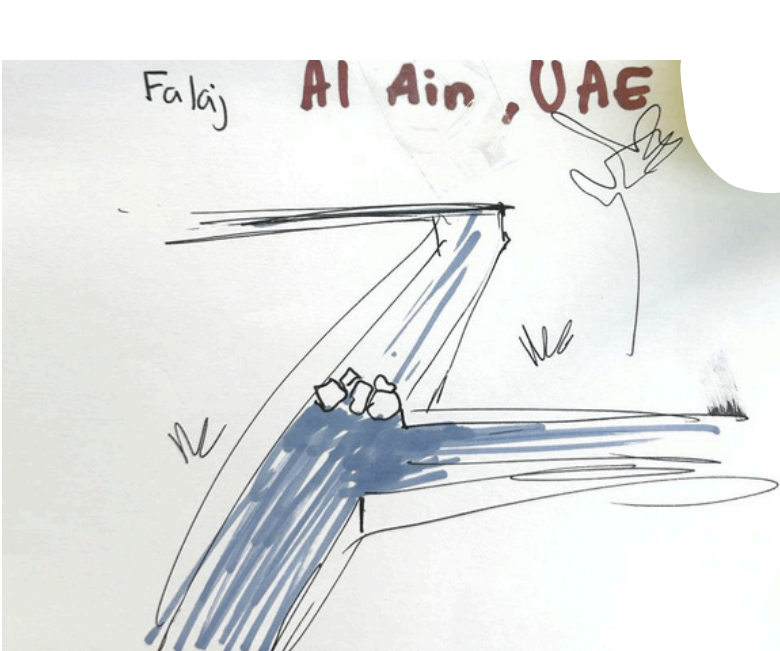
Arab Region



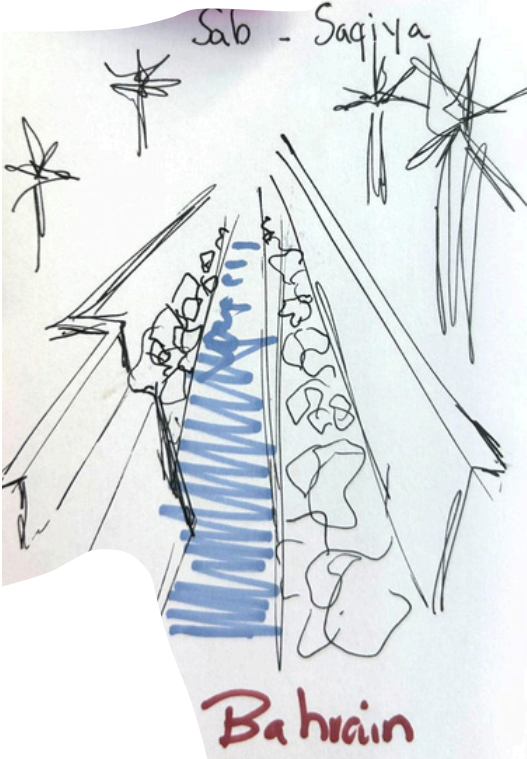
Al Ula
Qanat



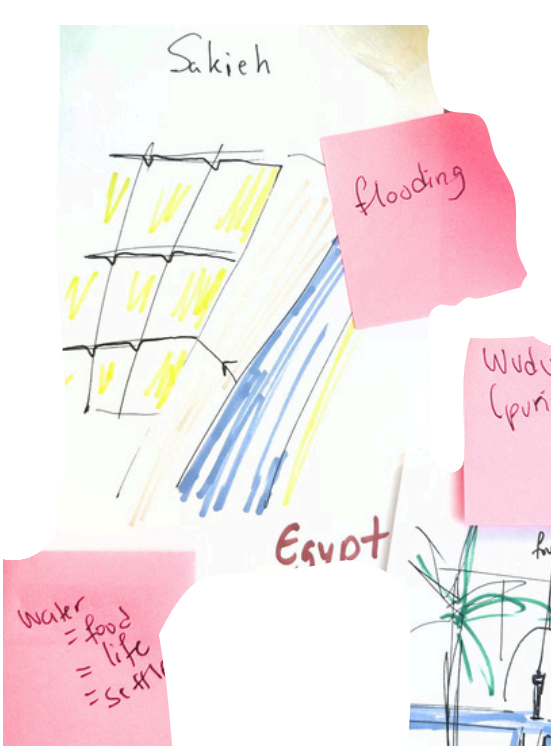
Khaybar
Qanat



Al Ain
Falaj



Budaiya
Saqiya-Sab



Nile
Saqiya

Water Ethics in Islam

fair and equitable water share is dictated by Sharia law

Public (Saqiya al kabira) and private (Naher) channels

ceremonial gatherings are held around water for blessing

Timekeeping by sundials and astronomy (Falak) and the lunar cycle

harvesting and irrigation times were everchanging and seasonal

Conflict resolution in Majlis

the majlis resolved water dispute to assure fair share in weekly meetings

Purification (Wudu) rituals

fresh water from the public canals were used for ablution and cleaning

Agriculture by lunar cycle

during Sarqah (dry) season, textiles stopped water flow to manage scarcity

certain crops were planted according to the lunar cycle which affected water-flow

Bahrain Islam Water Ethics

Arab Region



Al Ula
Qanat

Ancient oasis in NW Saudi Arabia; date palms for 3,000+ years; qanats, wells, terraced agriculture



Khaybar
Qanat

Fertile oasis north of Madinah; Bronze Age fortified settlement; advanced water storage & irrigation



Al Ain
Falaj

"Spring of water" in UAE; UNESCO-listed oases; aflaj irrigation system; date palm cultivation



Budaiya
Saqiya-Sab

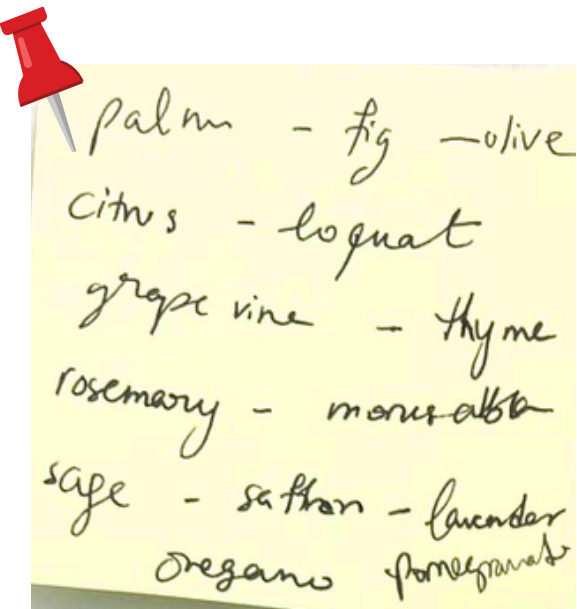
Coastal oasis in Bahrain; freshwater springs; traditional date gardens; historic water channels



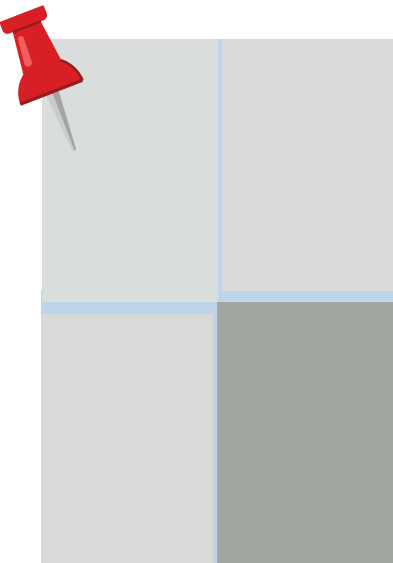
Nile
Saqiya

Lifeblood of Egypt & Sudan; annual flood-based agriculture; basin irrigation since antiquity

Arab Region Influence on Al Andalus



plant palette

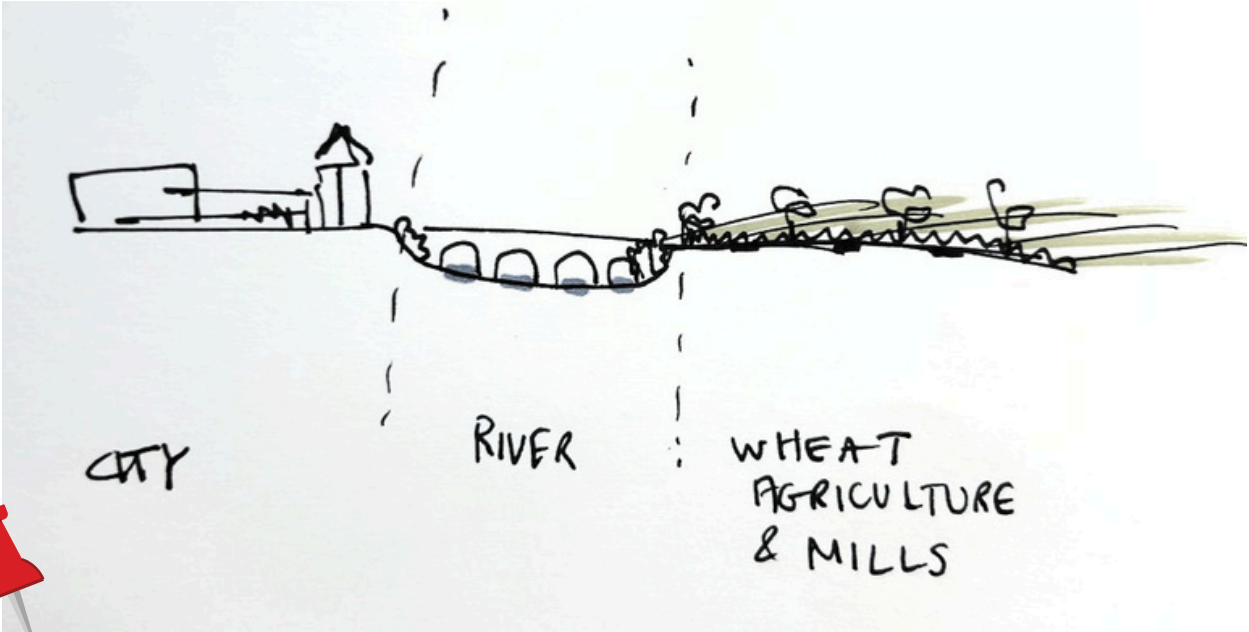


shape and form

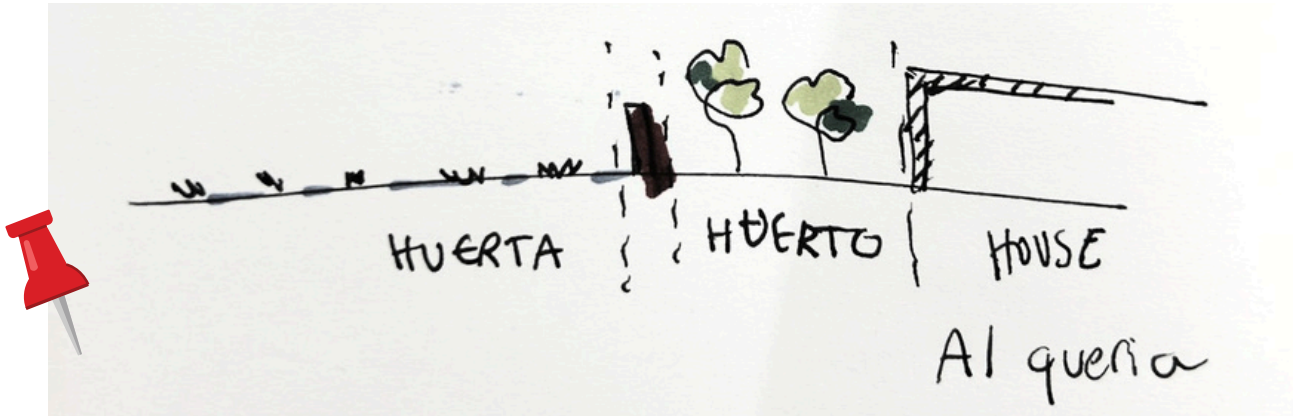
- conquest 711
- end of empire 14921

Arabic Term	Transliteration	Literal Meaning	Valencian Equivalent	Landscape Description
بُسْتَان	Bustan	Fruit garden / orchard	Huerto	An agricultural garden near a house, containing fruit trees, vegetables, and spices . A productive and domestic space.
قَرْيَة	Al-Qarya	Village	Alquería	An even more direct cognate of alquería. The Arabic root word for a small settlement or village .
السَّاقِيَة	Al-Sāqiya	"The water carrier" / "The one that gives drink"	Acequia	Irrigation channel

Bilad al Sham- Greater Syria



valencia city and la huerta and turia longitudinal section



al queria and la huerta connection typical section

Spain- evolution of the islamic garden

The Muslim period in Spain (711-1492) marked a convergence of religions and cultures. After the arrival in America, new species were introduced, and the idea of the *botanical garden* emerged for exhibition and scientific purposes, along with the greenhouse (*orangerie*) to maintain them.

ARCHITECTURE:

- Christian gardens: cloistered garden-> isolation from the environment
- Islamic garden: use of walls as a display of architecture

VEGETATION:

- Christian garden-> medicinal use (*herbarium*), practical use
- Islamic garden-> sensory experience (shading, smells, colours) and production (citrus trees)

WATER:

- Christian garden: water symbolises life, present in the gardens through wells and fountains. Used to water the orchards
- Islamic influence: a spiritual approach and the aesthetic use of water elements. Large bodies of water create a mirror effect that enhances the architecture. Moving water allows the introduction of sound. Also used for cooling and watering vegetation.

FORM & FUNCTION

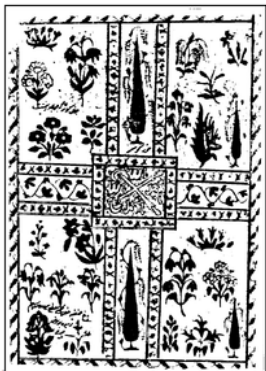
- Christian garden: appears in enclosed spaces (monasteries, convents) and appears in religious spaces as the idea of Eden, related to the idea of reflection and meditation.
- Islamic garden: enclosed but more closely tied to the environment. Idea of a protected oasis. A place of intimacy and pleasure.



openings controlled vegetation fountains



symbolic
"Herbarium"

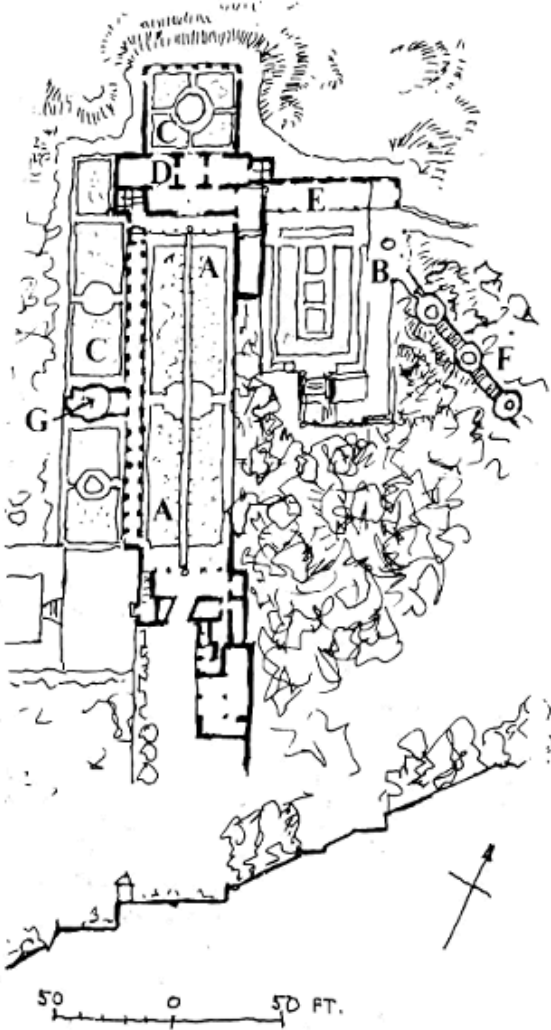


sensory experience
productive use



wells and fountains

- 45 GENERALIFE
- A Court of the Canal
 - B Patio de los Ciprésés
 - C Terrace
 - D Casino
 - E Belvedere
 - F Water steps
 - G Mosque



Italy- Sicily

Emirate of Sicily (831–1072 CE) and the Arab-Norman period: Palermo renowned for its pleasure gardens, "the Genoard" (from the Arabic Jannat al-ard, meaning "Paradise on Earth").

ARCHITECTURE:

- Gardens designed in lockstep with palatial architecture with specific views
- Muqarnas (honeycomb vaulting), Fountains and shaded porticoes

VEGETATION:

- Citrus, Date Palms, Roses, Jasmin, Figs, Pomegrate

WATER:

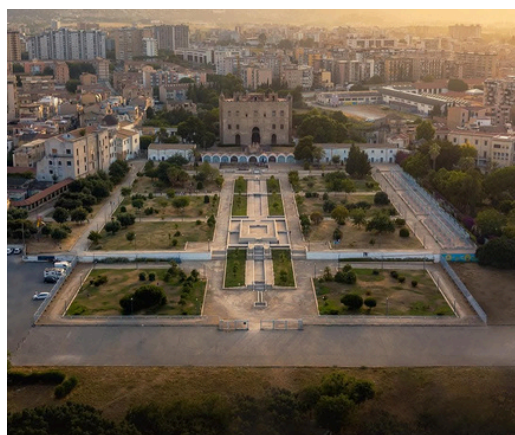
- The Salsabil (fountain), Peschiera (large basin), Qanats

FORM:

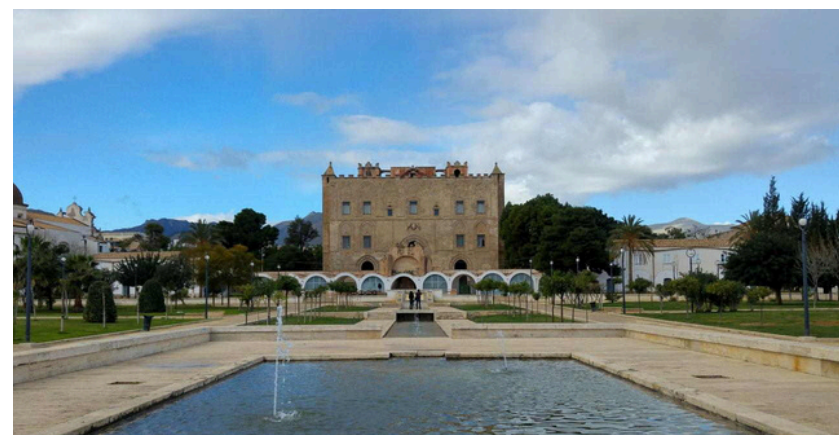
- Axial alignment, Geometric layouts (Perpendicular paths and water channels)

FUNCTION:

- Microclimate Engineering; Pleasure via senses; Manifestation of Wealth and Power



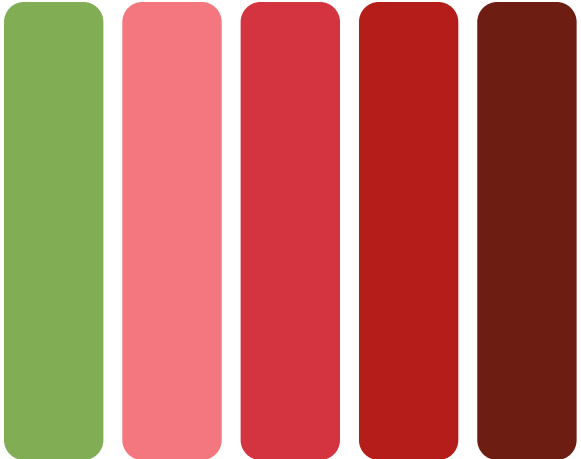
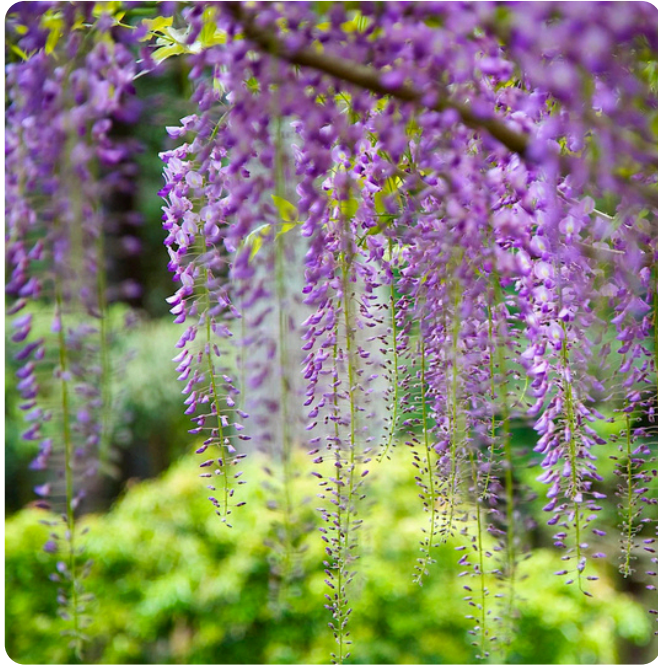
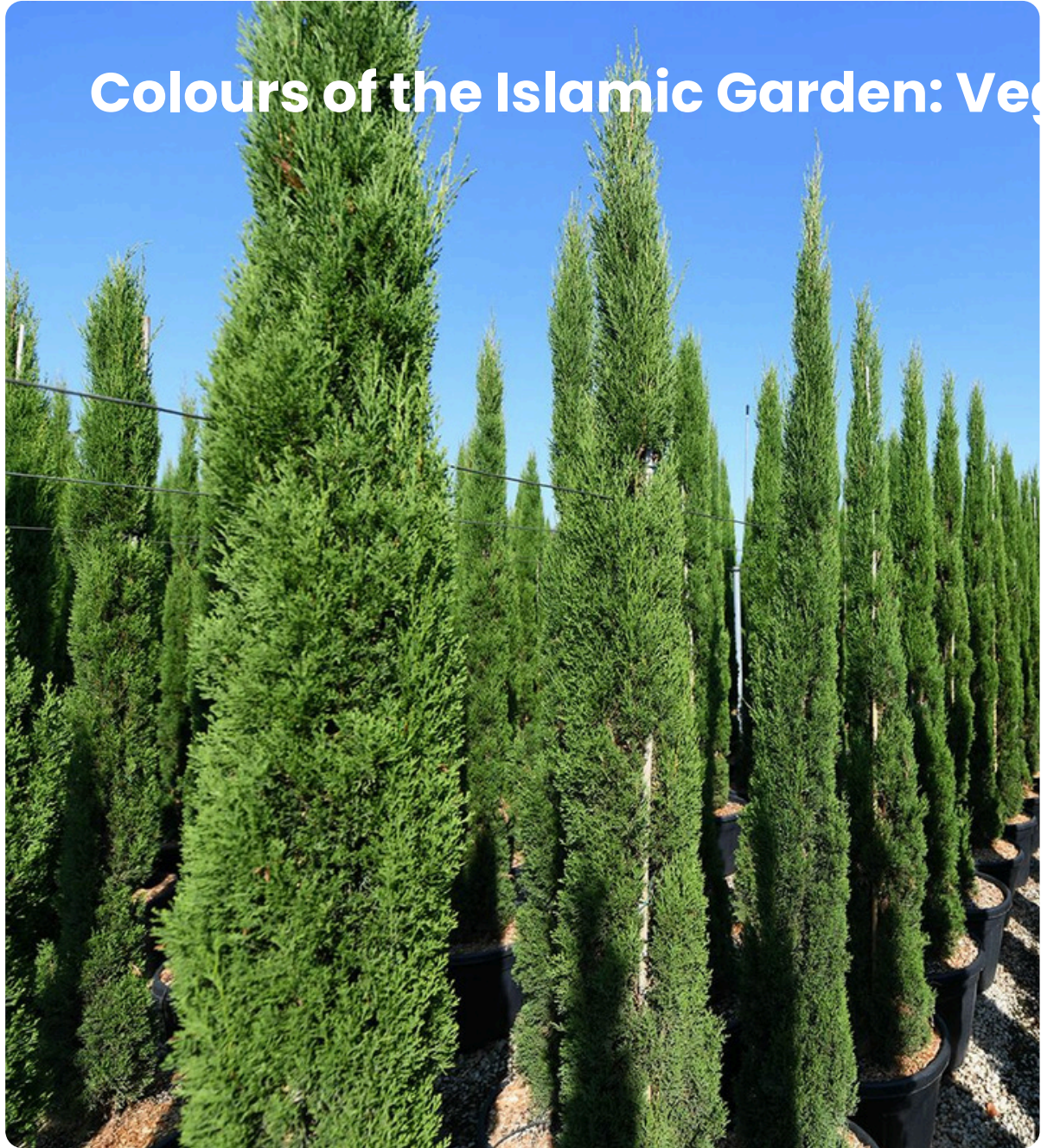
La Zisa (Palermo, 1165)



La Cuba (Palermo, 1180)

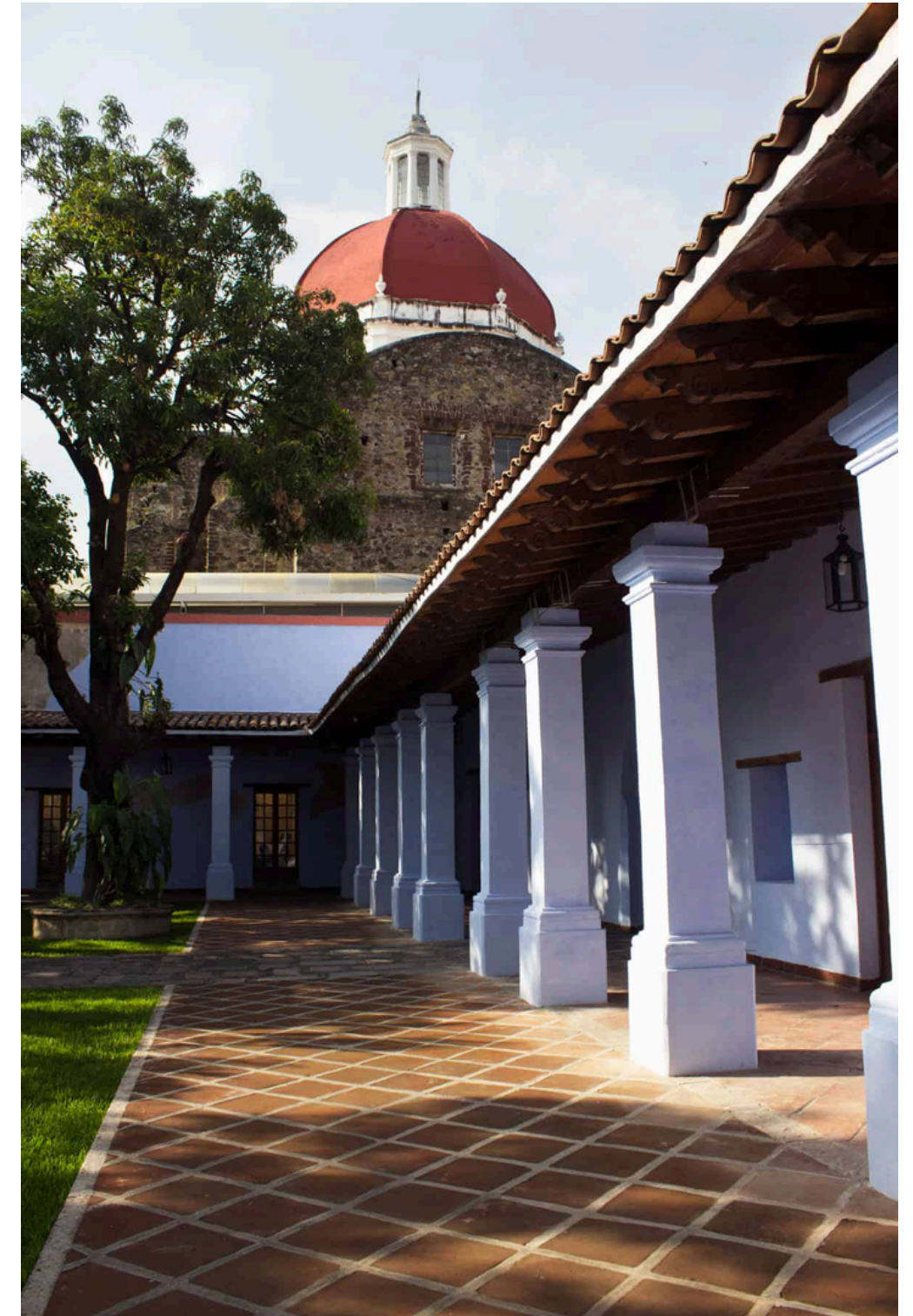
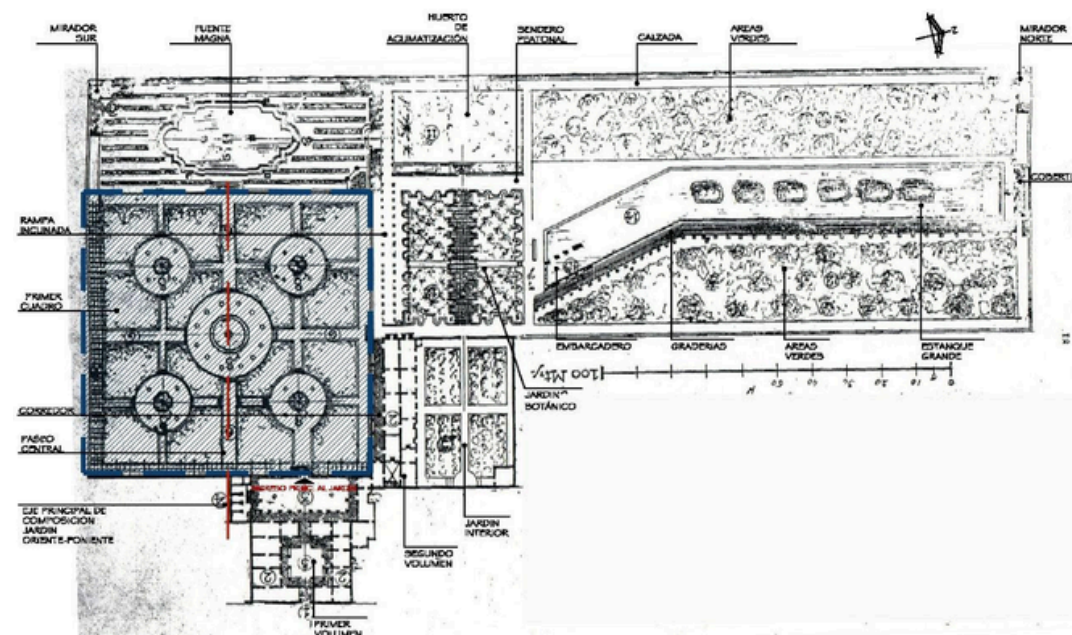


Colours of the Islamic Garden: Vegetation (Fruits and Flowers)



América- Colonial Garden in México

- The Colonial time in Nueva España (1500–1800) left an heritage in the mixture of cultures, the uses and traditions were translated to architecture and the new way of living.
- It had a mix of uses, where the leisure, the common living, religion, water and vegetation merge in one place in the center of Cuernavaca, a city known for being second residence for many people of Mexico City, where the spanish empire were established.
- To keep the landscape architecture in the place, vegetetion were imported from Europe, and it merged with local vegetation, principally fruit trees.



Contemporary gardens

Jardines Mediterráneos de la Hoya – Almería, Spain

Key idea: contemporary regeneration of a historic landscape.

Main points:

- Located below the Alcazaba, in dialogue with walls, slopes and historical building;
- Uses terraces, walls, ramps, paths and minimal water features;
- Dry Mediterranean planting: resilient shrubs, grasses, aromatic plants, fruit trees;
- Contemporary, restrained design that enhances history without imitating it.



Contemporary gardens

Giardino della Kolymbetra, Agrigento

Giardini ipogei, Favignana, Italy

- Key idea: archaeology, agriculture and water heritage.
- Main points:
 - Set within historical landscape and quarries;
 - Strong connection to geology and morphology;
 - A productive, shaded, slow landscape rather than a purely ornamental garden.



Contemporary gardens

Le Jardín Secret, Marrakech, Morocco

- Key idea: the garden as an urban oasis. Contemporary restoration of an ancient garden
- Main points:
 - Enclosed spaces, geometric layouts, central water axes and shaded paths;
 - Use of citrus trees, palms, hedges, courtyards and pavilions;
 - Water acts as climate device, symbol and irrigation system;



The garden remains a living form of cultural memory

From Persia to the Islamic world, from Spain and Sicily to America, the same elements change form: water, shade, enclosure, vegetation and geometry become tools for climate, identity, beauty and regeneration