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The Background and Content of Thomas Jefferson's Plan for a Botanical Garden for the University of Virginia

토머스 제퍼슨의 버지니아대학교 식물원 구상 배경과 내용

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Abstract

This paper examines the background and content of Thomas Jefferson's botanical garden plan for the University of Virginia. When Jefferson promoted the establishment of a botanical garden, European botanical gardens were evolving from physic gardens, and American botanical gardens were in their infancy. Accordingly, this paper compares the Botanical Garden Plan for the University of Virginia with contemporary botanical gardens. This is examined by outlining the trends of botanical gardens in Europe and the United States around the nineteenth century, analyzing their function and spatial structure. Also, Jefferson's perspective on botany, his plan, and botanical gardens are reviewed. This study found that Jefferson's project had its background in the social recognition of the importance of botany as a practical science, advancing the national economy, which was a prominent goal in late eighteenth-century Europe, and in developing networks of exchanging plants and information concerning botany and botanical gardens. Based on the botanist Correia's opinion on the role of a public botanical garden, the Botanical Garden Plan for the University of Virginia was developed by Jefferson as an action plan, including its site creation, space organization, and supplying of plants. Compared to the other contemporary botanical gardens, the University of Virginia's Botanical Garden Plan has the following characteristics. First, like European gardens in the late eighteenth century, it evolved from being a physic garden to a botanical one. As such, it emphasized botanical research and education over medicine, creating a tree garden and a plant garden. Second, it differed from many European and American botanical gardens in that it rejected decorative elements, refused to install a greenhouse, and attempted to spread practical overseas plants suitable to the local climate. This study contributes to broadening the history of botanical gardens at the turn of the nineteenth century.

Keywords

Botany; Harvard Botanical Garden; United States Botanic Garden; Physic Garden

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Thomas Jefferson tended the vegetable garden at Monticello with famous verve, exchanging seeds with correspondents across the world and continuously experimenting with plants to see if and how they would grow in Charlottesville's climate and soil. Jefferson also adored carrots and established a yearly quota of 10 bushels for the plantation garden. The root vegetable—orange as well as yellow—was featured in numerous dishes at Monticello, including poiridge. *Dacus carota* is pictured here. Photo by: Robert Llewellyn. See more photos of this garden. Of the some 330 varieties and 99 species of *Notes On Virginia*. By Thomas Jefferson The Federalist Papers Project www.thefederalistpapers.org. *Notes On The State Of Virginia* by Thomas Jefferson. Table of Contents. Introduction to *Notes of the State of Virginia* by Thomas Jefferson. 4 QUERY I An exact description of the limits and boundaries of the state of Virginia Page 7. *Notes On The State Of Virginia* by Thomas Jefferson. extracts you please for the *Journal de Physique* which come within their plan of publication. The strictures on slavery and on the constitution of Virginia are not of that kind, and they are the parts which I do not wish to have made public, at least till I know whether their publication would do most harm or good. Thomas Jefferson's interest in gardening arose from a passionate curiosity about the natural world. Jefferson's initial designs for the Monticello landscape borrowed heavily from European horticultural, architectural, and literary sources, but they were grounded in the classical writings of the Greeks and Romans. His plans varied dramatically, expressing at times a poetic fancy and at others a rigid adherence to geometric form. Jefferson sketched this plan during a difficult period of his public life, when he was suffering from severe headaches and the stress of the Aaron Burr treason trial then taking place in Richmond. *The American Gardener's Calendar*.