

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ
WORLD HERITAGE LIST N° 442

A) IDENTIFICATION

Nomination : Monticello and the University of Virginia in
Charlottesville

Location : State of Virginia

State Party : United States of America

Date : December 29, 1986

B) ICOMOS RECOMMENDATION

That the proposed cultural property be included on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria I, IV and VI.

C) JUSTIFICATION

A request to include the University of Virginia on the World Heritage List has long been awaited. The case presented by the Federal Government of the United States is, however, particularly interesting in that it groups together the two major Thomas Jefferson works in Charlottesville under one thematic nomination : Monticello and the University of Virginia. Every guarantee for their conservation has been obtained, whether it be from the Jefferson Memorial Foundation or the State of Virginia, the respective owners of the properties, and we can only rejoice in the greater coherence which results from the complementarity of the two works. Monticello (1769-1809) is a perfect example of a neo-classic villa rustica, based on a Roman design, revised by Palladio and amended by the Physiocrats. The University of Virginia is a fine example of the architectural ideal of the Age of Enlightenment put to use in the great educational programme of the third President of the United States.

Construction of Monticello began in 1769, but was suspended between 1784 and 1789 during Jefferson 's stay in France. The very personal conception of the house, which never ceased to evolve during the forty years it took to build, clearly shows the various influences experienced by its designer. That of Palladio is particularly evident in the perfect proportions of the pedimented porticos. That of the contemporary neo-classic architecture is no less evident : the interior spatial organization and the low elevation (despite the building's one-storey appearance, there are in fact three distinct storeys) which was borrowed from contemporary Parisian town house design. The western facade, which is dominated by an octagonal dome, is reminiscent of the Hôtel de Salm (1782-1786). The integration of

the service buildings and outbuildings, arranged in two L-shaped wings extending from the main house by means of underground passages covered by terraces (crypto-porticos) and terminating in small pavilions, elegantly resolves the problem which had been present since the Renaissance, of finding an aesthetic and functional balance between the otium and the negocium in a country residence: only the harmonious volume of the villa emerges from the foliage of the park where, towards the end of his life, Jefferson planted orchards, vegetable and flower gardens.

Jefferson's most ambitious and last architectural undertaking was the construction of the University of Virginia. In elaborating this project which is based on educational ideals which are both encyclopedic and democratic, he departed from pre-existing British or American college planning schemes. The rational layout of this "academic village" on an 11-hectare site inspired on the one hand by the principles of hygiene laid down by the hospital builders (particularly visible in the dormitories and dining rooms set back and separated by wide lawns), as well as by a symbolic architecture which is expressed by the hierarchy of volumes and the repertory of forms.

A half-scale copy of the Pantheon in Rome, which houses the Library, dominates the academic village; the ten pavilions which house the professors of the ten schools that make up the University are deliberately based on a distinctive design and are intended to serve as an encyclopedia of classical and neo-classical architectural designs. However, the connecting colonnades serve to give a feeling of unity to this space which was designed, originally, like a vast avenue leading northwards to the Library, Temple of Knowledge. The later construction of a building at the south end (Cabell Hall) has unnecessarily transformed this triumphal way into an enclosed space. The reconstruction of the Library and its restoration in 1976 are the only major modifications to the "Jefferson Precinct" which, since 1825, has fulfilled the function for which it was built.

ICOMOS recommends the inclusion of Monticello and the Jefferson Precinct on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria I, IV and VI.

- **Criterion I.** The integration of the buildings into the natural landscape, the originality of the plan and design, the refined proportions and decor, make Monticello an outstanding example of a neo-classic work of art.

- **Criterion IV.** Just as the Royal Saltworks by Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (included in 1982 on the World Heritage List) are an outstanding example of the functional adaptation of neo-classic aesthetics to industrial buildings, so the University of Virginia is an outstanding example of a great educational institution from the Age of Enlightenment.

- **Criterion VI.** Monticello and the University of Virginia are directly and materially associated with the ideals of Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), better known for his political career, the brilliance of which overshadowed his reputation as a writer and architect. These works of perfection, where the difficult passage from Utopia to reality is harmoniously achieved, are directly inspired by the very same principles which led to Jefferson's Declaration of Independence (1776) and his project for the abolition of slavery (1800).

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