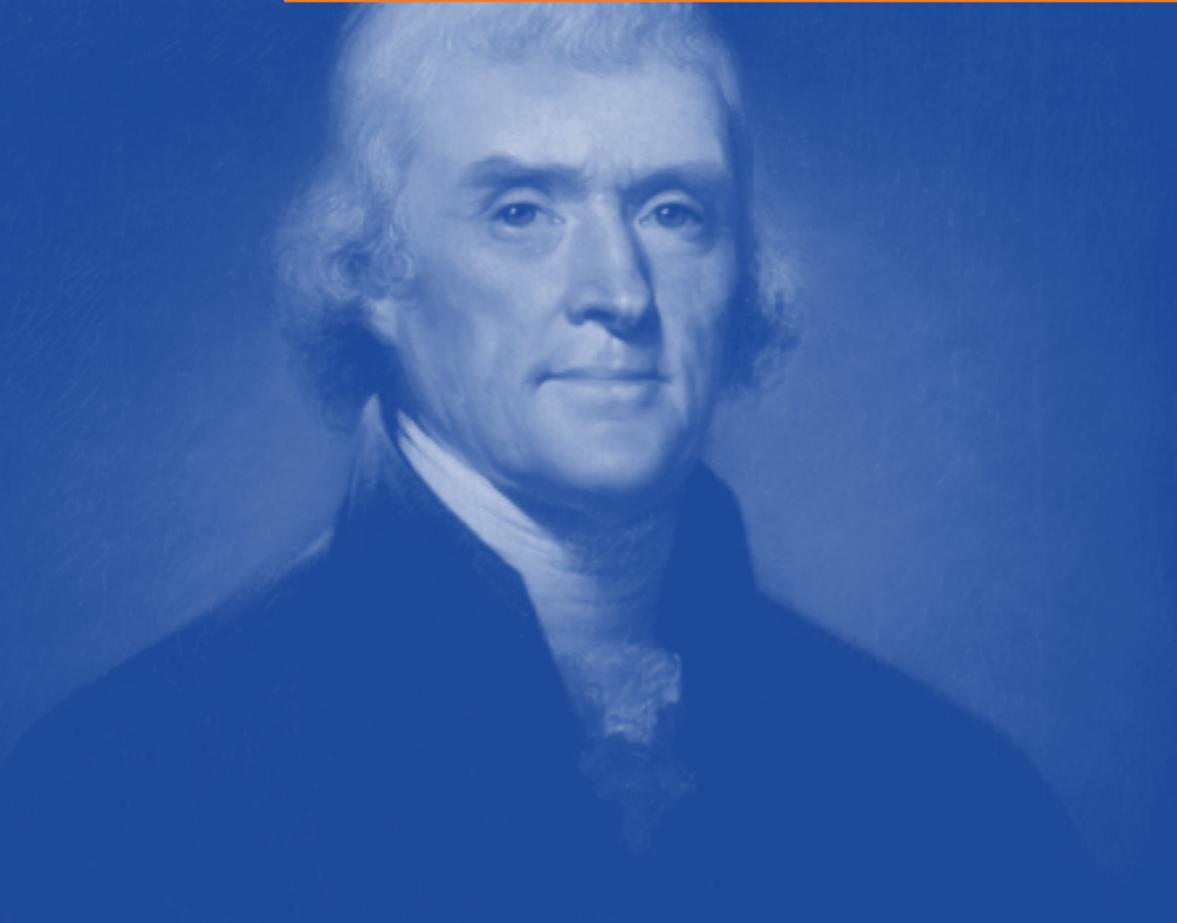


# Thomas Jefferson



Empire of Liberty?



This is  
Jefferson's  
estate at  
Monticello, just  
outside of  
Charlottesville,  
Virginia

What sort of  
nation do you  
think Jefferson  
envisaged?

# “The Yeoman Farmer”

Jefferson envisaged an agrarian nation of farmers, like himself, in contrast to the urban environments that he saw as a corrupting influence on society.

He wrote James Madison in December 1787:

“I think our governments will remain virtuous for many centuries; as long as they are chiefly agricultural; and this will be as long as there shall be vacant lands in any part of America. When they get piled upon one another in large cities, as in Europe, they will become corrupt as in Europe”





This is  
Jefferson's  
estate at  
Monticello, just  
outside of  
Charlottesville,  
Virginia -  
*again...*

What is **missing**  
from this  
present-day  
image?

# Jefferson as a slave owner

Jefferson had very complicated views on slavery. He believed in the abolition of slavery, calling it a “hideous blot” and a “moral depravity” but in his lifetime he owned over 600 enslaved workers. After his death, his will freed only five of them.

When it came to creating an “empire of liberty” – just like his Declaration of Independence, Jefferson was not including enslaved African Americans in his calculations (at least in the short term).



**Isaac  
Granger  
Jefferson**

One of the enslaved men working on Jefferson’s estate. Later in life he recorded his experiences (a transcript of which is available online via the Monticello website).

