

EDITORIAL

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This issue of Ornamental Horticulture gathers landscape studies, one of the aspects of Horticulture, as well as Architecture.

What we currently understand by landscaping was, in past centuries, only the gardening activity, for more extensive and rich the created gardens were. A garden is an idealized representation of the landscape, as each civilization, or even a person, wishes it to be.

*In fact, planting gardens is the purest of human pleasures, that is, one that represents the greatest rest for the human spirit; without gardens, buildings and palaces are only rough constructions; and we always see that, as time blooms for civilization and elegance, men bother to build grand buildings and garden gently, as if gardening were the full complement of perfection. (Francis Bacon, 1561-1626. **Of Gardens.**)*

However, landscaping is more than making gardens. It is a multidisciplinary activity, centered on the concern to conserve and manage existing resources in the external spaces worked, in addition to adapting these spaces to human activities with comfort, safety and beauty. It develops in spaces external to buildings and covers two achievements: the art of creating (individual); science, technique and the art of organizing (individual or team).

Air, water, vegetation, fauna, rocks and

soil, interrelated, determine the use of space for agriculture, livestock, mining, industry, commerce and recreation. Subject to the customary conditions, the creative work, which involves science and art, is carried out.

Landscaping, as we understand it today, comes from the first human settlements. Land use planning for the practice of agriculture and coexistence, has been done since the ancient civilizations of China and the Middle East. The distribution of housing and other elements in primitive tribal settlements in Africa also shows a plan that took into account the interdependence between man and nature.

In the nineteenth century, with the so-called Industrial Revolution, air pollution problems and urban land use were worsened in Europe and the United States, leading the authorities to appreciate landscaping and to regard green areas as a vital need. After the two World Wars, this need was further increased.

Today, with city growth and environmental degradation, landscaping is more important than ever, since it can ease microclimate, decrease air pollution levels, conserve soil and water, value elements that recall the past, provide beauty and delight to the senses.

Landscaping research and practice represent, therefore, a work for life quality, protection of biodiversity and natural resources, and conservation of historical heritage.

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