

**Joachim Koester / Matthew Buckingham
Sandra of the Tulphouse or How to Live in a Free State
2001**

Section 4/11

The long period of slow but steady escalation in the western arms race was decisively interrupted in the late fifteenth century by the development and distribution of gunpowder. Battles which might previously have lasted months or years were suddenly over in Weeks or days. But this period of brief wars would, in itself, only last a short time. Old tactics of fortifying the body within suits of armor, and hiding behind vertical city walls were given up. New strategies utilizing empty space to keep the enemy's canons at a safe distance again increased the length of time needed to conquer one's enemy.

After 1500, the cities of Europe were shaped and re-shaped by canon fire. The new city was formed according to the intersection between lines of sight and the trajectory of missile weapons. Fortifications opened up as a series of diagonals, moving out across the countryside. This pattern of interconnected angles, made up of ramparts, moats, and bastions created star-shaped cities all over Europe, which could extend outward infinitely, consuming and protecting everything within reach.

The geometric space of fortification-architecture, and ramparts in particular, were meant to embody a logic of order. Near the end of Beowulf, the hero turns to this structured space for solace. After he realizes he is dying from the poisonous bite of the dragon he has just slain, the prince struggles toward a seat on the rampart, where he tries to remain conscious and rational. The narrator tells us that "He steadied his gaze on those gigantic stones, and saw how the earthwork was braced with arches built over columns."

When I called my younger sister, who is studying business in Stockholm, she told me that her teacher had assigned the class to read Machiavelli. Knowing that they read Virilio at West Point, this somehow didn't surprise me. In *The Prince*, Machiavelli says he approves of rulers who build fortifications, but if they are beneficial in one way, they are harmful in another. "The prince who is more afraid of his own people than of foreign interference should build fortresses; but the prince who fears foreign interference more than his own people should forget about them. The best fortress that exists is to avoid being hated by your own people."

From looking at the officer's quarters and the soldier's barracks in the old Boatman Street military base, which became Christiania, one sees that it was built at a time when the officers did not trust their own soldiers. But soldiers in the time of artillery warfare also had good reason to distrust their superiors. The monarch not only ruled the land but also employed the army. Prior to this, soldiers supplied their own clothes and weapons. The traditions of uniformity, discipline, and inspection developed as a way for the monarch to verify he was getting what he paid for.

But sometimes the Monarchs couldn't pay: Frederik, Duke of Slesvig was all but invited by the Copenhagen aristocracy to overthrow his nephew Christian II and take the Danish throne for himself, so he hired an army and began fighting his way toward the capitol, securing the countryside all around it. But when he got to the city he met unforeseen resistance from the citizens. Frederick and his army probably would have been victorious had they attacked, but the duke lacked the funds to pay the additional fee required by the army for making the assault on the city.

Having only enough money for their regular wages, he set up a

camp outside the fortifications and looked for the cash to finish his conquest. The troops waited in their camp for nearly seven months, putting no effort into the siege. Finally winter hit and the citizens of Copenhagen gave up without a fight. Incidents like this led to the development of long-term credit banking as a reliable means to finance war.

Historians of ideas usually attribute the dream of a perfect society to philosophers, but we should remember that there was also a military dream of society; its fundamental reference was not to the state of nature, but to the meticulously subordinated cogs of a machine. This military dream always depends on artificial kinship relations, which are created in military bases, like the Boatman Street barracks. Spaces like this are not meant to be perfect social environments, but, instead, places in which society itself can be perfected. And it is the monarch or army general who probably experiences the deepest appreciation of the architectural plans for a new castle or base of operations.

Models representing cities at a particular time in their past also reveal themselves through physical patterns. As they try to simulate a totalizing view of space, these models not only shrink down a part of the world, they transform us into giants. Gazing down at our feet, and backward in time, the simplicity and clarity of this tiny world invites us to collapse and attempt to possess 'history.'

**Byens Lys, Christiania
backstage videoinstallation
August 25th - September 15th 2019**

Cecile Skov

WHILEAWAY

Outer Core, 2019
Aluminium

Sipping Eggs, 2019
Aluminium

Sane as Soap, 2019
Aluminium

Fremtidsskoven, Christiania
25. august-17. november, 2019
Kurateret af Det Kosmiske Hierarki