

# Introduction

JONAS E. ANDERSSON  
GERD BLOXHAM ZETTERSTEN  
AND MAGNUS RÖNN

The present book revolves around four key concepts. These concepts are architectural competition, institution, process and adjustments of contemporary competition structures. They may seem randomly assembled in order to form a pertinent book title, but considered as individual entities, they may also characterise the contemporaneous status of architectural competitions in the second decade of the new millennium. For clarity's sake, what then is an architectural competition? Besides being an intentional combination of words, which etymologically suggests that architecture is not only the art of building, but in conjunction with competition also implies a mutual struggle between architects and other stakeholders to land the ideal design and constructive solution for a particular design problem, competitions in architecture are a phenomenon that is closely related to the practice of architecture, i.e. in a noble and fair spirit think outside established values and norms in order to renew spatial thinking (Cuff, 1992). The practice of architecture suggests spatial explorations of potential design solutions with the intent to define what is perceived to be the ultimate solution for a certain spatial issue that centres on human beings in close interaction with built space with the quest to define place and space for different types of usages (Lefebvre, 1985).

Looking back in history, architectural competitions can be loosely linked to the ancient Greek tradition of organising Olympic Games every fourth year as a celebration of the Greek god Zeus, father of the universe. Rooted in ancient myths, Greek poet Pindar tells us that Heracles honoured his Olympian father by constructing the very first stadium, based on a straight line of 200 herculean steps, i.e. a stadion in the ancient Greek language or approximatively 600 Greek feet according to Herodotus, thus giving the world both a new type of building for practising sporting activities and a name for a unit of length.

Banned by Emperor Theodosius I in 393 AD as being part of a pagan cult, the Olympic Games ceased to exist. The French Revolution awoke the games for a short two-year period between 1796 to 1798, in which the metric system was introduced and used for the very first time (Arvin-Bérod, 1994). Possibly due to its fundamental role in the original Olympic Games, Pierre de Coubertin designated architecture to be one of the five categories under the arts section when the first Games reopened in Athens in 1896. Until the end of the 1940s, the arts section of the Olympic Games (OG) turned into large art exhibitions in the proximity of the sports arenas, greatly appreciated by the public. However, the art category of the OG raised the collective eyebrows of the members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), since the artists in comparison with the athletes were considered to be professional rather than amateurs. In 1948, after the Games in London, the decision was taken to dismantle the arts as an Olympic category and reshape it into a parallel activity held during the Games.

Returning to competitions that occur in the field of architecture, history suggests, that prior to the 19th century, such competitions oscillated between prize competitions for small-scale artefacts and large-scale building commissions, but in any case open only for just a few craftsmen, who had gained a personal reputation. The very first recorded design competition was organised in ancient Greece in 448 BC in conjunction with the reconstruction of the ancient Acropolis in Athens that had been destroyed during the Persian wars. The monument commemorated the peace of Callias and the Greek victory over the Persians in 449 BC (Hurwit, 2000; Nasar, 1999). In a similar manner, design competitions were held during the Middle Ages, for instance, like the one in 1401, for the design of two bronze-clad doors of the baptistery that belong to the cathedral in Florence which still exist today. A second competition, which focused on the dome of the Florentine cathedral, was organised in 1418. It turned into a personal duel between two renowned craftsmen, Filippo Brunelleschi and Lorenzo Ghiberti, the winner of the previous competition in 1401. Rivalry between acknowledged architects continued to flourish. In 1665, the competition for the east façade of the Louvre in Paris, initiated by Louis XIV, set the famous Italian architect Gian Lorenzo Bernini against four French architects. Two years later, a royal letter informed Bernini that his winning proposal would not be executed, instead, the four-architect jury under Claude Perrault took over the commission and realised an emblematic example of French classicism (Chancel, 1997, p. 30-32). Another case, in which the winning proposal was left unrealised, was the

design of the Spanish Steps in Rome in 1723, where an historic controversy with the pope, led the French embassy – situated at the top of the stairs – to award the commission to the second best solution (Watkin, 1986, p. 363).

Integrated in the Beaux-Arts tradition for educating architects, which dates back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the architectural competition served not only as an instrument for boosting creativity among young students in architecture, but also for selecting the future rising stars in architecture, who were to enter the royal court or the grand salons of the aristocracy. The French Revolution propelled the architectural competition into becoming an instrument for a whole new system based on brotherhood, equality and freedom to manifest itself in architecture (Szambien, 1986); some 25 architectural competitions with 480 proposals during the last six months of The Reign of Terror were inaugurated. In the dictionary *L'Encyclopédie Méthodique*, first published in 1801, the French architectural critic and theorist Antoine Quatremère de Quincy described in conjunction to the word architectural competition that the ultimate objective for a competition was to avoid both ignorance by the client and intrigue by the competitors, so that the best design solution would prevail:

*The principal motif for an architectural competition is to suppress the ignoramus' choice of artistes for a public commission, but also to hinder the artistes' attempts to manipulate the commission at the expense of talent. (...) If the matter is merely to decide (...) which architect who is the most suited, then a competition is unnecessary. However, if the matter is to decide the best solution, then, a competition can be based on a programme for the realisation of the building. The judgment can be based on the drawings that are submitted in response to these requirements (Quatremère de Quincy, 1801, p. 38).*

Through Quatremère de Quincy it is possible to address the second key concept for this book, i.e. institution. In line with the emerging French Republic that followed upon the overthrow of the autocratic power of the French Kings, Quatremère de Quincy searched for an egalitarian instrument to overcome yet another remainder from the Ancien Regime: the fawning upon new commissions in search of personal enrichment and titles.

This new instrument should be based on selective principles with the effect that the emerging institution might vouch for the overall best solution. This new institution, a public system for architectural competitions, would tame

egos and promote “both rational judgments on public buildings that are based on the design solutions that the competitors submit, and, after a fair struggle, award the winner a simple prize that is purely associated with the glory of having won the competition” (Quatremère de Quincy, 1801, p. 35-36).

Putting an overzealous revolutionary spirit aside, and given that these words were written shortly after the most violent years during the French Revolution, Quatremère was remarkably modern in his thinking, and the EU directive 92/50/EEC concerning public contracts, including design competitions, resumes this spirit (European Commission, 1992). This is also one of the aims of this anthology, namely exploring the status of the architectural competition as a modern and contemporaneous institution.

### **The architectural competition as institution**

An institution is a pursuit which has come gradually to be recognised in society through a process of institutionalisation. Institution may be understood as a system of rules that makes possible and also maintains a social order in society. Therefore, a stable function must be present that is upheld during a period of time, a system of imperative rules that the participants must follow in order to be admitted into the practice of this enterprise. John Sirjamaki (1967) notes that the concept of institution has been present within English linguistic usage since the middle of the 15th century with at least two different meanings. On the one hand, institution may denote an established practice over time. On the other, institution may embody an order of decision-making that regulates organisations and their enterprises. These two modes of understanding institution are closely connected, presupposing a structured ordering with participants who share the same world picture. The architectural competition regarded as institution and process corresponds with both of these meanings.

The modern architectural competition is an institution within architecture and urban design going back 150 years in Europe that has been recreated in new practice with the help of rules, traditions and organisations. Both organisers and competing architects and their professional organisations contribute to the preservation of the competition as institution and process. Through their organisations, architects have established their own units for competition service with staff and elected competition boards scrutinising competition briefs. As an example the Swedish Association of Architects offers competition services on its homepage. The same development may be found in Denmark, Norway and Finland.

The modern competition is at one and the same time a well-established praxis in architecture and urban design, made explicit in relation to national, European and international rules of competition. The competition has also come to be an instrument of a form of architectural politics in national governmental programmes in Europe, when aiming to create spectacular architecture. Confidence in the competition's capacity to generate good solutions to problems of construction is a distinct theme in programmes of architectural politics (EPFAP, 2014/2016). The competition rules are a codified praxis in architecture and urban design. The competition represents both a social order and contiguously a professional practice paying great attention to its effects on society. On the one hand: he or she who breaks the rules of the competition will be excluded according to the approved rules. This is a matter addressed by the organisation that monitors and supervises the competition system. On the other hand, however, things get more complicated given the organisational structure of the competition system, with different interests and actors taking part during the competition process.

In the Nordic competition culture, proposals with minor deviations from the competition brief can be presented by the client and accepted by the jury as a winning design. But what constitutes a small deviation? Behind the competition rules are notions of fair terms and an impartial assessment of competition proposals. The proposals must be made using simply a motto. The jury must not know who has made the proposals. The intention is that anonymity should result in the jury selecting the best solution to the competition task as the winner. This constitutes an institutional system in competition culture that has survived confrontation with the EU regulating procedure – characterised by competitiveness and bureaucratisation. The jury has a central role in the competition. The delegates must see to it that the rules are followed at the same time as appointing a winner. The architects on the jury also have a professional responsibility in relation both to the design teams and the organiser. As an institution the architectural competition is acted out on a global arena denoting a common core of understanding as well as distinctive national features.

### **The architectural competition as process**

The concept of process has some interrelated but differing meanings. These are often enumerated in varying order in leading dictionaries of the English language, e.g. Collins Dictionary, the Oxford English Dictionary, Random House and Webster's dictionaries. Some emphasise as their first option "a systematic

series of actions to some end”, while putting in second place “a continuing action, operation, or series of changes taking place in a definite manner” (Random House and Webster’s). While others put the notion of “change” within a series of actions or development in the primary space, while as a second meaning giving “a method of doing or producing something” followed by “a forward movement” (Collins Dictionary). In an architectural competition process the diverse meanings will all be found to be relevant in varying order, depending precisely, on the nature of the individual process.

Considering the architectural process with the competition as a built-in process, it refers to architecture as a ‘making’ discipline, and what can be more ‘making’ than the production of design proposals in a future-oriented context. Competition is ‘making’ architecture by combining know-how to produce design and organising processes with knowledge about the task and its pre-conditions. The organiser presents the competition in a brief to design teams, stating what is expected in return from them.

Competition as process also reflects Gilbert Ryle’s well-known distinction between knowing-how and knowing-that (Ryle, 1971). Here, we find two different and distinct kinds of knowledge; to know how to make design proposals is not just a question of knowing the right facts about the task, while to exercise knowing-how in design you do not have to analyse scientific data at first hand; you need a primary generator, a driving idea for the design solution (Darke, 1979). Knowing-that is a starting point for design teams in finding out how to respond. Should the brief be read as an instruction or as inspiration and a challenge? From knowing how to understanding the competition, design teams have to test possibilities in order to find a primary generator. Knowing that can finally be presented as drawings and illustrations in slides and models.

Making is a concept of high relevance in the production of knowledge by design. Industrial designers, interior designers, architects and landscape architects have making as a common task; they are responsible for designing objects, projects, and man-made environments (Dunin-Woyseth and Michl, 2001). In this context, competitions can be seen as the production of architectural knowledge about the future in the form of a development of possibilities.

### **Conferencing about architectural competitions**

This anthology includes selected and processed papers from a conference on competitions in architecture and urban design. This scientific conference with

the theme Conditions for Architect-Client Interactions in 2014, 13-14 February, was hosted by the Delft University of Technology, TU Delft. The conference was organised by Dr. Beatrice Manzoni, SDA Bocconi School of Management, and Dr. Leentje Volker, Delft University of Technology. The architect-client theme was articulated in the call for papers. The research community were invited to reflect on the following issues:

- Are competitions obstacles in establishing a relationship between a client and an architect or urban designer, or do competitions act as a catalyst and as professional laboratories?
- How can the structure and procedures contribute to client-architect interactions, and how do they push them apart?
- What do we actually know when we have selected an architectural firm during a competition?
- Can restricted competitions become an experimental arena for innovative design?

Participants who were affiliated to universities and practices in Austria, Canada, Denmark, England, Finland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, the Netherlands and USA noticed the conference and chose to participate. The call for papers generated 24 conference papers. The conference was organised according to the scientific curriculum with keynote speakers and presentations of conference papers in parallel sessions. In order to bridge the gap between practice and theory, the conference included both academic presentations of competing in architecture and practitioners who discussed the raw reality of participating in architectural competitions. The invited key note speakers were:

Elisabeth Tostrup, Professor at Oslo School of Architecture and Design  
 Jan Benthem, Owner of Benthem Crouwel Architects  
 Kristian Kreiner, Professor at Copenhagen Business School  
 Malcolm Reading, Owner of Malcolm Reading Consultants  
 Marleen Hermans, Professor at Delft University of Technology  
 Marc Unger, Chief Procurement Officer at ProRail  
 Matteo Fugazza, President & CEO of Nexiar

The international conference in the Netherlands formed part of an ongoing scientific development of knowledge on competitions in architecture and urban

design. The conference ended with a guided architect tour of Rotterdam city, the centre for many architectural competitions over the years following the destruction of the old city during World War II.

### **Academic networking around architectural competitions**

In 2005, Princeton University, USA, invited academics to discuss competitions in architecture and urban design based on research projects. The result is presented in the report entitled *The Politics of Design: Competition for Public Projects* (Malmberg, 2006). The birth of an academic network around architectural competitions began three years later. In 2008 the School of Architecture and the Built Environment at the Royal Institute of Technology, KTH in Stockholm, Sweden organised an international conference that was called *Architectural Competitions*. Dr. Jonas E. Andersson, Dr. Reza Kazemian and Dr. Magnus Rönn were organisers of this first international academic conference on architectural competitions.

In 2010, a second scientific conference concerning architectural competitions and related concerns was held in Copenhagen, Denmark. This conference was part of a larger conference that was called *Constructions Matter; Managing Complexities, Decisions and Actions in the Building Process*. This time, the initiative came from Professor Kristian Kreiner at the Copenhagen Business School (CBS), with several publications on the issues. Professor Joris van Wezemael of the University of Freiburg was responsible for coordinating the sub-session on architectural competitions with the main topics of the full conference.

The next international conference, *Competitions and Architectural Quality in the Planetary Age*, was held in 2012 at the University of Montréal in Canada. Professors Georges Adamczyk, Laboratoire d'étude de l'architecture potentielle (LEAP) and Jean-Pierre Chupin, Research Chair on Competitions and Contemporary Practices in Architecture, organised this third conference on architectural competitions. Overcoming the barriers of language, this conference started to interlink research traditions on architectural competitions from French-speaking countries with English-speaking countries. Yet another conference on competitions followed later the very same year. The conference *Architecture as Human Interface* took place in Helsinki in 2012. This fourth scientific conference was a co-operation between the School of Architecture at the Royal Institute of Technology, KTH in Stockholm and the Architecture Departments at three Finnish universities: in Helsinki (ATUT), in Tampere (UTA) and the University of Oulu. In

addition, the Finnish Association of Architects participated in the organisation of the conference. Finnish scholar Leif Östman and Swedish academics Jonas E. Andersson, Magnus Rönn and PhD Student Charlotte Svensson organised the competition track. The fifth conference followed two years later at the TU Delft, the Netherlands, as stated above. Another scientific conference will follow at the Leeds Beckett University in Leeds, UK, on 27-20 October in 2016. The organisers of this sixth international conference on competitions are Dr. Maria Theodorou and Dr. Antigoni Katsakou, both active at the School of Architecture at the Leeds Beckett University. This conference will be entitled: *The Competition Mesh: Experimenting with and within Architecture Competitions*.

### **Knowledge production on architectural competitions**

Conferences represent one important aspect of knowledge production on architectural competitions both on a structural level and on a detailed level. Another, but equally important side of knowledge production on competitions is the academic production of peer-reviewed conference papers that are published in anthologies and scientific journals. Given below is an overview of publications that the conferences mentioned above have generated.

In 2010, the anthology *The Architectural Competition: Research Inquiries and Experiences* was published under the editorship of academics Jonas E. Andersson, Reza Kazemian and Magnus Rönn (Andersson, Kazemian and Rönn, 2011). This book contains 26 peer-reviewed and revised papers from the scientific conference in 2008 in Stockholm. In 2013, a second anthology was published; *Architectural Competitions - Histories and Practice*. This publication has 12 reworked papers from the conference in Helsinki in 2012 that were peer-reviewed and revised prior to publication. This book also had three editors, academics Jonas E. Andersson, Gerd Bloxham Zettersten and Magnus Rönn (Andersson, Bloxham-Zettersten and Rönn 2013). In 2015, a third publication appeared. This was a publication that was entitled *Architecture Competitions and the Production of Culture, Quality and Knowledge*. The publication includes 22 papers that were submitted to the scientific conference in Montréal in 2012, but reworked according to peer-review comments. This publication was edited by editors professors Jean-Pierre Chupin and Carmella Cucuzzella and PhD candidate Bechara Helal (Chupin, Cucuzzella and Helal, 2015).

However, the knowledge production on architectural competitions also includes special thematic issues in scientific journals. The *Nordic Journal of*

Architectural Research (NJAR) has taken an interest in architectural competitions. In 2009, the journal published a double issue on architectural competitions by publishing 11 scientific articles that were submitted for the conference in Copenhagen in 2010 (No 2/3). This issue was simply entitled *Architectural Competitions* and included contributions mainly from Europe. In 2011, the *Scandinavian Journal of Management* published three reworked papers that were submitted to the conference in Copenhagen in 2010 (Issue 1). In 2012, NJAR published yet another issue, this time entitled *Competing in Architecture* (No 1). This issue contained eight scientific articles on architectural competitions that were submitted in conjunction with the conference in Helsinki in 2012. The same year the National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design in Oslo published a yearbook on competitions in Norway (Berre and McGowan, 2012). In 2013, submissions for the conference in Montréal were assembled for a special issue of the French journal *d'a (D'architecturs, le magazine professionnel de la création architecturale)* (Adamczyk et al. 2013). In this case, nine articles explored current knowledge on architectural competitions in Europe, Canada and South America.

The Norwegian scientific journal of FORMakademisk has also paid attention to the increasing interest in architectural competitions. In December 2013, the journal published a special issue that was entitled *Architectural Competitions I – Exploring the phenomenon of competing in architecture and urban design*. This issue presented four revised and reworked papers that originally were submitted for the conference on competitions in Helsinki in 2012. In a second issue, January 2014, the journal continued with yet another issue with three other papers on architectural competitions. They had also been submitted for the conference in 2012 in Helsinki. This issue was called *Competitions II. The dynamics of competing and organizing competitions in architecture and urban design*. Three other journals, e.g. *Journal of Architectural Education* (1982-4), *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* (1990-2) and *Geographic Helvetica* (2011-2), have published special issues on architectural competitions. The common trait for these journals is that they discuss architectural competitions from an architectural history perspective.

The academic production of knowledge also includes research that has been carried out as PhD research projects. Dissertations on architectural competitions are important pieces of new knowledge that pave the way to more complex knowledge on architecture and competitions. These contributions

are determined by their point of departure, hence, they can be divided into two categories:

- Architectural competitions seen from an architectural history perspective
- Architectural competitions seen as a contemporary phenomenon

The first category that uses an *architectural history perspective* includes six dissertations, all produced in the Nordic countries; Waern, 1996; Tostrup, 1999; Sauge, 2003; Bloxham Zettersten, 2007; Rustad, 2009; Hagelqvist, 2010. The second category uses a *contemporaneous perspective* on competitions and includes 13 dissertations: Blomberg, 1995; Östman, 2005; Svensson, 2008; Fialho, 2007; Volker, 2010; Schmiedeknecht, 2010; Katsakou, 2011; Andersson, 2011; Silberberger, 2011; Cucuzzella, 2011; Ramberg, 2012; Fuchs, 2013; Jacobsen, 2014; Guilherme, 2016). This collection of dissertations can be described as mainly European with a strong predominance of dissertations from the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) and with occasional dissertations from Brazil, Canada, England, the Netherlands, Portugal and Switzerland. Thus, these dissertations also trace the geography of architectural competitions, mainly situated in a European context.

### **An emerging research field on architectural competitions**

The listed pieces of conferences and knowledge production on architectural competitions supply some fundamental characteristics that are of general importance. Globally, they suggest the emergence and consolidation of competitions in architecture and urban design as an individual research field. The key components in this construction are:

- International conferences with key note speakers and paper presentation
- Committees of senior researchers for planning and reviewing of abstracts
- Introduction of a system for peer review of conference papers
- Publishing of anthologies and/or proceedings
- Scientific journals for putting together a body of articles
- Presentation of findings and empirical data from competitions

- Development of theories, methods and concepts for understanding competitions
- Systematic feedback – new scientific conferences with international participation

In consequence, one can assume that a research community is under construction. This community needs some gentle manoeuvring in order to constitute a special scientific field. The development so far demonstrates that there is a road map in place. Hence, the present anthology must be considered as a new contribution in order to pave the way towards the further development of architectural competitions as a particular research field.

### **Wrapping up: Adjustments in contemporary competitions**

The competition as institution and process represents a complex system for production of architectural knowledge by design in a future-oriented context. The empirical findings in the conference papers selected for this anthology bring out five aspects that describe an on-going process of adjustment that is taking place in contemporary architectural competitions in architecture and urban design. The conclusion is that these adjustments in the competition as institution and process reflect new conditions in the structure of architectural competitions that apply to both clients and to the profession of architects. The trends in this on-going adjustment process can be summarised in the following five bullet headings:

#### 1. Specialisation and the appropriation of knowledge

Firstly, we witness a change in competitions over a period of time, where single architects are replaced by teams of enterprises within architecture, urban design and landscape architecture. This trend of team-building is matched by the fact that competition tasks impose new demands on knowledge to an ever greater degree. Specialist competence within clearly demarcated disciplines and the appropriation of research-based knowledge within a broader field is required in order to resolve competition tasks. Coordination of specialist competence in competition teams is a reaction and a consequence for consultants as well as organisers, responding to a principal trend of specialisation in architecture and urban design.

## 2. Bureaucratisation and administration

Secondly, ever more administrative routines in competitions emerge in the shape of internal procedures involving the key actors, together with demands concerning the handing in of proposals which the design teams must observe in order to be allowed to participate. This applies to demands in the invitation to pre-qualified competitions, stipulations in the competition briefs and administrative systems for the evaluation of the competition proposals. Organisers have, for example, brought in new systems for the assessment of sustainable design and green building. Documentation for applications as well as competition briefs grow in scope. This bureaucratisation of the competition also comes forth at the same time as a trend towards the quantification of architectonic qualities where the concept of good architecture is being replaced by the right quality as graded according to a predetermined scale with regards to what may be viewed as bad, good, better or best.

## 3. Juridification and procurement

Thirdly, competitions in Europe aiming at implementation have been incorporated into laws on public procurement. This is a legal regulation of the project competition affecting all EU countries, manifested as demands from the public organiser that design teams must observe so as not to risk being excluded from participation. Nowadays particular experts on procurement law scrutinise the invitation to pre-qualification and the competition brief before the competition is announced through the electronic systems for the procurement of services. For the organiser and the design teams, juridification takes the form of references to regulations in the law on public procurement in the competition documents.

## 4. Internationalisation and excluding practices

Contemporary competitions reveal two opposing tendencies: on the one hand, we witness an opening up across the globe, with foreign architects on design teams and collaboration in competitions across national boundaries. On the other hand, the exclusion of design teams in competitions, both early in the process through pre-qualification and at a late stage, through the award process. Despite these practices, applications from a considerable number of architect offices based in Europe appear in invited competitions through the general internationalisation of the profession, and strengthened by the geographical mobility

in Europe and collaboration in projects. Apart from this, geographically based exclusion in competitions is prohibited for public organisers in Europe.

##### 5. Market orientation and conflicting interests

We observe changes in competitions with a market orientation becoming ever more evident, where the public character of the competition reveals competing interests that result in a number of paradoxes, or contrary wishes among key actors which have to be reconciled. To the organisers, the competition used as a tool for marketing is often as important as the capacity to produce architectural quality and finding creative solutions and innovative propositions in response to societal changes. The competition has also become a vehicle for rival cities to make themselves visible in the world, via spectacular architecture. In this market-oriented perspective the competition becomes an investment in the city, aiming to create an architectural form that attracts interest, visitors and financially strong stakeholders.

The identification of these five aspects in the contemporaneous use of architectural competitions for new buildings, physical planning or other design endeavours has supplied a structure for organising the 12 papers that are selected for this anthology. 11 of the papers were submitted for the conference in 2014 at the TU Delft. These papers were submitted to a three-step peer-review process that included firstly, the editors' advice for improving the papers, secondly, peer-reviewing by two external referees, and thirdly, a final approval by the referees and the editors. The twelfth contribution has been written in the form of an essay by one of the keynote speakers for the conference. It is a revised and enhanced version of a speech given at Columbia University, New York, October 2015. This essay will open the current anthology on architectural competitions as institution and process, while subject to different adjustments.

#### **Part 1. Specialisation and the appropriation of knowledge**

Kristian Kreiner opens the discussion on knowledge in architectural competitions with an essay basing it on a single case in Denmark. The aim of this particular competition was to create the world's most accessible office building. The organiser contributed to specialisation and appropriation of knowledge by organising design teams, educating them about accessibility on the basis of the principles for accessibility, equal opportunities and universal design according to

the UN convention on the rights for people with disabilities, UN CRPD. The organiser wanted to make for a better understanding of the competition task in the design teams by improving their knowledge on accessible design solutions for people with a wide range of disabilities. This specialised knowledge on designing for every potential human need was then to be absorbed or incorporated in the competition proposals.

A side effect of this education was that it created differences in the view of the competition task of the design teams versus the architect jurors. Two different images of the competition task evolved that were not integrated in a shared understanding of the aim of the competition. The design teams developed their architectonic solutions on the basis of new insight into potential disability problems. However, the architect jurors made their evaluations of the competition proposals on the basis of their professional competence, awarding the proposal that was judged to have the highest architectonic merit—not the solution with the best level of accessibility as perceived by people experiencing disabilities. One explanation for why the difference in approach could not be bridged during the competition process, brought forward by Kreiner, concerns visual capacity as the prime decision maker. There was no assessment scale which made it possible to communicate the specialised knowledge to the jury about human interaction with built space when experiencing disabilities as regards the level of accessibility knowledge of the design teams. The traditional visual manner of presenting architectural designs overlooked the need for bringing out perceptual qualities in the suggested design solutions in the competition proposals, in order to make them the object of quality assessment by jury members.

Another example illuminating an adjustment to specific client requirements in the form of appropriation of specialised knowledge is to be found in Gerd Bloxham Zettersten's case study on the competition for a new city hall in the mining town of Kiruna, in the far north of Sweden. The town's city hall has been the object of two architectural competitions during an interval of c. 55 years, in 1958 and in 2012-13. The city hall in Kiruna is a prize-winning building from the 1958 competition which was to be replaced on a new site, in a project based on the winning proposal in the competition of 2012-13, which was an invited competition with pre-qualification. The competition was arranged by the town municipality of Kiruna in cooperation with the Association of Swedish Architects. However, in the competition brief it emerged that it was the mining

company LKAB in its role of client that was responsible for the implementation of the winning proposal. The invitation to pre-qualification for the design of a new city hall resulted in 56 applications from design teams. Five of these were invited to the competition. The teams were made up of a multi-disciplinary group of participants which clearly showed a transition in competitions from individual architectural offices to design teams with an international element. This construction of teams responds to a present need to absorb and integrate specialist competence.

The key actors in the design teams consisted of well-known architectural offices in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The jury on the other hand consisted exclusively of Swedish members, something which reflected a tension in the competition between an international predisposition and local adaptation. The comparative study demonstrates new conditions for the production of knowledge through design. Not only was the city hall in Kiruna the object for an architectural competition—the entire town had to be moved, if the place was to survive, as the present site is in the process of collapse due to the underlying honeycombing caused by extensive mining activity. The urban plan for the future town is the result of an international urban design competition in 2013.

Specialisation in architectural competitions is also illustrated in Antigoni Katsakou's investigation of Swiss architectural offices that have built their professional careers by virtue of competition proposals. Katsakou has interviewed 17 representatives of five architectural offices. Firm A was founded in 2003, and nine years later, in 2012, they had completed 60 projects, half of which were designed for competitions. However, none was a winning design, but several projects were awarded second prize. Firm B was set up in 2007. Their first prize was awarded in 2009. Three years later, in 2012, the office won two first prizes. Firm C was established in 1998. By 2012 the firm had taken part in 60 competitions and won first prize in 20 of these. Firm D started in 2006. Up to 2012 they had participated in 30 competitions and won five first prizes. Firm E was founded 2007 and five years later, in 2012, they had submitted 12 design proposals in competitions. In two of these competitions the firm won first prize.

On the basis of this fundamental data, Katsakou notes that specialisation towards competitions changes the architects' understanding of the competition form in a surprising way. Architectural offices which at the start of their professional careers praise the open competition and its capacity of generating radical solutions that attract attention to their authors, will by degrees be invited

to pre-qualified competitions, which makes them positive towards competition forms that limit participation to selected design teams. Therefore, the form of specialisation that favours radical proposals holds within it a conservative tendency. Success in open competitions makes the firms increasingly positive towards procedures that limit risk, affording a greater degree of prediction and economic security through an offer of re-compensation for approved proposals. Katsakou sees the firms' specialisation as a psychological journey for the architects, which in turn makes a convincing argument to strengthen the capacity of the open competition in contributing fresh thinking within architecture and urban design. Young architects and newly started offices need to be able to show off their profile and competence to potential clients.

## **Part 2. Bureaucratisation and administration**

Bureaucratisation infiltrates the competition as institution and process through external demands and internal driving forces within the building sector. From an architectural perspective, bureaucratisation manifests itself in competitions as demands concerning delivery of proposals, new forms of accounting, management routines and assessment principles in juries. The introduction of administrative routines for the management of architectural competitions and of other systems for securing desired building qualities affects the organiser as well as the jury and the competing design teams. No-one escapes.

Two such examples are the demands for certification of sustainability, i.e. green building. Two contributions focus on this specific aspect in architectural competitions. Carmella Cucuzzella takes as a starting point 15 Canadian competitions in which experts in environmental classification were involved in the assessment of the submitted proposals as jury members. According to Cucuzzella, the experts and their technically oriented systems for classification and assessment of sustainability influenced the jury's understanding of quality in the submitted competition proposals. What emerges is two very different ways of perceiving quality in architecture and urban design. One might describe them as measurable quality versus evaluated good quality. The right, measurable quality is represented in the administrative systems for environmental classification by properties that can be delimited and made measurable. Good quality is equivalent to values and experience that is possible to assess, connected with the site and its special prerequisites. The identification of good quality in the submitted competition proposals orients the assessment towards the detection

of appropriate, unclear or simply not adequate solutions of the competition proposal, however, a significant task for the jurors is to define this assessment, so that it can be shared by all the members.

Cucuzzella notes that jury assessments of competition proposals risk becoming too rigid when environmental experts are included in the jury, offering their advice on the basis of technical systems for environmental classification. Their presentation of qualities as “facts” has too great an impact on the detection of design as measurable properties versus values and experience in architecture. The outcome might turn into an instrumental jury evaluation of architecture that encourages assessments on rating scores of specific qualities rather than an overall evaluation and a qualified and comprehensive consideration of the balance between specific requirements and design solutions in order to achieve a harmonised architectonic quality. Therefore, Cucuzzella suggests that the environmental experts should be external consultants outside of the jury deliberations and that the final judgment of competition proposals should be made by the architect jurors.

Leif Östman reaches a somewhat different conclusion after his survey of the competition in 2013 for a new campus building at Aalto University on the outskirts of Helsinki. The 2013 competition for a new campus building at Aalto University was arranged as an open international competition in two stages. The jury comprised 14 competent members. The first stage resulted in 189 proposals. Six of these were selected for development in a second stage. Östman notes that the capacity of the proposals of meeting the demands for sustainability resulted in few comments from the jury in their report on the competition.

In the competition brief, sustainability demands were a central challenge for invited design teams to address. However, the particular focus on sustainability was lost during the competition process, and, in principle, it also vanished from the final jury verdict. One explanation pointed to by Östman was the absence of a distinct advocate for the sustainability perspective in the jury’s assessment of the competition proposals. Once again the trick question is how to judge a system for assessment of sustainable conception, its advantage, use and capacity of contributing to architectonic quality. The architects in the jury who had a decisive say in the assessment of the competition proposals maintained their role as professional experts on architectonic quality. Vague demands and wishes in the brief for sustainable design form did not have an impact in the jury’s selection of a winner. Östman’s conclusion is that the sustainability demands need

to be clarified and incorporated in the assessment of competition proposals in a better way.

Östman's study ends up as an opposing recommendation to Cucuzzella's suggestion. Despite their contradictory results, both authors agree upon an inherent dilemma in competitions with articulated intentions. This may be understood as a question of how art and science may meet in a fruitful way in competition processes aiming at sustainable design – however, doing so without generating administrative control systems or checklist protocols which are bureaucratic solutions with poor relevance for an over-arching architectonic quality.

### **Part 3. Juridification and procurement**

Project competitions have been introduced into legal frameworks for public procurement in Europe. Through this framework, the architectural competition has been ranged in a legal system of prescriptions that strengthens a tendency to checklist protocols and control systems. However, the juridification of project competitions is not confined to the procurement of architect services but carries further significance for the competition as institution and process. For example, the shared set of rules and regulations of the EU procurement directive (2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC) puts forward noticeable differences in the method of procurement of public assignments in architecture and urban design in Europe (European Commission, 1992). In his contribution, Michel Geertse notes that juridification includes a meeting between two very different types of competition cultures; an administrative procurement culture and a design-oriented culture. Once again, we find a classic conflict in the view of architectural quality as measurable properties in a project versus aesthetic values and the spatial experience of architectonic conception. In the investigated competitions, the right, measurable quality appears as on the one hand must-demands and on the other, the evaluated, good quality as floating design criteria steering the jury's assessment and choice of the winning proposal.

According to Geertse, the procurement culture searches for the right quality that results in a preference on the part of public clients looking for architectural services in the Netherlands and the UK for selective tender procedures instead of procurement via competitions. In contrast to these two countries, France stands out as a country where public clients still to a large extent use competitions for the procurement of architect services for building assignments. From

Geertse's study it becomes clear that the juridification of architectural competitions strengthens the procurement experts' role and their tendency to put forward a premium on measurable demands in the selection of design teams, the formulation of demands in competition briefs and the jury's assessment of competition proposals.

Magnus Rönn brings up juridification in the selection and short listing of design teams. Rönn denominates this type of selection process as a client regime and an expression of a latent juridification process among Swedish contractors. Six invited competitions form the basis for this assumption and serve as an illuminating example in his discussion. The organisers' expectations of the architectural competition is found at the very centre of the client regime. On the one hand, the organisers aim to attract as many architect candidates as possible in order to supply a qualified selection of design teams. On the other hand, the intent is to restrict the number of participants that may comply with the regulations in the law on public procurement admission to the competition. From the perspective of the design teams, the picture is the opposite one. The more attractive the competition is, the more applications are sent to the organiser, which, in turn, automatically reduces their chance of being selected.

These two rivalling perspectives are clearly highlighted in Rönn's comparison of how the client regime functions in architectural competitions versus in competitions for land allocation agreements. The way in which the organiser picks out design teams through selection committees cannot be fully predicted in advance. But the fact of gatekeepers in the shape of selection committees applying the must-demands in the invitation is clear. However, when there is great pressure of applications, the members of the selection committees develop new internal demands on the design teams that are not evident in the invitation.

#### **Part 4. Internationalisation and excluding practices**

A majority of architectural competitions increasingly use pre-qualification procedures. The transition from open competitions to invited ones with a limited number of design teams can be seen in the exclusion of young architects and newly started firms. In addition, language demands in the organiser's invitation to competition and requests concerning documented knowledge on national building regulations have an excluding effect. In parallel, the propensity to internationalise competitions is found in competition briefs written in English, as well as internationally composed juries. There is also a

shared core of principles used in international, European and national competition rules.

In his contribution, Pedro Guilherme gives us a view on competition as an international institution and process that the Portuguese revolution of 1974 has in effect given rise to. The renewal of competition culture is in this case part of a political context which has made it possible for, in particular, two Portuguese architects to achieve international star architect status; Alvaro Siza Viera was awarded the Pritzker Prize in 1992 and Eduardo Souto de Moura in 2010. Through the 1974 revolution which opened Portugal to the world, the two star architects were given the opportunity to show themselves off in international competitions. The competition thus regained its status among these architects. Their success in international competitions also made way for younger architects.

Silvia Forlati presents a study which contains findings that are based on data supplied by architects in 25 countries. She points out that the view of the architectural competitions as "getting the job" yields a perspective on competition that is too restrictive. Competition culture is not solely concerned with assignments. In order to understand adjustment processes in architectural competitions one has to consider the competition as an international institution and process through its side effects. Forlati gives us a survey that illuminates the competition from the point of view and experience of design teams in several countries. The survey is based on response to an open call through the Wonderland network, the Austrian Chamber of Architects and Chartered Engineers and through websites. The call resulted in 116 replies from architects in the 25 countries. From these replies it appears that the architects have participated in at least one competition that has had a decisive influence on their professional careers.

Forlati summarises the experience of the architects in the following rule of thumb: out of ten competition proposals, two will result in a first prize, of which one will be built. It is against this background that the competition must be seen in a wider context than merely as an instrument for procurement. For example, architects point to several positive by-products, in spite of recurrent losses, such as the fact that the competition has given them the opportunity of testing design ideas and of showing their creative ability to potential clients outside the competition framework. A majority replied that competitions stimulate their architectonic thinking. It is likely that this is one of the major

reasons why the architectural competition has such a good reputation among architects as a professional body.

Jonas E. Andersson discusses three invited architectural competitions undertaken on the basis of a government initiative in Sweden in 2010 that aimed to develop new residential housing for elderly people. Out of 120 applications, 11 design teams (9%) were selected for three competitions in Burlöv, Gävle and Linköping. This meant that 109 applications (81%) were sifted out. The governmental programme in Sweden was to be carried through during a period of two years. The background for the governmental programme was a forward looking challenge; the development of architectonic solutions to meet the needs of the welfare society in environments adapted to an aging population with functional impairments. The government programme aroused interest in several municipalities which asked, in the introductory phase, for information regarding economic support for competitions. The time scale for the government initiative became a determining reason for there were only three municipalities, Burlöv, Gävle and Linköping, organising competitions. The time frame was too narrow which limited the possibility for other municipalities to organise competitions within the time given by the government.

Few municipalities converted their interest into the setting up of architectural competitions. Andersson describes the realised architectural competitions as dependent upon key actors in order to bridge internal problems in the municipal organisation caused by the time pressure of the overall government initiative. Andersson notes that the municipalities chose to organise invited competitions with pre-qualification in response to the time pressure. The choice of competition form in the three competitions that were carried out was made by a small group of key actors inside the different municipalities. The coordinating manager intervened with the purpose of clarifying the intentions of the governmental programme and of adding knowledge to the competition processes about elderly people and their needs, through parallel investigations. This, then, is a form of internal adjustment created by the time pressure in the government assignment.

### **Part 5. Market orientation and conflicting interests**

The two final chapters in the anthology throw light on two different ways in which market orientation and rivalling interests are expressed in architectural competitions; on the one hand, as external driving forces when cities compete

with each other, through the means of competitions aiming at spectacular buildings; on the other, as internal interests opposing each other within the competition. Architecture with a market orientation as an underlying driving force figures in Justas Pipinis' study. Architectonic conception is used by the municipality of Uppsala in Sweden to attract interest, visitors and businesses to a new concert and congress hall. Pipinis' examination tests a hypothesis; to what degree the competition contains a toolbox promoting the rendering of iconic buildings characterised by exceptional architecture. According to Pipinis, architectonic iconification is a question of the planning of competitions that include implementation of design proposals and that receive their final verdict only later when the building has been taken into use, and its activities have been appreciated by the target group. The competition creates the basis for iconification through the conception of proposals, but the deciding point lies outside of the competition process.

The 2002 competition for a concert and congress hall in Uppsala is used as an example of iconification. In this competition, Henning Larsen Architects in Denmark were selected as winners. The competition tools offering themselves for iconification were: (a) an attractive competition form; (b) an inviting competition brief; (c) exciting competition proposals; (d) a competent jury assessment; (e) the implementation of the winning proposal; (f) quality activities in the building; and (g) target groups that appreciate both the architecture and the contents. It is not only the tools that are interesting, but in particular, how ably or consciously the key actors make use of the toolbox in a process of iconification that starts in the planning of the competition, continues through the implementation of winning proposals, finally to be confirmed through the administrative function.

By way of conclusion, Beatrice Mansoni, Leentje Volker and Hedley Smyth account for a series of paradoxes present internally in the competition viewed as institution and process. What emerges is a picture of a field of tensions, with key actors as carriers of rivalling interests, which may be summarised as the 'concept paradox'. It means that the competition is given several contradictory tendencies which must be balanced in the competition stages as (a) the programming of the competition task, (b) the selection of participants in the competition, (c) conception of the competition proposals and (d) the jury's selection of a winner. This balancing act within competitions results in a number of imperative deliberations which must be made by organisers, selection committees, design

teams and jury members. It is not possible to avoid the balancing action as long as there are rivalling interests inherent in the competition viewed as institution and process. In this perspective the concept paradox becomes a theoretical tool for the understanding of the competition in a market-oriented world. According to Manzoni, Volker and Smyth deeper studies of competition paradoxes may contribute knowledge and innovation to the competition in its role of institution and process.

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Institution and process are two major concepts in the understanding of the competition and how this tool for the production of architecture and urban design has developed. They represent a core of establish ideas and fundamental principles, here combined with making and acting by key players in competitions. Adjustments in contemporary competitions presented and discussed here are based on empirical findings in selected papers. Several adjustments can be found in each text. Only a few aspects have been emphasised in this introduction – many more may be found. It is our hope that the reader will find this a fruitful way of theorising competition in architecture and urban design as a growing field of research.

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