Meaning Inquiry for 21st Century Architecture through the Pritzker Prize Laureates

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Abstract

Globalization and digitalization in 21st century have been affecting the notions and conceptions of societies. Inevitably, architecture has been following, even forming, these advancements. The aim of the architect is to create *meaningful architecture* that is adequate for occupants' needs as meaningful architecture refers to a set of intentions, visions and solutions that can be provided by design, guiding the architectural process from concept formation to construction and use. Present study proposes a *meaning model* for understanding / diagnosing the sources of meaning in 21st century architecture. *Reality*, *expression* and *purpose* –three fluid and permeable criteria- were proposed as the variables of the model and architectures of the Pritzker Prize laureates 2000-16 were examined accordingly. Since laureates produced numerous buildings and Pritzker assessments cover lifetime careers, only one building that was considered to be compatible with the 21st century of each laureate was exemplified. Pritzker Prize announcements and materials in the social media, such as web-pages, magazine articles, critical writings and video recordings, were reviewed while considering each architect's discourse. The study diagnosed, (i) technology, (ii) timelessness, (iii) inclusiveness and (iii) humanitarianism being generic in creating meaningful architecture in 21st century. The study is unique; it is impartial in structuring the meaning model and it considers 2000-15 Pritzker prize laureates in a comparative manner.

Keywords: 21st century architecture, meaning in architecture, Pritzker Prize, architectural criticism, architectural theory

INTRODUCTION

Increased population, climatic changes, poverty in some regions, wars, immigration, aging society and non-renewable resources are knocking the risk alert whereas globalization, digital revolution and the accelerated inventions have been changing our perception, understanding and living. Intensive use of computers and their role in aiding architects in design and presentation are mentioned to be creating *"… an autonomous design medium, offering the possibility of exploring new geometries and design techniques"* (Kinayoğlu, 2008). Industry 4.0 and internet of objects force new approaches for design as all these factors require new ways of viewing the 21st century architecture.

Sheltering had been the primitive and prior function of architecture provided residency in caves, in nature. Evolution of life and societies widened architecture's borders, it exceeded beyond being rigid masses hosting activity. Architecture has started to assemble human aspirations and represent cultures. Architecture has been *"… widely perceived to possess meaning to be more than mere structure"* (Whyte, 2006; p.2) as seeing buildings as *conveyors of meaning* became the main consideration for critics and writers (Haldane, 1999). Therefore the following questions become important: What is meaning in architecture? What is meaningful in architecture? How can we diagnose or define the meaning of a specific architectural work or era of architecture?

The present study tries to exemplify such an inquiry via a unique case-study. It focuses on the most and highly credited meanings attributed to present time architecture, put a diagnosis on how meaning in architecture is being obtained recently. In this frame; study will first draw an impartial meaning frame for architecture via reviewing definitions of *the meaning in architecture* proposed by various (Modern-Post Modern) theorists and historians. The rest of the inquiry is devoted to the case-study; the 21st century laureates of the prestigious Pritzker Prize, which is known as *the architecture's Nobel*, *profession's highest honor*. Addressing the symptoms of the new era and diagnosing its reflections in architecture required a new theoretical framework for the meaning issue in architecture as it also requested a verifiable sample group.

Awarding the total career of an architect, the achievements in architectural and social lives consist Pritzker Prize's uniqueness as the laureates are named among the best architects of the world, not only for their mastership but also for their being influential in shaping the built environment. Therefore, laureates and their works were considered to be appropriate cases for illuminating the meanings noticed, revealed and declared by an institutionalized crediting authority in architecture and the annually changing / updated values that this event announces to the non-architect society. What contemporary architecture could have been offering for society was thought to be tracked via unveiling the meanings of architectures created by the distinguished laureates. Therefore, present study is a search for meaning in architecture, sampling its approach on 21st century Pritzker Prizes.

Results have potential to illuminate the institutionalizing values of the architectural society and the meanings and messages given to the rest of the society via the awarding mechanism whereas the dynamics behind the screen, i.e. how candidates and juries are chosen or how the jury reviews the edifices of candidates within limited time, are still left open to curiosity for another study. All publications, announcements or explanations referenced in this study upon the Pritzker material should be considered as the tip of an iceberg, might be called the media face, as the main body still waits for another exciting discovery.

MEANING IN ARCHITECTURE

Linguistically, *meaning* refers to convey; denote, to act as a symbol of, to intend, to have the importance or value of, to design, or destine for a certain purpose (Soukhanov, 1991). But what is 'meaning' in architecture and how is a building is qualified to be meaningful particularly, in the 21st century? C. Jenks demonstrated that there should be a demand for new architecture, especially after the industrial revolution that happened in the middle of the 19th century (Jenks, 1982).Similarly, there should be a demand for new architecture for dealing with the issues specific to 21st century matters as well.

For the historian and theorist C.N. Schulz, architecture is a manifestation of reality. A building,with its *form* and *space*, is a conveyor of *reality* that had prevailed in a definite time. Architects should handle with the qualities that a building bears and provide a symbolic form with spaces conveying determined meaning (Jenks& Baird, 1971). Form, in Schulz's point of view, should represent, symbolize and concretize certain conception. According to Schulz, meaningful architecture "… *gives visual expression to ideas which mean something to man because they 'order' reality. Only through such an order, only by recognizing their mutual dependence, do things become meaningful*" (Jenks, 1971; p.223). These ideas might differentiate in their essence; they might be philosophical, social or religious and these ideas take role in construction of the reality we are living in. From a parallel perspective, W. Whyte affirms that architecture have always been conceived as an instrument that articulate ideas, beliefs and emotions, it is not a mere utilitarian object. According to Whyte, "*buildings convey meaning, and what they mean is the spirit of the age in which they are constructed*"(Whyte, 2006, p.163).

P. Goldberger emphasizes on the concept as well, that architecture should have a symbolic representational form. Goldberger affirms that architecture is connected with and affected by culture and even it is the ultimate *physical representation of a culture more so than its flag does* (Goldberger, 2009; p.16). Many cities or countries are known for an iconic building representing identity as architecture represents the sum of common cultural experience. Goldberger confirms on this idea by assessing the social and technological changes that affected the architectural meaning. Bank buildings' architecture, for instance; tended to look serious, classical, symbolizing protection and security to convey the feeling for customers that their money was in a secure place in old days whereas today's banks are represented in a more open and transparent way due to the electronic money for which protection for screens are not necessary any more. Goldberger explains "*Even if we find the old bank exhilarating, it has a different meaning as a work of architecture now than before*" (Goldberger, 2009; p.23). In our time, the old bank is being experienced as a piece of monumental architecture, not conveying safety and security anymore. Regarding Schulz's and Goldberger's conceptions; a building is a form representing a capacity, the symbolic form and its bounded space concretizes the elements of reality, i.e. function, time and economy.

Architect J. Pallasmaa argues that in the last recent decades, many architects are seeking for newness and uniqueness where there is an absence in the adaptation and harmony with the historical layering. Newness, Pallasmaa declared, imposes deep potential which vitalize the building and the experience through it. Pallasmaa conceives newness as an individual practice and as a *self-expression*. According to him, respecting the tradition and rootedness does not imply traditionalism by necessity, but it can also acknowledge a *source of meaning, inspiration and emotional rooting*. The echo to tradition comes from the *architectural logic itself and its cultural deep structure*, such an architecture *projects comforting and enriching experiences of participation in a meaningful historical continuum* (Pallasmaa, 2012; p.15) Thus, Pallasmaa affirms that architecture cannot success if it ignores its culture and roots, and it becomes a more meaningful formal game when it echoes the building's imperishable tradition. Pallasmaa also confirms that architecture should supply cultural identity and be an evolving story of history because art and architecture are significant participants manifesting the continuity of a culture.

Schulz also asserts that the meaningful architecture should provide *environmental qualities*, the atmosphere or the surrounding that the person lives in. The meaning of space, thus, is related to our feelings and our empathy towards it: When we travel to a foreign country, the space becomes *neutral* to us despite our feelings of joy or sorrows, while our home or country give us a feeling of security and these qualities are associated with our assigned values toward the space. Goldberger conforms on this conception, where he conceives a successful architecture is not that one which only fulfill the required function, but also the one provides aesthetic significance, actuate empathy and evoke feelings. Such building owns profound meaning more than a well-functioning one (Goldberger, 2009). Moreover, in the context of values and empathy Sarah Robinson, in corporation with Pallasmaa, argues in her book *Mind in Architecture* about the importance of experience, and in her turn is relating any object's meaning to the experience it is affording to us (Robinson& Pallasmaa, 2015). The experience is related with values, feelings and empathy toward a certain physical object and is summed up from our understanding for this object. Thus, both Schulz and Robinson conform on the idea that meaning is related with the experience and the value affordance that architectural structure provide to us. Through this qualitative aspect of experience, architecture becomes meaningful concretizing higher substances of values for us.

METHODOLOGY
Defining the criteria for meaning in architecture
For diagnosing the meanings leading the 21st century architecture, an impartial meaning frame was needed. Impartiality was obtained through consideration of multiple discourses by Schulz, Jenks, Pallasmaa, Goldberger, Robinson and Whyte, the writers either of the 20th century or its turn to the 21st century. Thus the meaning frame that this study proposes does not depend on a single theory of meaning, rather constructs a comprehensive theory itself. Sure, discourse readings could have been enlarged and varied whereas the present study considered practicality in terms of obtaining definitions and applicability of these definitions on architectures.

Shortly, to be meaningful, architectural products are expected;

(i)   to be *Manifesting Reality*, therefore expressing architect's main attitude towards past and future values of society; revealing his/her understanding of the present era;his/her symbolizing culture, traditions and roots via the total building form,

(ii)   to be indicating *Purposes for Building*, therefore enriching the experiential world of individual users; capturing the senses of perceivers; raising specific emotions of people; creating a sense of place; causing newness in social experiences; evoking and raising feelings, and

(iii)   to be giving *Visual / Spatial Expressions to Ideas,* therefore articulating the social and architectural ideas, beliefs and emotions that are supposed to be originating from the spirit of time; ordering the fuzzy being of reality in a certain way.

In a nutshell, *Manifesting Reality*refers to the general concept and form that an architect uses in shaping / structuring / organizing spaces, as *Purposes for Building* refers to the specific experiences that the architects wants people to live via the building's interior and exterior composition and the *Visual / Spatial Expression* refers to the architect's personal / distinct ideas and proposals brought as a solution to the problems of contemporary life. As can be noticed, these three definitions raise and support each other, therefore addressing a single definition automatically raises the definitions of the other two.

Though buildings are static, the meanings attached to them can vary according to time and the reader (Whyte, 2006). Therefore the meaning frame and the reading displayed in this study should not be considered as an ultimate theory or criticism for the architectures but as a reflection of a mind trying methodological diagnoses for what has been happening in the highlights of architecture.

The Pritzker Laureates, the Limits
First 15 years' laureates were focused for the case-study in order to observe / display the big picture of architectural meaning at the beginning of the 21st century. Being the laureate in 2003, in the 25th anniversary of Pritzker Prizes, and being the designer of famous iconic building The Sydney Opera House, Jørn Utzon (1918-2008) designed and built mostly in his home country Denmark as most of his designs were considered to be rooted in the 20th century compared to the other 15 years' laureates of the 21st century. Therefore, he was excluded in the inquiry. Similarly, Frei Otto, the laureate of 2015 was also excluded in present inquiry due to the unique place of his fantastic experiments merging engineering and architecture, owing a lot to 20th century predecessors. We think both Utzon and Otto deserve unique inquiries that focus on their transferring role of values and meanings between the centuries. Present study tributes them as being the winds beneath the several architects' wings, who acted in 21st century values. The 2016 laureate was included in the inquiry as the present study was completed at the beginning of 2017.

The Readings, the Limits
Considering the proposed meaning frame, readings were run via reviewing the texts that appeared in media, that architects wrote and that of written for architects. Besides, the

videos in which an architect appears and talks about his/her building or which a certain building of an architect has been subjected and interpreted by several actors were collected and analyzed. In 21st century, videos are immediate, intimate, effective and comprehensive mediums revealing what has been happening. Data collected via mediums was processed by the two readers, who are also the writers of this paper, and a diagnostic paragraph was written for each architect. One building, built after 2000, per each architect was chosen to represent / exemplify one's architectural attitude towards 21st century. In choosing sample buildings, sample's qualities responding to the 21st century reality and architect's attitude was given importance, therefore samples were chosen from the buildings that were built before or after the architect became a laureate. Present study considers validity of possible different ways of readings, diagnoses and sampling as well. Diagnostic texts are given below as the sample buildings are collected in Pictures 1,2 and 3.

CASE-STUDY: PRIZKER PRIZE LAUREATES AND MEANING(S) OF ARCHITECTURE
Being the first Pritzker prize laureate of the 21st century,R. Koolhaas referred to the *Generic Spaces* assignable for any place, to any inhabitant. In his point of view, a contemporary space should be open and flexible (Schrijver, 2008). Koolhaas believes that a building should have symbolic form because architecture has a civic meaning and iconic buildings are part of the cultures they belong to, they convey economy and development such as his CCTV Headquarter (Howarth, 2014). Koolhaas ignores imitating from history because he thinks it causes weakness in ideas while he applies technology and innovative methods in line with the fluidity of life (Goldberger, 2000). Koolhaas considers the physiological and emotional factors of occupants for arousing feelings toward the piece of architecture. He also believes that in the contemporary time there should be an emphasis on creating social spaces for promoting connectivity and communication.

J. Herzog & P. De Meuron, laureates of the year 2001, always seek for designing spaces with new approaches and creating spatial sequence to provoke movement and sense of discovery toward the space, while they do not tend to create symbolic form in their architecture. Each project has its own combination ofdetails, materials to let the occupants to perceive it as a piece of art. (Moor, 2016). Herzog & De Meuron conceives values to be gained from people's responses to the building. Accordingly, they consider the building from a wide urban perspective. In the Actelion Business Center, they intended to concretize *"the company's future-oriented business activity"* with their basic theme for the building, to foster *"communication and openness"*; (Architecture lab, 2010) stayed away from the site's rigid urban texture; utilized beams as their main element and stacked it above each other in different angles so that the random set of beams allowed creation of various spaces like terraces and courtyards for break-outs.

G. Murcutt was the laureate of the year 2002. All his designs take place in Australia. The jury awarded Murcutt for his eco-friendly designs, for his being a naturalist (Lifson, 2002).In Murcutt's architecture, a space should have the theme of freedom, exposing, embracing nature, and lack of enclosure. Experience to Murcutt, is designing for the senses of humankind, bringing the feeling of haven and peacefulness to the building. Sensibility to the surrounding, landscape, environment and nature (Futagawa, 2003) and echoing the planet earth geometry and originality are addressed for qualifying his architecture. Murcutt applied sustainable methods and techniques in his buildings. Inclusiveness and respect to all faiths were the keywords of his latest 2016 building, the Newport Mosque for which he worked in collaboration with H. Elevli. Murcutt abstracted traditional elements, the lanterns on the roof, as he did not use any minaret or dome symbolizing religion (O'Hara, 2016; Brown, 2017).

Z. Hadid, laureate of the year 2004,focused on fragmentations and explosions of spaces. Hadid conceived contemporary space as an entity that has fluidity and porosity in which

series of flows create a new paradigm, away from the Euclidian(Gannon, 2006). Hadid applied the computer aided design tools for reflecting the soul of the contemporary age (Wright, 2014.a) as she did not believe symbolism. For her, buildings should be derived from their contexts and as pieces stepping from the ground. Hadid proposed a new way of movement through the space, aimed penetration of spaces that have points of intensity and points of tranquility. She conceived ground levels to act as fields of public domain (Gannon, 2006). Hadid also tended to reflect the political aspirations of the country, like her design for Heydar Aliyev Center. Lines of the project was derived from the region's local architecture; floral patterns and art figures. These characters were gathered with Hadid's fragmentation and abstraction and with her ambition to create fluid space. Thus, the building is reflecting Azerbaijan's ambition and aiming to be an integral part of national culture, not only because of its form, but also that of the deep concept, people and culture.

T. Mayne, laureate of the year 2005, founded Morphosis, with M. Rotondi (Lifson, 2005). Mayne does not aim to stylize a space but enhance the way it is accommodating activity. He also aims to create a space as a heart in the building, beating with social communication. In some cases, he believes symbolism is a must because buildings contribute city's skyline. In his design for the Perot Museum of Nature and Science, Mayne rejected the idea proposing museum architecture to act as a neutral background, instead, by integrating architecture with nature and technology, he attempted to create an interactive environment letting the building present itself as an active tool (Olsberg, 2012) (Picture 1).

Laureate 1 (Year: 2000)

R. Koolhaas, China Central Television Headquarter Building, China, 2002-2012 (URL 1)

Laureate 2 (Year: 2001)

J.Herzog & H. De Meuron, Actelion Business Center, Allschwil, Switzerland, 2007-2010 (URL 2)

Laureate 3 (Year: 2002)

G. Murcutt & H. Elevli, Newport Mosque, Melbourne, Australia, 2004-2016 (URL 3)

Laureate 4 (Year: 2004)

Z. Hadid,
Heydar Aliyev Centre, Baku,
Azerbaijan, 2007-2012
(URL 4)

Laureate 5 (Year: 2005)

T. Mayne, Perot Museum of
Nature and Science, Dallas,
USA, 2008-2012
(URL 5)

Picture 1. Pritzker Prize Laureates between the years 2000-2005 and the sample buildings that exemplify each architect's approach to architecture and its meaning, the meaning defined in this study.

P.M. da Rocha, laureate of the year 2006, considers architecture as a matter of knowledge; an intellectual work, an analyses of history and the present reality, exploring the place and responding to site and situation (Belogolovsky, 2006). For de Rocha, architecture influences all knowledge and politics not only in a single country but also in the universe, it effects other fields of knowledge in the era that societies have been developing an understanding for nature; the techniques used in architecture are the human way of seeing the nature therefore human discover the secret and truth of nature through architecture (Arkitera, 2006). For de Rocha architecture *"is the transformation of the nature, a total fusion of science, art and technology in a sublime statement of human dignity and intelligence through the settlements we build for ourselves"* (Sousa Cruz, 2016, p.6). De Rocha's concrete structures, that are also landmarks, consider the relationships with the surrounding as well. Elevated/lifted floors in de Rocha's buildings are for avoiding the blocking the territory of the city (Wright, 2014.b), for promoting public use and for connecting the building to their surroundings as De Rocha did in the New Coach Museum.

R. Rogers, laureate of the year 2007 is known for being an architect of space-age. He believesthe rich and poor are equal thus spaces should be flexible and open. Rogers thinks architects have social responsibility and they shape cities. He does not create symbolic forms. Buildings, for him, should be vitalized, conveying comfortable atmosphere, imposing optimism as theybe preserving human qualities and fulfilling the occupants' emotional and physiological needs. Likewise, designing and constructing means building something that belongs to its occupants, echoing their values. What Rogers considers in his buildings are the occupant, the passerby and the thought of public(Rogers, 2017).Rogers seeks modernization via buildings and create them in a way emulates their time. Being aware of the contemporary time's environmental considerations, he utilizes sustainable design methods. Ethos is the controller for Rogers. He aims to unite the buildings' content and appearance to be one for all people. In the 8 Chiefly, in collaboration with Stirk Harbour + Partners, he aimed to create a contemporary office, where technology is the driver. Sustainable materials, water reduction and reduced carbon emission were the technical challenges of the Office whereas the grand entrance was devoted to public use and the landscape podiums on multiple levels were proposed for employee's sense of comfort (Rogers, 2017).

J. Nouvel, the laureate of the year 2008, is known with new horizons, creative experimentations and expanding the language of contemporary architecture. B. Lacy, in his book *100 Hundred Contemporary Architects*, acknowledges Nouvel as the architect who stepped away from Modernism and Post-modernism and created his own unique architectural language, which is a combination of traditional and non-traditional forms (Lacy, 1991). Nouvel is a contextual architect. His context extends to the historical, cultural and the local. Nouvel believes that culture is a link between different civilizations and space should echo the culture as form should be symbolizing the roots of the building's place (Peltason & Ong-Yang, 2011). Nouvel, in his design for Abu Dhabi Museum, aimed to enrich the experience of occupants by constructing a relation between the matter and light andto bring the sense of locality by the distinctive imprints of light into space (The National, 2017).

P. Zumthor, laureate of the year 2009, is known for his being the master of timelessness in architecture and his enrichment of the architectural profession with his philosophy; his respect for the site, local culture and the legacy of the place. Zumthor seeks to assign spatial qualities to his spaces by artful use of building materials. Zumthor builds an image of the space, focuses on how the occupants should feel. (Zumthor, 2010) He does not believe in symbols or the message of a building, instead considers a building as an integral part of its surrounding. He emphasizes on the locality, on triggering the senses of users and creating spatial images. Being close to nature or integrating withnature is important to him (Chapman, 2016). According to Zumthor, the 21st century's architecture should reach to an ultimate abstraction in addition to preserving the legacy of a place as he did it in Bruder Klaus Chapel. There is no altar in the Chapel, accordingly, the space is not precisely utilized as a church space, but as a small place in the field which *"express hopes for human existence"*(Louisiana channel, 2015).

Being founders of SANAA, K. Sejima and R. Nishizawa were the laureates of the year 2010. SANAA uses singular architectural language, buildings dissolving within their contexts creating rich experiences, such as sense of freedom and integration with the surrounding. The contemporary space for SANAA is an infinite one, without borders therefore architects avoid opaque masses and symbolism (Peltason & Ong-Yang, 2011). For SANAA, people should not be restricted via heavy envelopes that separate them from external environment. Instead people should be experiencing their architecture as a layer of landscape, interconnecting all potentials within it. Conceiving architecture as a park that gather people, melting with the landscape, SANAA creates special relations with the environment. In architects' point of view, meaning is related with people's feeling of lightness and fluidity throughout the building, as can be obviously seen in their design for the Grace Farms community center. SANAA achieved two goals in Grace Farms; created spaces for connectivity and socialism andplaced the roof above creating an effect of melting within the landscape (Picture 2).
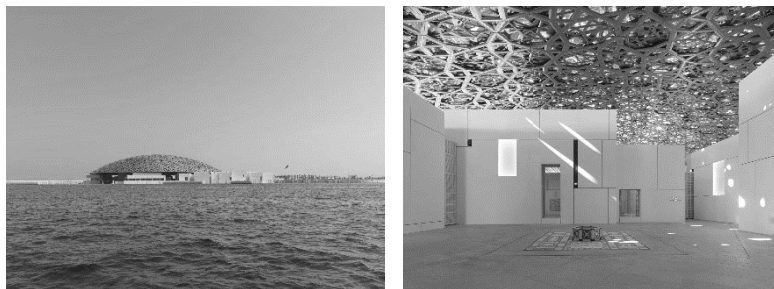

Laureate 6 (Year: 2006)

P.M. da Rocha, New Coach Museum, Lisbon, Portugal, 2015
(URL 6)

Laureate 7 (Year: 2007)
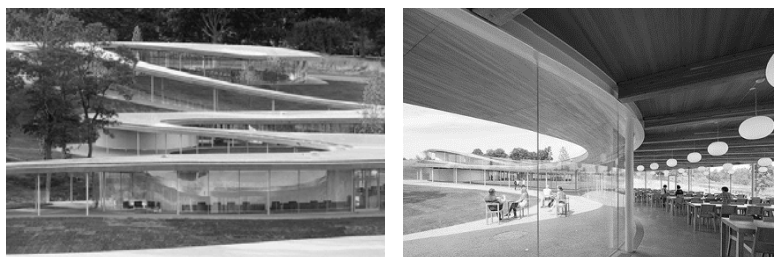
R. Rogers, 8 Chiefly,
Sydney, Australia, 2006
(URL 7)

Laureate 8 (Year: 2008)

J. Novel, Louvre Abou Dabi,
Abou Dabi, United Arab
Emirates, 2006-17
(URL 8)

Laureate 9 (Year: 2009)

P. Zumthor
Bruder Klaus Field Chapel,
Mechernich, Eifel,
Germany, 2007
(URL 9)

Laureate 10 (Year: 2010)

SANAA, Grace Farms ,New
Canaan Connecticut, USA,
2015
(URL 10)

Picture 2. Pritzker Prize Laureates between the years 2006-2010 and the sample buildings that exemplify each architect's approach to architecture and its meaning, the meaning defined in this study.

E. S. de Moura, being the laureate of the year 2011, is a modernist, sees modernism as a project rather than a formal approach. According to de Moura nothing until this time *"has appeared to replace it. It is only the means that have changed"* and *"architecture lives to be transformed, and there lies its true calling: to be occupied by people"* (Machado, 2011). For de Moura, goal of architecture is searching for anonymity –a coexistence of nature and artifact in a perfect equilibrium (Lifson, 2011)- and being a natural part of a place whereas it is also a global issue, a second skin that does not need to declare a message or a narrative (Sachetti, 2011). Exquisite use of materials and sometimes the color is a characteristic of de Moura's architecture (Correa, 2011). Being highly influenced from M. van der Rohe, de Moura gives importance to appropriateness, the local and the past providing information about the future. De Moura considers houses as experiments in architecture transforming materials to languages as his Cinema House

has lenses focused to see the view of the surrounding mountains and river as the Two Houses in Ponte de Lima is a true expression of his quote *"in architecture the opposite is also true"* (Correa, 2011), presenting two opposite ways of standing on the ground despite identical programs.

W. Shu was the laureate of the year 2012.Being the founder of Amateur Architecture Studio, Shu considers architecture as a gathering of the artistic and functional elements. Shu believes that place has a spirit and it imposes it as architecture is not a piece of art that people look at for a temporary time but is a place where people must live their lives for long time. For Shu, making a building means enduring for decades; nature and architecture should intersect and overlap. He does not believe in the rigid stacked mass of architecture (Mattie, 2017).In some cases, architecture should concertize a valuable traditional element as he also emphasizes connecting with history and local context and on the essence of building materials to enrich the experience. Shu conforms on the importance of doing more economical buildings with well-studied techniques and controlling all the project in order to satisfy all the proposed conditions. In Ningbo History Museum, where the site of the project is located between demolished villages, Shu was fascinated with the materials; combined two materials, the concrete with bamboo texture on it and the debris collected from the surrounding area (Mattie, 2017). In this context, Shu preserved the local qualities as he also offered more economical solution through the use of recycled building materials.

Being the laureate of 2013, T. Ito created a new approach, the *emerging grid* (Brownwell, 2011),a step beyond the rigid modernist one, extended to be three dimensional and presented by biological constructs. Ito aims to enrich human experience by creating imprints of nature via using natural light in the building, for keeping occupants in connection with nature. Also, Ito thinks the human body is being changing by the time; for this, he conceives there should be a new way of abstraction different than the rigid modernism's abstraction. He calls it the *'new real'* in architecture: *"Abstraction is definitely necessary. If there were no abstraction, what is real would become fabricated and artificial. With a new type of abstraction, modernism can be transformed into a fertile and rich territory"* (Brownwell, 2011). In his design of the Serpentine Art Gallery, Ito derived the shape from an algorithm that expands as it rotates. The triangles and trapezoids were the result of the intersecting lines which form a new real abstraction: *"There's a feeling of reality, and the abstraction disappears. This is mysterious. Abstraction occurs at various levels, like the emerging grid"* (Brownwell, 2011).

S. Ban was the laureate of the year 2014. He founded Ban Architects, also the NGO Voluntary Architecture Network to aid the refugees. For Ban, a space of a building is the one that pleases its inhabitants (Brownwell, 2011). Ban aims to create lightness via materials. He tends to create new approaches for moving through his buildings; not only to experiencing interiors, but also experiencing the exterior nature and views around the buildings. Ban thinks that architects in our days are not very involved in disaster projects, in fact it is a duty of an architect (TEDx Tokyo, 2013).Ban authored the *Humanitarian Architecture,* a collection of his humanitarian projects, devoted to and volunteered for the refugees and people who suffered from disasters. Ban seeks to develop new techniques in this context, whether from inventing a new paradigm of partition systems for refugees who are gathered in one place, i.e. a stadium, or developing on the typical refugee shelter that are provided by the government or organizations (Ban, 2014). His humanitarian project also covered buildings that were necessary for the society to re-function after the disaster. After the destructive earthquake of the year 2008 in China; Ban had provided a design for series of classrooms for the elementary school in Chengdu city made from paper tubes. He had refined the techniques of construction to let the untrained volunteers from university

students be able to join the rebuilding works, and the result of this team work during one month was three buildings, each having nine classrooms.

A. Aravena, being the laureate of the year 2016,started to lead his practice in association with other architects known as *'ELEMENTAL'*, as he calls it a *'Do Tank'*. *"Calling the company, a "Do Tank," as opposed to a think tank, they have built more than 2,500 units using imaginative, flexible and direct architectural solutions for low cost social housing"* (The Hyatt Foundation, 2016). The mission wascreating social impact and public responsibility for the topics from infrastructure to housing and public spaces. Aravena conceives that architectural space and public spaces should own good qualities, they are for people of the city, so doing qualified spaces means improving quality of life without relating to people's financial situation(Aravena & Iacobelli, 2016).Evoking from this principle, Aravena emphasizes that post-disaster houses should also be good quality spaces, not like the typical ones offered after a disaster.In terms of form, Aravena keeps far from imitation (from history) and showy artistic forms. To let people assign values for spaces, he tends to engage people in the process, responding to their demands, synthesizing to find the best solution that offer them qualified living. In addition, he conceives in the contemporary time, considering sustainably should be stemming from the logic of design, not from assigning elements. As he did for the Innovation Center, the goal was to create the right environment for knowledge creation. He went away from the typical known glass office buildings that are exposed to sun and create greenhouse effect inside the building (TED Global, 2014). Instead, he turned the design inside-out, inverted the typical paradigm of an office building that has a central core and stacked floors around it, covered with glass skin(Picture 3).
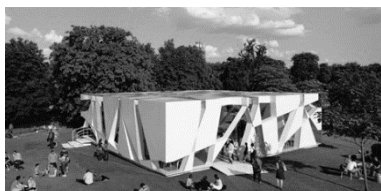

Laureate 11 (Year: 2011)

E.S. de Moura,

2 Houses in Ponte de Lima, Maia, Portugal, 2007
(URL 11)
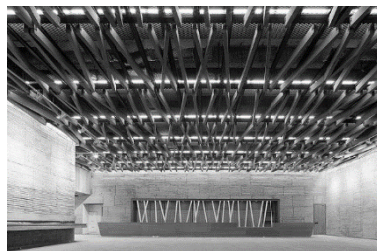
Laureate 12 (Year: 2012)

W.Shu, Ningbo History Museum, Ningbo, Zhejiang, China, 2008
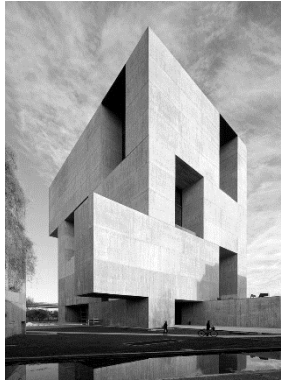(URL 12)

Laureate 13 (Year: 2013)

T. Ito (with C. Balmond), Serpentive Pavilion, London, United Kingdom, 2002
(URL 13)

Laureate 14 (Year: 2014)

S. Ban, Hualin Temporary Elementary School, Chengdu, China, 2008 (URL 14)

Laureate 15 (Year: 2016)

A.Aravena (ELEMENTAL), Innovation Center for the University of Chile, Santiago Metropolitan Region, Chile, 2014 (URL 15)

Picture 3. Pritzker Prize Laureates between the years 2011-2016 and the sample buildings that exemplify each architect's approach to architecture and its meaning, the meaning defined in this study.

RESULT: DOMAINS OF MEANING IN ARCHITECTRE

The focused Pritzker Prize laureates and their key concerns in architecture raises the 4 domains of *obtaining meaningful architecture* that can be attributed to the early 21st century;

1. The meaning that has been obtained via "technology":Approaches are based on the following keywords; innovation, comfort, artistic use of materials and details, imprinting nature, sustainability, lightness, fluidity, porosity, dissolving, non-traditional attitude, infinity, abstraction and architecture as a fusion of science, art and technology. Mainly, Koolhaas, Herzog & de Meuron, Hadid, Rogers, Nouvel, SANAA and Ito seem to be the laureates who use technology intensively in creating meaningful architecture.

2. The meaning that has been obtained via "timelessness": Approaches are based on the following keywords; good relations and integration with nature, ecology, landscape, anonymity, surrounding, historic / cultural / localcontext, traditions, integration with place, integration with urban texture, use of recycled materials and architecture as a second skin. Mainly, Mayne, Da Rocha, Zumthor, De Moura and Shu are the laureates who create meaningful architecture by proposing timeless buildings.

3. The meaning that has been obtained via "inclusiveness": Approaches are based on the following keywords; connectivity, communication, flexibility,openness, ground levels as public domain and architecture as a place for social interaction. Mainly, Koolhaas, Herzog & de Meouron, Murcutt, Hadid, Mayne, De Rocha, Rogers and SANAA are the laureates who design in a more inclusive manner and obtain a meaningful architecture.

4. The meaning that has been obtained via "humanitarianism": Approaches are based on the following keywords; low cost social housing, engaging people in design, economy, cultural sustainability and architecture as a service to the ones in need. Mostly, Murcutt, Ban, Shu and Aravena are the laureates who refer humanitarian purposes of architecture and act accordingly, therefore consider the use, meaning and reason of architecture in humanitarian domain.

As can be noticed, some laureates act in more than one domain of meaning in architecture as few of them base their attitude towards 21st century on a narrower – and/also deeper- point of view. In fact, these four domains do not represent *newness* in architectural debate, on the contrary they constitute a continuation of meanings and values that have been existing through numerous theories and discourses. Finding/inventing/experimenting new constructional methods, for higher buildings or for larger spans for instance, has always been an important issue in architecture. What we observe today is the involvement of computer technologies that enable architects control and create their designs in conditions of maximum freedom. Nothing, neither formally nor materially, seems impossible in 21st century's computerized / digitalized conditions, therefore *meaning of architecture* has been expanded towards technology. Digitalization enables complex/sophisticated abstractions as it also facilitates betterment of comfort and sustainability conditions of buildings. Similarly, creating timeless environments that are in harmony with nature and local/urban life has been an issue all through history. Adding artful edifices to an existing context has been obtained via either the support of technology or through inventing artful ways of construction, therefore it is possible to claim that although digitalization has expanded its area of effect up to timeless environments, meaning in architecture has still been obtained via timelessness, via the inventions in craft of construction and its dramatic experiential effects. Inclusiveness, also, has always been the ultimate goal of cities, the urban environment. In the 21st century, we observe that, inclusiveness has been carried to building scale, therefore not only the squares of a city enables citizens' gathering anymore but also the courtyards, ground floors and even the public spaces on upper levels of buildings provide the new kind of inclusiveness. Although traces of humanitarianism in architecture can be observed in near history, keeping budgets low and enabling populations to participate to the future of their own environments seems to be the newly emerging issues of the 21st century architecture.

Briefly, present inquiry diagnosed technology, timelessness, inclusiveness and humanitarianism as the sources of meaningful architecture for the beginning of the 21st century via examining the discourses of Pritzker Prize laureates and claims that all these sources have been existing through history whether near or far. Future is open to new inventions and new concepts, therefore developments such as increasing interactions with sciences, the robotic construction technology, inquiries in developing settlements in other planets, experiments for intelligent / composite materials, changing natural balances on earth and the increasing number of human flows between continents, all may trigger new possibilities, and also new obligations, for creating/proposing new meanings in architecture. In these circumstances, what expected from the Pritzker Prizes and its content guiding societies unavoidably becomes very important. The Prize should support / follow all these new meaningswhile continuingawarding the conventional meaning sources of architecture as well, reminding societies what architecture is and what it is about.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
No conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

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