



# EVALUATING THE INFLUENCE OF DOMINANT CIVILIZATIONS ON PRITZKER PRIZE OUTCOMES IN ARCHITECTURE (1979-2024)

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## Abstract

Elitism in architecture is evident in various aspects: architects are elevated as authorities on built environment quality, recruitment often draws from elite circles, commissions primarily come from elite patrons, and the profession largely caters to the values and aesthetic preferences of privileged groups. Prestigious architecture awards on a global scale reinforce this elitism, thereby producing so-called 'starchitects', who, in turn, benefit from this recognition. Among numerous evaluative frameworks, the Pritzker Prize (PP) stands out as one of the most esteemed. It is hypothesized that this prize favors architects whose nationalities are aligned with the 'West', over 'non-Western' counterparts. In light of substantial critique directed at this historically-based dichotomy as overly simplistic, the culturally-rooted 'Clash of Civilizations' theory, which identifies eight key world civilizations, offers an alternative framework for analysis.

Employing a qualitative research methodology with case studies as its primary strategy, this research utilizes data from the Pritzker Prize's official website ([pritzkerprize.com](http://pritzkerprize.com)) to identify trends and cycles of PP-winning starchitects across various nationalities worldwide. By tabulating these findings and triangulating data with other extant sources, the study applies the aforementioned theory to analyze these nationalities, situating each within its corresponding geographic regions and thus, key civilization.

Conducted in November 2024, this research analyzes 47 PP award cycles and identifies that starchitects from 21 different nationalities have received the prize over the years. Among these, architects representing Western civilizations have overwhelmingly secured the prize 36 times, followed by Japanese architects with 9 wins, Latin American architects with 4, and a single win each for architects from Sinic, Hindu, and African civilizations. Consequently, the hypothesis is affirmed, demonstrating that the PP exhibits a preferential bias towards the Western civilization.

## Keywords

Pritzker Price, Starchitects, Nationalities, Key Civilizations, West

## Introduction

The term 'elitism' can pertain to architecture in many ways. Ellin (1997) defines elitism in architecture as the industry's elevation of architects as ultimate arbiters of quality in the built environment. On the other hand, Wijetunge et al., (2024) asserts that the industry preferentially favors architects from elite backgrounds over those from lower social strata. Supporting this view, Harwood, May and Sherman (2011) discuss the historical tendency of elite patrons to commission architects, highlighting their influential role in shaping architectural practice. Moreover, it has also been established that how architectural practice and design often cater to elite social classes, shaping built environments that reflect the values and aesthetic preferences of privileged elite groups (rethinkingthefuture, n.d.). In this light, Betsky (2014) contends that it is this very system of elitism that in fact drives progress, and sustains architecture profession's vitality. Given this view, Ellin (1997) notes that the aforesaid notion of elitism paved the way for the rise of 'star architects', commonly referred to as 'starchitects'. Parman

(2018) reveals that architects constitute a mere 0.1% of the profession, and further observes that they attract significant attention—both admiration and critique—for the elitist characteristics often evident in their works. Slessor (2014) suggests that such elitist characteristics are manifested through aspects such as aesthetics, innovation, and particularly, grandeur (in the scale and budget) of architect-designed buildings.

Given this perspective, elite stature of the architectural profession and the celebrated status of architects are undoubtedly bolstered by prestigious architectural awards, with the Pritzker Prize (PP) arguably leading the way. Known affectionately as the ‘Pritzker’, it is one of the most esteemed awards in the profession, often described as the ‘Nobel Prize of architecture’ (britannica.com, 2024). Established in 1979, the prize not only seeks to increase public appreciation for architecture, but also “[...] to recognize the talent, vision and dedication of exceptional architects worldwide” (Pritzkerprize.com, 2023). There are many implications of winning such prestigious architectural prizes. Smith (2015) explore how such awards can shape and elevate architectural careers and trajectories, drawing on examples from across the globe. This perception is reinforced by the prominence of architects whose fame and influence that overshadow emerging talents (Parman, 2018). This *status quo* is exacerbated by the prestigious architectural prizes being awarded to grand architectural statements, overshadowing innovative work in less affluent contexts (Slessor, 2014).

The analysis of PP laureates since the inception of the award reveals of a concentration of winners from the so-called ‘Western’ countries, particularly the United States and Europe. This pattern suggests a regional bias, overlooking architects from other parts of the world perceived to be ‘non-Western’, contrary to the prize’s commitment to acknowledging great architects ‘worldwide’. For instance, as of 2018, only a handful of PP laureates hailed from non-Western countries, raising questions about the prize’s inclusivity and global representation (ArchDaily, 2018). Having established architects and their elitist practices, it is now pertinent to set boundaries for the dichotomous contexts they are drawn from.

The theoretical divide between the ‘West’ and ‘non-West’ is deeply-rooted in colonial history, cultural ideologies, and political power structures. Rooted in colonialism, Western European powers constructed a dichotomy that portrayed the West as ‘civilized’ and progressive, while stereotyping the non-West as ‘exotic’ or ‘backward’ (Said, 1978). This binary was reinforced by the Enlightenment, which associated the West with individualism, democracy, and scientific rationalism, in contrast to the communal and traditional nature ascribed to non-Western societies (Hall, 1992). Economically, the West has traditionally represented the affluent ‘Global North’, while the non-West has been associated with the developing ‘Global South’ (Wallerstein, 1976). The Cold War further entrenched this divide, framing the ‘West’ and the Soviet-aligned ‘East’ as ideological opposites (Fukuyama, 1992). Postcolonial theory critiques that these binaries are Eurocentric, advocating for a recognition of hybrid identities and unique cultural systems that challenge the simplistic West/non-West distinction (Bhabha, 1994). With globalization and the economic rise of Asia, scholars question the validity of these terms, seeing them as outdated simplifications that fail to capture the fluidity of today’s multipolar world (Appadurai, 1996). In this light, Huntington’s (1996) well-received concept of the ‘Clash of Civilizations’, which outlines 8 key world civilizations associated with clear geographic demarcations, offers an alternative framework for viewing global dynamics from a fresh perspective. This approach can therefore, be applied to examine the aforementioned bias apparent in the awarding of PP.

The preceding introduction outlines the aims and objectives of this research. The aim of this research is to establish that the world’s most prestigious architectural prizes, which elevate architects to elite ‘architect’ status, predominantly favor certain civilizations over others. The objectives of this study are as follows. The first objective is to ascertain cycles of PP-winning architects across various nationalities, thereby allowing for the quantification of laureates by nationality. The second objective is to identify the geographical areas and prominent countries that fall within the established key civilizations. The third is to incorporate the key civilizations corresponding with the nationalities of PP winners.

## Theoretical Framework

### *Clash of Civilizations:*

The influential theory ‘clash of civilizations’ by Huntington (1996) can be used as an alternative perspective to conceive the dynamics of the contemporary world, in the light of reproach directed at the feeble division of the world into the ‘West’ and ‘non-West’. The theory argues that future conflicts of the world will no longer be driven primarily by ideological or economic factors, but rather by cultural and civilizational differences. Huntington (1996) posits that global conflicts will stem from tensions between large cultural groupings he terms ‘civilizations’, defined by shared religious, linguistic and historical characteristics. It has to be made clear that the idea of conflict between civilizations that is proposed by the theory is irrelevant for this study. According to Huntington (1996), the 8 key civilizations of the world include Western, Sinic, Islamic, Hindu, Orthodox, Latin American, Japanese and African, with fault lines along these civilizational borders becoming hotspots for potential conflict.

### ***A Cultural Grounding:***

The criteria set by Huntington (1996) for determining key civilizations focus on shared cultural (mainly religious and linguistic) and historical identities, which he argues to form the core of large-scale, cohesive cultural groupings he calls 'civilizations.

Religion and language are fundamental features of culture, shaping values, communication, and collective identity (Durkheim, 1973; Greetz, 1973). While these two factors are central to defining a culture, other factors, such as cuisine, dress, and artistic traditions, contribute to cultural identity but are generally considered less fundamental (Geertz, 1973; Hofstede, 1984). As Durkheim (1973) tells us, it is religion that shapes culture by influencing values, social norms, and daily practices, by creating a shared framework that guides communities' worldviews and behaviors. Fox (2004) argues that religion serves as a core identifier of cultural boundaries and values within civilizations, often surpassing political or economic differences in its influence on collective identity. Similarly, Casanova (1994) emphasizes the role of religion in the public sphere as essential to the social and moral frameworks that shape civilizations, asserting that religious beliefs contribute deeply to shared ethical and cultural norms. Confirming these views, Huntington (1996) in establishing civilizations, places significant emphasis on religion as a defining factor. He proposes that religiously-rooted civilizations are culturally-distinct, and have historically shaped global conflicts and alliances. As for him, language too is vital to a culture as it preserves traditions, facilitates communication, and sustains collective identity, as confirmed by Sapir (1921) and Geertz (1973). In this light, Huntington (1993) elaborates that civilizations are defined by cultural factors and resulting self-identification that in fact transcend national boundaries. Therefore, it could be argued that the theory by Huntington (1996) carries a deep cultural grounding.

### ***Homage to Political and Economic Factors:***

As Marx (1867) and Wallerstein (1974) tell us, politics and economics are crucial for shaping a period, as they influence societal structures, power dynamics and material conditions. While primarily grounded in culture, the theory by Huntington (1996) also incorporates political and economic elements to explain civilizational divides and potential conflicts. However, critics argue that Huntington's consideration of them is underdeveloped, as his emphasis on cultural identity often overshadows these aspects, reducing their explanatory power in understanding global conflicts (Fox, 2001; Chiozza, 2002). For instance, Chiozza (2002) contends that Huntington's framework risks overlooking how economic globalization and political alliances mitigate or exacerbate conflicts within and across civilizations. Similarly, Said (2001) critiques Huntington's model for reinforcing cultural determinism at the expense of analyzing how political interests and economic dependencies shape intercultural relations. This lack of emphasis on political and economic factors leaves gaps in explaining variations in cooperation and conflict among civilizations, highlighting limitations in Huntington's predominantly culture-centered approach. However, it could be argued that the interplay of politics and economics is most vital for understanding current/potential conflicts between civilizations, but civilizations themselves. Hence, despite critiques, Huntington's theory remains a foundational framework for understanding contemporary geopolitical tensions and the role of cultural identity in international relations as Fukuyama (1997) as well as Russett, Oneal & Cox (2000) tell us; justifying its application for this study.

### ***Interplay Between Nationality, Country, Geographic Region and Civilization:***

To fully understand the concept of civilization, it is essential to address the ideas of 'nationality' and 'country' first. This in turn allows an examination of their interplay with the phenomenon of civilization. Nationality denotes an individual's legal affiliation with a specific state, which typically grants those rights and responsibilities within its legal and political framework (Gellner, 1983). This formal bond links individuals to a country, influencing aspects of identity, citizenship rights, and participation in governance (Smith, 1991). Nationality is distinct from ethnicity or cultural affiliation, as it is a legal concept rooted in citizenship rather than in cultural heritage or traditions (Anderson, 1991). Nationality requires a physical place to occupy in the form of country. A country is a defined geographic territory governed by a political authority, typically characterized by recognized borders, sovereignty, and an organized government (Anderson, 1991; Gellner, 1983).

Every country belongs to a certain geographic region. A geographic area refers to a specific portion of the Earth's surface defined by natural features (such as mountains, rivers, or climate zones) or human-made boundaries (such as political borders demarcating countries, cities, or regions etc.). It is a spatial unit used for mapping, analysis, or governance (Clove, Crang & Goodwin, 2005).

In contrast, civilization is a large-scale cultural grouping of people sharing common historical, religious, linguistic, and social traits, often extending across multiple nations and regions (Huntington, 1996). Civilization reflects an overarching cultural identity, shaping values, norms, and worldviews across vast areas, with civilizations often distinguished by foundational religions or philosophies, such as Western, Islamic, or Sinic etc. (Braudel, 1995). Unlike nationality, which is bounded by country borders, civilization represents deeper cultural bonds that cross national boundaries, fostering a sense of shared heritage and continuity (Toynbee, 1948).

The discussed ideas form the basis for the study's assessment of the key civilizational affiliations of PP-winners across diverse nationalities, belonging to diverse regions within which their countries are located.

### **Prominent Countries of Key Civilizations:**

According to the culture-centered theory proposed by Huntington (1996), the key civilizations of the world include Western, Sinic, Islamic, Hindu, Orthodox, Latin American, Japanese and African. Further, many commentators contribute to establishing the physical geographic regions, in which countries exist. Some are culturally potent to the extent of being called 'prominent countries'. It is this set of countries that belong to the civilizations established by Huntington (1996). Table 01 analyses the key civilizations, the region in which they exist, and the key countries that belong to them. It is the listed main cultural influences collectively adhered to by these countries that place them within their corresponding civilization.

#	Key Civilizations	Geographic Regions Encompassed	Prominent Countries (ones to win the PP in red)	Main Cultural Influences
1	Western	Europe, North America, Oceania (Huntington, 1996; Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Casanova, 1994)	<b>United States, United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Holland, Norway, Italy, Denmark, Spain, Portugal</b> (Huntington, 1996; Inglehart, 2003; Lipset, 1996)	Secularism, Individualism, Rationalism, Democracy, Capitalism (Casanova, 1994; Hall, 1992)
2	Sinic	East Asia, parts of Southeast Asia (Huntington, 1996; Fairbank, 1978; Pye, 1992)	<b>China</b> , Taiwan, Singapore, South Korea (Fox, 2001; Wang, 2003)	Confucianism, Authoritarianism, Collective Harmony, Meritocracy (Hall, 1992; Bell, 2008)
3	Islamic	Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, South Asia, parts of Southeast Asia (Fox, 2001; Bayat, 2007; Esposito, 2010)	Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Pakistan, Indonesia (Bayat, 2007; Nasr, 2001)	Islam, Sharia Law, Community, Spiritual Devotion (Esposito, 2010; Casanova, 1994)
4	Hindu	South Asia (Huntington, 1996; Thapar, 2002; Fuller, 2004)	<b>India</b> , Nepal, Mauritius (Smith, 1986; Fuller, 2004)	Hinduism, Caste System, Dharma, Spiritual Philosophy (Smith, 1986; Thapar, 2002)
5	Orthodox	Eastern Europe, Russia, parts of the Caucasus (Huntington, 1996; Roudometof, 2001; Payne, 2004)	Russia, Greece, Serbia, Ukraine, Georgia (Huntington, 1996; Roudometof, 2001)	Orthodox Christianity, Collectivism, Tradition, Resilience (Casanova, 1994; Roudometof, 2001)
6	Latin American	Central and South America (Fox, 2001; Casanova, 1994; Wiarda, 2003)	<b>Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Chile</b> (Fox, 2001; Wiarda, 2003)	Catholicism, Family-Oriented Values, Social Harmony, Syncretism (Casanova, 1994; Wiarda, 2003)
7	Japanese	Japan (Huntington, 1996; Reischauer, 1977; Krauss & Nyblade, 2005)	<b>Japan</b> (Huntington, 1996; Reischauer, 1977)	Shinto, Zen Buddhism, Group Harmony, Respect for Nature (Smith, 1986; Sugimoto, 2003)
8	African	Sub-Saharan Africa (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Davidson, 1994; Mazrui, 1986)	Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Ghana (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Davidson, 1994)	Indigenous Religions, Community-Based, Oral Tradition, Harmony with Nature (Mazrui, 1986; Davidson, 1994)

**Table 01**

Source: Author (2024)

This establishing of the regions, prominent countries and primary cultural influences associated with each key civilization provides a foundation for analyzing PP-winners of various nationalities, enabling them to be placed within the corresponding civilization.

### Review of Literature

The manifestation of elitism in architecture is a well-explored subject. When Ellin (1997) discerns that architects have been elevated to ultimate arbiters of the quality of the built environment, Wijetunge et al., (2024) discusses the fact that architects have been traditionally drawn from elite backgrounds. Harwood, May, and Sherman (2011) highlight the historical role of elite patrons in commissioning architects and shaping architectural practice. When rethinking the future (n.d.) establishes that architecture profession's tendency to cater to elite interests, Betsky (2014) argues that it is this very elitism that keeps the rigor of the profession alive. In this backdrop, how the notion of elitism in architecture leads to the rise of 'starchitects' is elaborated by both Ellin (1997) and Wijetunge et al., (2024). When Parman (2018) establishes them to be a minority who receive undue attention, Selessor (2014) tells us of the criteria that starchitects employ in their designs to perpetuate an elitist temperament. McGuigan (2014) reveals the part played by prestigious prices of architecture to maintain this status quo. When britannica.com (2024) and Ingalls (2016) introduce the PP as the most coveted in the profession, pritzkerprice.com (2024) tells us of the criteria of recognition associated with the prize. Smith (2015) and Cheng (2017) explore the positive impacts of such awards on recipients, while Parman (2018) and Slessor (2014) critique their negative effects, including various forms of marginalization perpetuated by them.

Despite the prize's prominence, there is a notable scarcity of academic literature critically assessing its impact, selection processes, and broader implications within the architectural profession. Archdaily (2018) is one of the few sources that is critical of the prize's raising questions about the prize's inclusivity and global representation, by establishing its predisposition towards architects from the West. Madhdavinejad and Hosseini (2019) employs data mining and content analysis techniques to examine the jury citations over four decades, providing insights into the evolving criteria and values that have influenced the selection of laureates. Sharma (2011) on the other hand, assesses politics of the PP, by relying on Google Trends Data. Moreover, Basyazici and Uluoğlu (2017) study the phenomenon of being distinguished in architecture through a study on the PP and how it promotes the reproduction of the conventions of architectural knowledge. Hayen (2012) on the other hand, takes a whole different approach by assessing the masculine dominance apparent in the PP, where traditional male roles and the concept of 'genius' associated with it are scrutinized through a discourse analysis. It is noteworthy that all of the aforesaid studies rely on PP jury citations. Moreover, studies such as that of Hristov (2024) tackle the PP and its potential for developing library tourism are extant. Apart from scholarly work, other literature such as that of Goldhegan (2001), Archdaily (2018) and Ravenscroft (2024) that discuss critiques the Pritzker Prize for becoming predictable, biased and uninspired, arguing that its selections often prioritize established names over innovative or transformative architectural contributions. The reviewed literature confirms a clear research gap regarding the nationalities of Pritzker Prize winners and the civilizations to which they belong.

The theoretical underpinning of this study delves on the following literature. Said (1978), Hall (1992), Wallerstein (1974), Fukuyama (1992) Bhabha (1994) and Appadurai (1994), who delve on a historical perspective, critique the simplistic binary of the 'West' versus 'non-West' division. On the other hand, Bhabha (1994) and Appadurai (1994) establish the need for a new take on the dichotomy, which should address the dynamics of the contemporary global scenario. Given this view, the '*Clash of Civilizations*' theory proposed by Huntington (1996) provides an alternative framework. Although the idea of key civilizations in the world carrying shared historical, religious and linguistic traits proposed by the theory is well received, it also draws criticism. According to Said (2001) and Chiozza (2002), the theory overemphasizes cultural differences and risks reinforcing stereotypes. However, Inglehart & Norris (2003) partially support its insights, suggesting that cultural values, especially regarding gender and democracy, remain divisive in the theory.

Huntington's theory is deeply rooted in culture. For each of the world civilizations proposed, he sets a criterion of shared cultural, religious and historical identities, which form the core of large-scale cohesive cultural groupings. In this light, the it is worth discussing the relationship that exists between culture and religion. The pivotal role played by religion in shaping culture is discussed by Durkheim (1912) and Baundel (1995). Fox (2001) strengthens this view by telling us of religion's ability to surpass political and economic factors when it comes to the formation of a collective identity. Casanova (1994) too agrees, by highlighting religion's critical role in shaping civilizations. Given this view, Huntington (1993) also asserts how cultural factors aid self-identification that in fact transcends national boundaries. In his view, religiously-rooted civilizations are culturally distinct, and have historically shaped global conflicts and alliances. All of the aforesaid views delve on a historical perspective, harking back in time. Although Huntington's theory also incorporates political and economic elements to explain civilizational divides and potential conflicts, Fox (2001), Chiozza (2002) and Said (2001) all assert that consideration of the aforesaid factors is unsatisfactory. However, this critique mostly applies to political and economic explanations for understanding conflicts, but civilizational divides. Despite such limitations that are

debatable, according to Fukuyama (1997) as well as Russett, Oneal & Cox (2000), Huntington's framework remains influential in analyzing geopolitical tensions, and the impact of cultural identity on global relations; justifying its application here.

While Gellner (1983) and Smith (1991) generally define 'nation', Anderson (1991) emphasizes on the legal aspect of it. On the other hand, Cloke, Crang and Goldwing (2005) define 'country', Cloke, Crang & Goodwin (2005) define 'geographic regions' that contain countries.

In this light, Huntington (1996) and Braudel (1995) define 'civilization'. Huntington (1996) and Toynbee (1948) also posit how civilizations in contrast, transcends national boundaries, fostering deeper cultural bonds, a shared sense of heritage and continuity. The reviewed literature underpins this study's investigation into the civilizational affiliations of PP winners, analyzing how nationality, country boundaries and geographic region align with and manifest within broader civilizational frameworks.

In order to be able to place the relevant key civilization pertaining to a given country, it is vital to comprehend the region of the world to which it belongs. Huntington (1996), Inglehart & Baker (2000), Casanova (1994), Fairbank (1978), Pye (1992), Fox (2001), Bayat (2007), Thapar (2002), Fuller (2004), Esposito (2010), Roudometof (2001), Payne (2004), Fox (2001), Casanova (1994), Wiarda (2003), Reischauer (1977), as well as Krauss & Nyblade (2005) determine the geographic regions pertaining to key civilizations. On the other hand, Huntington (1996), Inglehart (2003), Lipset (1996), Fox (2001), Wang (2003), Bayat (2007), Nasr (2001), Smith (1986), Fuller (2004), Roudometof (2001), Fox (2001), Wiarda (2003) and Reischauer (1977) establish key nations belonging to the aforementioned regions. The cultural grounding behind such regions and nations are established by Casanova, (1994), Hall (1992), Bell (2008), Esposito (2010), Smith (1986), Thapar (2002), Roudometof (2001), Wiarda (2003) and Sugimoto (2003) as justification to collective identities that in turn place numerous countries under one key civilization. This affords an opportunity to determine the corresponding key civilization of nationalities that have won the PP.

### Methodology

The research was carried out in November 2024 (between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>), from the home institution in Oklahoma, USA. This study employs a qualitative methodology, using case studies as its central approach to investigate patterns within the PP laureates. Material Data collection focuses on extracting detailed information from the official PP website (pritzkerprize.com), identifying cycles of winning architects from different nationalities. This approach allows for a quantitative breakdown of awardees by nationality, enabling the classification of these nationalities according to their alignment with Huntington's (1996) framework of key civilizations, acknowledging its culture-centric approach.

Defining the regions, nations, and key cultural influences associated with each key civilization creates a foundation for analyzing PP-winners of various nationalities (Table 01). This affords the opportunity to analyze the case studies that tackle 21 different nationalities to receive the PP over 47 cycles, in descending order of wins. The data is organized in tabular form, allowing for an in-depth examination through which each nationality is contextually situated within the broader conceptualization of key civilizations (Table 02). This analysis is to wield conclusions. The study adheres to ethical guidelines, refraining from gathering sensitive firsthand information and relying exclusively on secondary sources.

### Case Studies

Out of 47 laureates, 21 nationalities, are recorded. The 21 nationalities show representation from the eight key civilizations listed by Huntington (1996). **Table 02** illustrates nationality, Year PP was awarded, PP Cycle, names of laureates, number of recipients according to nationality (in descending order), and key civilization to which, they belong.

Sl.	Nationality	Year	Cycle	Laureates & year of Pritzker Prize				Number of Recipients	Key Civilization
1	American	Various (1979-2005)	1, 2	Philip Johnson (1979)	Kevin Roche (1982)	I.M. Pei (1983)	Richard Meier (1984)	8	Western
				Gordon Bunshaft (1988)	Frank Gehry (1989)	Robert Venturi (1991)	Thom Mayne (2005)		

Sl.	Nationality	Year	Cycle	Laureates & year of Pritzker Prize					Number of Recipients	Key Civilization
2	Japanese	Various (1987-2024)	1, 2, 3	Kenzo Tange (1987) Toyo Ito (2013)	Fumihiko Maki (1993) Shigeru Ban (2014)	Tadao Ando (1995) Arata Isozaki (2019)	Ryue Nishizawa, Kazuyo Sejima (2010) Riken Yamamoto (2024)	9	Japanese	
3	British	Various (1981-2023)	1, 2, 3	James Stirling (1981)	Norman Foster (1999),	Zaha Hadid (2004)	Richard Rogers (2007),	David Chipperfield (2023)	5	Western
4	French	Various (1994-2021)	2, 3	Christian de Portzamparc (1994)	Jean Nouvel (200w28),		Anne Lacaton, Jean-Philippe Vassal (2021)	4	Western	
5	Swizz	Various (2001-2009)	2	Jacques Herzog, Pierre de Meuron (2001)		Peter Zumthor (2009)		3	Western	
6	Portuguese	1992, 2011	2, 3	Álvaro Siza (1992),		Souto de Moura (2011)		2	Western	
7	Spanish	1996, 2017	2, 3	Rafael Moneo (1996)		Rafael Aranda, Carme Pigem, Ramon Vilalta (2017)		4	Western	
8	Brazilian	1988, 2006	1, 2	Oscar Niemeyer (1988)		Paulo Mendes da Rocha (2006)		2	Latin American	
9	German	1986, 2015	1, 3	Gottfried Böhm (1986)		Frei Otto (2015)		2	Western	
10	Australian	2002	2	Glenn Murcutt (2002)					1	Western
11	Austrian	1985	3	Hans Hollein (1985)					1	Western
12	Burkinabé	2022	3	Diébédo Francis Kéré (2022)					1	African
13	Chilean	2016	3	Alejandro Aravena (2016)					1	Latin American
14	Chinese	2012	3	Wang Shu (2012)					1	Sinic
15	Danish	2003	2	• Jørn Utzon (2003)					1	Western
16	Indian	2018	3	Balkrishna Doshi (2018)					1	Hindu
17	Irish	2020	3	Yvonne Farrell, Shelley McNamara (2020)					2	Western
18	Italian	1990	1	Aldo Rossi (1990)					1	Western
19	Mexican	1980	1	Luis Barragán (1980)					1	Latin American
20	Dutch	2000	2	Rem Koolhaas (2000)					1	Western
21	Norwegian	1997	2	Sverre Fehn (1997)					1	Western

Source: <https://www.pritzkerprize.com/laureates>

Table 02

Source: Author (2024)

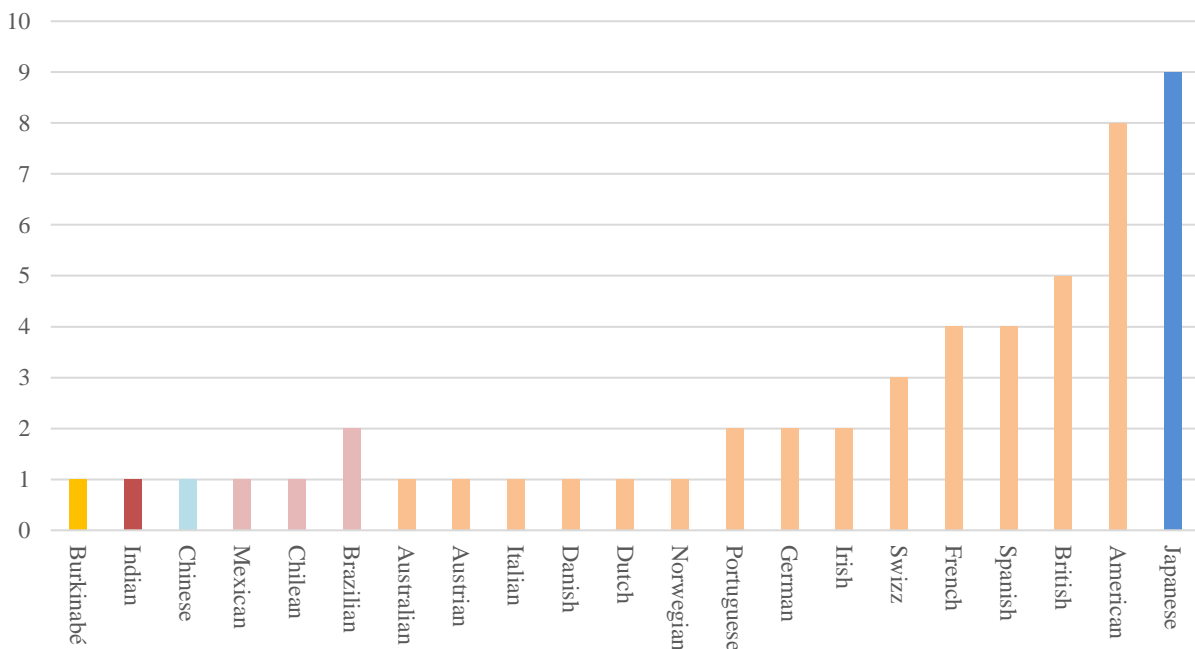
### Summary

Table 03 and Table 04, summarize findings in Table 02.

#	Nationality	Country	Number of PP Wins	Civilization
1	Japanese	Japan	09	Japanese
2	American	Unites States of America	08	Western
3	British	Great Britain	05	Western
4	French	France	04	Western
5	Spanish	Spain	04	Western
6	Swiss	Switzerland	03	Western
7	Portuguese	Portugal	02	Western
8	Brazilian	Brazil	02	Latin American
9	German	Germany	02	Western
10	Australian	Australia	01	Western
11	Austrian	Austria	01	Western
12	Burkinabé	Burkina Faso	01	African
13	Chilean	Chile	01	Latin American
14	Chinese	China	01	Sinic
15	Danish	Denmark	01	Western
16	Indian	India	01	Hindu
17	Irish	Republic of Ireland	01	Western
18	Italian	Italy	01	Western
19	Mexican	Mexico	01	Latin American
20	Dutch	Netherlands	01	Western
21	Norwegian	Norway	01	Western

Table 03

Source: Author (2024)



Graph 03: Number of PP winners based on nationality and civilization

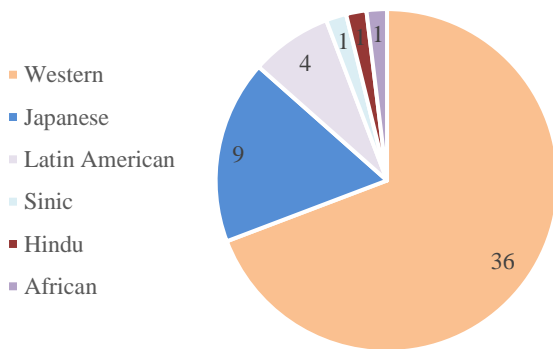
Source: Author (2024)



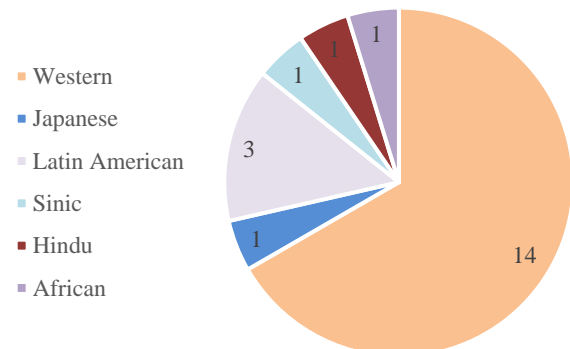
#	Civilization	Number of Architects to win PP	Number of Nationalities Belonging to Each Key Civilization to have Won the PP
1	Western	36	14
2	Japanese	09	01
3	Latin American	04	03
4	Sinic	01	01
5	Hindu	01	01
6	African	01	01

Table 04

Source: Author (2024)



Graph 02: Number of Architects to win PP by Civilization  
Source: Author (2024)



Graph 02: Number of Nationalities by Key Civilization to have won the PP  
Source: Author (2024)

Table 02, and Table 03 as its summary reveal the following. An analysis of 47 PP cycles reveals that architects from 21 nationalities have received the award since its inception. Japanese architects top the list with 9 wins, followed by Americans with 8. British architects have secured 5 wins, while French and Spanish architects have each won 4 times, the Swiss 3 times, and the Portuguese and Mexican 2 times each. Apart from the aforesaid, Australian, Austrian, Burkinabé, Chilean, Chinese, Danish, Indian, Irish, Italian, and Dutch nationalities have won one each.

Table 01 presents the following insights. From the perspective of civilization, the geographic regions with shared cultural values corresponding to all eight civilizations are established, enabling the identification of prominent countries within them. Notably, with the exception of Burkina Faso, all countries associated with the nationalities of Pritzker Prize winners are considered prominent. Burkinabé nationality’s association with the country Burkina Faso, and its placement within the African geographical region and thus civilization is an axiom that does not need confirmation.

Table 02, and Table 04 as its summary highlights the following findings. The aforementioned analysis facilitates identifying the corresponding civilizations of Pritzker Prize winners across various nationalities. Among the nationalities represented, 14 belong to Western civilization and 3 to Latin American civilization, while there is one each from Japanese, Hindu, and Sinic civilizations. Notably, neither the Islamic nor Orthodox civilizations have yet produced a Pritzker laureate. Overall, architects from Western civilizations dominate the Pritzker Prize with 36 wins, followed by Japanese architects with 9, Latin American architects with 4, and a single win each from Sinic, Hindu, and African civilizations.

### Conclusions

Architecture, like other arts, is deeply influenced by elitism, which elevates architects as the ultimate arbiters of quality, and favors those from elite backgrounds. This elitism, which fosters admiration and critique for ‘starchitects’, is reinforced by prestigious awards, which bolster the profession’s elite stature. Among the numerous frameworks for evaluating distinguished architects worldwide, the Pritzker Prize stands out as one of the most prestigious. The PP, widely regarded as a key driver in establishing starchitect status, is perceived to manifest many systematic biases. Among these, civilizational dynamics emerge as particularly significant, aligning closely with Huntington’s concept of ‘civilizations’, also known as the ‘Clash of Civilizations’. This theory gains currency due to rigorous critiques received by the overly simplistic division of the historical world into the West and Non-West

(or East). Civilizations, rooted in cultural identity, are expansive entities shaped by shared histories pertaining to culture. Religions and languages are the most crucial in culture-making, among other lesser factors. It is culture that creates distinct civilizations that exert global influence and potential for conflict, as cultural identities increasingly define global alliances and divides. Huntington's culturally-rooted theory, despite the criticism it receives for giving less emphasis to political and economic factors, is well-received; justifying its application for this study.

Nationality refers to an individual's legal affiliation with a state, influencing their rights and obligations within a governance structure. A country on the other hand, is a defined geographic territory governed by a political authority, typically characterized by recognized borders, sovereignty, and an organized government. Each country belongs to a physical geographic region of the world. In contrast, civilization is a large-scale cultural grouping of people sharing common religious, linguistic, and social traits perceived in a historical perspective, often extending across multiple countries and regions. Civilization reflects an overarching cultural identity, shaping values, norms, and worldviews across vast areas, with civilizations often distinguished by foundational religions or philosophies. Unlike nationality, which is bounded by country borders, civilization represents deeper cultural bonds that cross national boundaries, fostering a sense of shared heritage and continuity. This distinction forms the foundation for this study's examination of the civilizational affiliations of PP winners from diverse nationalities and corresponding countries.

The analysis of 47 PP award cycles reveals that architects from 21 different nationalities have received the prize since its inception. Japanese nationality leads with 9 wins, followed by Americans with 8. The British have won 5 times, the French and Spanish 4 times each, the Swiss 3 times, and the Portuguese 2 times. In addition to the aforementioned, architects of Australian, Austrian, Burkinabé, Chilean, Chinese, Danish, Indian, Irish, Italian, and Dutch nationalities have each secured one win. This fulfills the first objective of the study. Going by the factor of civilization, the geographic region with shared cultural values that pertains to all 8 of them are established, allowing the distinction of prominent countries falling within them. It is noteworthy that except for Burkina-Faso, every other country pertaining to the nationalities to have won the PP are considered prominent countries. This fulfills the second objective of the study. Achieving the aforementioned facilitates identifying the corresponding civilizations of Pritzker Prize winners from various nationalities, aligning with the study's third objective. In terms of nationalities represented, 14 nationalities belonging to Western civilization nations and 3 Latin American nationalities have produced PP laureates, while one each from Japanese, Hindu and Sinic civilizations. It is noteworthy that neither the Islamic nor Orthodox civilizations are yet to produce a PP laureate. In overall, architects from Western civilizations have dominated the PP, securing 36 wins. Japanese hold the second-highest number of wins, with 9, followed by Latin American civilizations with 4. The Sinic, Hindu and African civilizations each account for a single win. The above distribution establishes a clear hierarchy of key civilizations, with success in the PP serving as an indicator of global cultural influence. The findings affirm the hypothesis, demonstrating that the PP exhibits a preferential bias toward the most key civilizations, contributing to the fulfilment of the study's aim.

The study carries a number of limitations. Its reliance on the PP as the sole measure of architectural recognition presents a key limitation. This limitation could be mitigated by incorporating other awards of similar stature (*i.e.* RIBA Royal Gold Medal, *Premium Imperial*, UIA Gold Medal, Venice Biennale Architecture Golden Lion, Mies van der Rohe Award and the Aga Khan Award for Architecture). Furthermore, the study's reliance on Huntington's 'clash of civilizations' theory is another limitation, which could be addressed by integrating alternative frameworks. The 'World-Systems Theory' proposed by Wallerstein (1974) that provides a perspective of a world of core-periphery dichotomy is such an example. Further, the study paves the way to explore the underlying reasons why some key civilizations have been more prolific in winning the prize, and conversely, why others have not, with particular attention to why Japanese architects have won the prize more than any other nationality.

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