

Designed by Patricia Urquiola – three spaces for three identities

Abstract

In the extensive meaning of interior spaces interrogating architectural quality and the experience of people inhabiting built spaces, it is the aim of this text to contribute to the reflection about interiors' atmospheric quality. Interiors referring to the sensorial qualities a space sends out have impact in the subjective representation of the space and in the individual use of it. The projects of the contemporary Spanish born designer Patricia Urquiola (°1961) invite to a discussion about design of interiors aiming to conceive spaces with atmospheric quality that express identity. This text addresses from a phenomenological approach three different examples of different typologies and architectural programmes: Casa Moroso, Mandarin Oriental Hotel and Missoni Stores in Milan and Paris. The text concludes that the original achievement of these projects voice the relevance of creating interiors as empathic sceneries of spaces recognized from its identity character and image. It stresses that interior architecture takes a key role in creating places that emphasize architecture as a human experience of atmospheres.

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Recibido: Abril 26 de 2016

Aprobado: Octubre 27 de 2016

Key words:
Atmospheric quality, identity,
interiors, light, sensorial
experience, shadow.



Diseñado por Patricia Urquiola - tres espacios para tres identidades

Resumen

En el extenso significado de los espacios interiores hay interrogantes por la calidad y la experiencia de las personas que habitan los espacios construidos, el objetivo de este texto es contribuir a la reflexión acerca de la calidad atmosférica de los interiores. Los interiores se refieren a las calidades sensoriales que un espacio envía a la representación subjetiva y al uso individual. El proyecto de la diseñadora española Patricia Urquiola (N. 1961) invita a la discusión acerca del diseño de interiores con el objetivo de concebir espacios con calidades atmosféricas que expresen identidad. Este texto se direcciona desde una aproximación fenomenológica de tres diferentes ejemplos de tres diferentes tipologías y programas de arquitectura: Casa Moroso, Hotel oriental Mandarin y Almacenes Missoni en Milán y París. El texto concluye que el logro original de esos proyectos habla de la relevancia de crear interiores como escenarios empáticos de espacios reconocidos desde su carácter identitario e imagen. Esto acentúa que la arquitectura interior toma un rol significativo en la creación de lugares que enfatizan la arquitectura como una experiencia humana de atmósferas.

Palabras clave:
Calidad atmosférica, identidad,
interiores, luz, experiencia
sensorial, sombra.

Introduction

Interiors always display a *certain* atmosphere which has an impact on the individuals that experience the architectonic space. Within the space, the individual interprets meanings, forms and functions and is also reflected by the space s(he) inhabits. An architect that brought the concept of atmosphere to the spot is Peter Zumthor. In his book *Atmospheres: Architectural Environments, Surrounding Objects* (2006), he writes that it is the particular atmosphere of a building that moves the individual. He goes further and defends that the particular atmosphere of a building is related with its architectural quality. But he also asks: “what do we mean when we speak of architectural quality?” and confesses that: “It is a question I have little difficulty in answering. (...) Quality architecture to me is when a building manages to move me.” (2006, p. 11). Despite the difficulty of Zumthor to answer his own question about the meaning of quality in architecture and the difficulty to design atmospheres, the Swiss architect proposes nine principles as “what I have found out about the way I go about things and what concerns me most when I try to generate a certain atmosphere in one of my buildings” (2006, 21). These principles were particularly discussed in the article ‘Phenomenology for Introductory Architectural Analysis Courses: The Pentagon Methodological Approach’ (Pombo et al., 2015, pp.58-69).

The philosopher Gernot Böhme has been paying as well an inspiring attention to the concept of atmosphere in architecture. (Böhme, 2005; 1997). According to Böhme, the architect has conscience of the importance of the atmospheric quality of spaces to people. In the chapter *Die produktion von Atmosphären in der Architektur* (The production of atmospheres in Architecture) the philosopher advocates that the architect through “the sensitive parameters that he chooses, colours, surfaces, line framing and the arrangements and constellations that he creates are at the same time the physiognomy from where arises an

atmosphere”(Böhme, 1997, p. 97). The examples presented in this text intend to contribute to the discussion about designing atmospheres in interiors by pointing out the relevance of the parameter of identity intertwined with other paramount features called by Böhme as ‘sensitive parameters’. Identity in the present text is considered as a global perceptive image of the architectural space that allows to recognize and to acknowledge the uniqueness of it. Particularly in the present analysis, parameters as light, shadow and colour are mentioned as perceptive attributes that are worked out by the designer to contribute to mirroridentity, i.e. the singular character of the space being it a familiar house with ethnic impact (Casa Moroso), a brand within a cultural inheritance context (Mandarin Oriental Hotel) or a brand with a corporative image (Missoni Stores). Among architects and authors that could be recalled regarding light and shadow the brief reference in this text falls on Louis I Kahn and J. Tanizakidue to the accent they give to the relation between them and the creation of ambiances.

Patricia Urquiola (°1961), a Spanish-born interior designer currently based in Milan studied architecture at the *Facultad de Arquitectura* de Madrid and the *Politecnico di Milano* and graduated under the wings of Achille Castiglioni (1918-2002) in 1989. Besides Castiglioni, also Vico Magistretti (1920-2006) guided her through the start of her first project. Afterwards, from 1990 to 1992, she worked at the university as the assistant of Castiglioni and Eugenio Bettinello (°1949) in Milan and Paris. Urquiola soon quit and applied to be the head of product development at the Italian design company DePadova. In 1996 she re-encountered Magistretti and worked next to him as head of Lissoni Associati’s design group. In 2001 she opened a design studio with her husband Alberto Zantone. Today the studio designs for renowned brands such as B&B Italia, DePadova, Kartell, Molteni. In addition, Urquiola received multiple accolades, including the very prestigious *Medalla de Oro al mérito en las Bellas Artes* in 2011 and the *Orden de Isabel la Católica* by King Juan Carlos I of Spain. In 2013,

Urquiola decided to partner up with Rizzoli and created an overview of her work with the original title *Patricia Urquiola; time to make a book* (Robertazzi & Valenti, 2013).

Patricia Urquiola, besides managing paramount features in interior architecture as light, shadow, colour, textures, materials and furniture, has the ability to face each client as a singular and unrepeatable partner being it an individual, a brand, a company. It is to notice that Patricia Urquiola creates interiors as aesthetical experiences for their users through the interplay of objective parameters with a refined sense of empathy with each project's core. Her designs demonstrate also her technical expertise mixed with unconventional and experimental solutions. Mastering these qualities, it is to argue that Urquiola creates spaces that do not repeat themselves but, on the opposite, are a statement of the identity of each place, of each brand, of each company. While discussing about architectural quality, Zumthor refers to the impact that quality has in the individuals that experience the architectonic space and asserts that "a building with a soul probably has a lot of dimensions" (Spier, 2001, p.7). In this text identity overlaps with 'soul' in the sense that each space is distinguished by the arrangement and constellation of its features displaying a unique 'character', 'temperament', 'personality' or in other words, atmosphere. Amongst Urquiola's diverse projects, the parameter of identity will be approached in this text through three examples: the private house *Casa Moroso* (Fig. 1-6)¹, the luxury hotel *Mandarin Oriental Hotel* (Fig. 7-14)² and the internationally brand store *Missoni Stores* in Milan (Fig. 16)³ and Paris (Fig. 17-

¹ Figure 1-4: Martino Berghinz Studio, *Private House*, w.p. [05.04.2016], <http://www.martinoberghinz.eu/index.php?/architecture/private-house/>.
Figure 5-6: Rosaria Zucconi, *Nel verde a casa di Patricia Urquiola. Il progetto di Patricia Urquiola condiviso con Martino Berghinz*, w.p. [07.03.2014] [23.01.2017], <http://www.elledecor.it/case/patrizia-moroso-patricia-urquiola-casa-Martino-Berghinz-udine#>.

² Figure 7-9, 11 & 13-14: Mandarin Oriental Barcelona, *Gallery: Barcelona*, w.p. [06.04.2016], <http://www.mandarinoriental.com/barcelona/hotel-photo-gallery/>.

Figure 10: a picture compilation from results from a Google search 'vegetal gaudi', w.p. [06.04.2016].

Figure 11: a picture compilation from results from a Google search 'cutting snowflakes', w.p. [06.04.2016].

³ Figure 15: a picture compilation from results from a Google search 'missoni textile', w.p. [06.04.2016].

Figure 16: Patricia Urquiola, *Missoni Milan*, w.p. [06.04.2016], <http://www.patriciaurquiola.com/architecture/missoni-3/>.

18)⁴. Besides the monography about Urquiola's work abovementioned, there is a scarce scholar reviewing of her projects. The authors based the present analyses upon the existing information, their visits to the places, except Casa Moroso, and upon a phenomenological approach. Particularly the phenomenological approach framed both the theoretical context and the qualitative methodology to interpret the visual material, namely the perceptive parameters' interplay. The text concludes that the original achievement of these projects voice the relevance of creating interiors as empathic sceneries of singular images of identity. It stresses that interior architecture takes a key role in creating places that emphasize architecture as a human experience of atmospheres.

Casa Moroso in Udine

Casa Moroso (Fig. 1-6) placed in Udine, in the north of Italy close to Slovenia, built up in 2010 is the outcome of a collaborative triumvirate between the architect Martino Berghinz, Patricia Urquiola and Patrizia Moroso, creative director of the Italian furniture brand Moroso (Zucconi, 2014). Apart from being friends, Urquiola is no stranger to the Moroso Company, as she designed several pieces of furniture and decorations like the metallic table and the white-grey *Redondo* lounge chair and the *shangai tip coffee table* as can be seen respectively in Figures 5 and 6 (Private Residential Udine, website).

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The exterior of the house (Fig. 1) is a design by Martino Berghinz, while the interior is the result of a cooperation between Berghinz and Urquiola. The house is a modern construction making use of earthly tones of colour such as dark brown wooden panels and rusty red window frames, doors and the path as a kind of bridge approaching the entrance. The house is almost completely hidden in the woods due to its camouflage colours and simple geometrical form. This minimalism continues in a way in the interior of the house.

⁴ Figure 17-18: Patricia Urquiola, *Missoni Paris*, w.p. [06.04.2016], <http://www.patriciaurquiola.com/architecture/missoni-2/>.



Fig. 1: Exterior Casa Moroso in Udine.

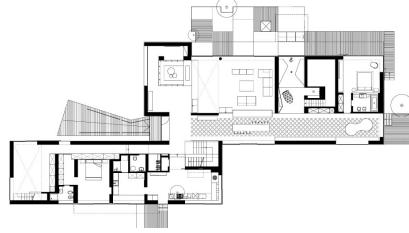


Fig. 2: Ground floor.

The house has a double function divided over two levels. It has two kitchens and two living rooms and every space interacts with the outside in different levels. First we have the ground floor (Fig. 2), which is the representative space of the house and is meant to accommodate visitors. It is divided into a more private living area and a more public living room. Remarkable and rather strange is that when one enters the house, the first space is the living room that feels private instead of the one that has a more welcoming atmosphere towards guests. Also on the ground floor there are two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a dining area and some private spaces (Zucconi, 2014). As Urquiola stated: “the most striking aspects of this house are its sensory richness and the unconventional perception of time that underlies the entire architectural conception”(Private Residential Udine, website). Moving to the first floor (Fig. 3), we find a second kitchen, living and dining area, three more bedrooms with an adjoining bathroom and some more private spaces. The references about the house focusses more on the ‘public’ area, avoiding to showcase the private spaces of the first floor.



Fig. 3: First Floor.

The principal characteristics of the house are its colourfulness, subtle enough to have an airy effect. There is no overkill of decorations, but when applied, they are used in an intense manner. The two main reasons for the choice of such a colourful decoration can be encapsulated in one word: identity. The designer tries to translate the personalities and the memories of the inhabitants into an interior. On one hand there is the polyvalent personality of Patrizia Moroso, being the creative mind behind a successful furniture and design company. On the other hand, Urquiola keeps Moroso's husband African origin in mind, explaining the ethnic aspects in the house. Abdou Salam Gaye, a Senegalese artist and designer, comes from a culture characterized by a colourful tradition that Urquiola underlines with her own bold colourful style (Moroso Design: Made In Senegal For The Rest Of The World, website). Urquiola takes these cultural references as a starting-point and forges them to create a light and eclectic interior paying the right amount of attention to the role of memories and origin of the owners to allow the evolving of different emotions and then, different atmospheres (Robertazzi & Valenti, 2013).



Fig. 4: Private living room ground floor.

The house has three sitting areas for different purposes. The first is an intimate living room (Fig. 4) at the ground floor entrance. The space is completely white with a built-in multicolour couch. On the wall is a work from the Egyptian born artist Fathi Hassan (°1957), currently active in Italy. The picture refers to his heritage and identity as a North-African citizen and can as such be connected with the husband's origin. Because this sitting-area is built on a higher level and has a window at the bottom of the outer wall, a connection between the outside world and the inside is established. Nature outside is at eyelevel and because of being nested in when sitting in the built-in couch, an inherent connection between the outside and the inside is created⁵. Natural light penetrates the room in the form of horizontal direct light on one side of the room, contrasted by the warm light and heat from a fireplace on the other side of the room. The smooth white walls ensure that the light is reflected in a

⁵ Sou Fujimoto points out the difference between a *nest* and a *cave*. Two fundamental differences can be noted: a *nest* is designed and a *cave* is decorated. Therefore a house is before it becomes a *cave*, than after some transformations and time it becomes a *nest*.

brilliant matter. Urquiola plays with this light knowing how an important ally it is in the creation of spots of clarity and warmth being in agreement with the vision of Louis I Kahn: "The sun never knew how wonderful an ally light is, until it fell on the wall of a building"(Kahn, 2013,p. 26). In his book *Silence of Light* (2013), Louis I Kahn calls light "the giver of all presences", because without it nothing can be seen. Light gives the object its materiality and this, in turn, throws a shadow. It is the architect's job to play with this technique and to create a unique language for an interior, defining the character of a room. For Kahn natural light is the light that matters in architecture. In the own words of the architect: "A space can never reach its place in architecture without natural light. (...) Natural light gives mood to space by the nuances of light in the time of the day and the seasons of the year as it enters and modifies the space" (Kahn in Tyng, 1984, p. 162). For Kahn natural light's nuances design the atmosphere of a space while interplaying with the architectonic structural elements. The sun makes the world tactile, gives it form and creates *intimate nooks* reinforces architect Luis Barragán (Pauly & Habersetzer, 2008).

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At a lower level,we find a second more lit sitting area (Fig. 5), bathing in a completely different and more playful atmosphere. The floor has a smooth brick coloured texture and the main wall looks like a slated surface. Natural light is invited into the room by a large window and seems to connect the sunlight with the yellow couches. The reddish accent returns several times in the room: the large photograph on the wall, the floor lamp, the floor itself and some decorative objects. The colour blue is introduced in two lounge chairs, some objects and in a light version in the rug. It seems that Urquiola tried to refer to the four elements, although some appears to overlap. Water is connected with the colour blue, fire with red, air with the natural light, yellow refers to the sun and earth can be traced in de brick colour. The photograph on the wall is from the Senegalese photographer Boubacar Touré Mandémory (°1956). He, together with Hassan was featured in Moroso's influential "M'Afrique"

exhibition during the 2009 Milan Furniture Fair (Hughes, 2010). To continue the ethnic look, Urquiola included bold African prints, some of her own design, and the vibrant colours as already mentioned.



Fig. 5: Public sitting area ground floor.



Fig. 6: Master bedroom first floor.

A last remarkable space in *Casa Moroso* is the master bedroom on the first floor (Fig. 6) with a different atmosphere from the rest of the house. Here, Urquiola hardly took the ethnic aspect into account; she attempted to create a more soft and romantic vibe, as expected for a bedroom. Colours like beige, old rose and soft orange are dominant. She tempered printed fabrics and banned them into a subtle rug, some cushions and a painting standing against the wall. By the recreation of a scenery with elements that evoke the feeling of cultural identity, Urquiola reinforces the potential of a house becoming the intimate cocoon that mirrors the individuals that are dwelling there. Again we may think about Louis Kahn's statement that we need to make an alliance with our environment, our surroundings, our heritage and our identity (Kahn, 2013). The feeling of *being at home* is not created by the building itself, but by the people who live in it. Kahn explains his opinion, "They [the inhabitants] are the creators of home. You don't build a home. You build a house. At best, if you build a house, there

comes out of it a sense of a way of life, a reflection of a way of life which inspires your own way of living” (Marcus & Whitaker, 2013, pp. 5-7).

Despite the short overview given in this text to Casa Moroso as a sample of the ‘spirit’ of the house, the authors state that this space intends to be a reflection of the ‘inhabitants world’ and therefore reinforces their feeling of being at home.

Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Barcelona

The *Mandarin Oriental Hotel* (Fig. 7) opened in Barcelona in 2010. The opening was not at the best moment due to the economic storm that recently hit the market, but as the works were already started before 2009, there was no backing down (Welcome to the new Barcelona, website). The hotel is located in the former head office of Banco Hispano Americano originally designed and constructed in 1955 by the Basque architect Manuel Galíndez. It was already a replacement for an older one destroyed during the Spanish Civil War, which dated from the late 19th century. The current renovation was done by the Spanish architects Carlos Ferrater (°1944) and Juan Trias Bes (°1964) with respect for the past and has preserved some of the bank’s original features. The interior is the result of Urquiola’s translation of Barcelona’s rich history, at the same times ticking to the line of the Mandarin Oriental Group, a group of luxury hotels, renowned for its service with an oriental evocation and touch (Mission and Guiding Principle, website). Urquiola took care of the complete interior decoration. She furnished the public spaces as well as the hotel’s 98 rooms with her own and other brands designs. “For this hotel, Urquiola created an interior that reflects the open cosmopolitan character of the great Mediterranean city where it stands and takes full advantage of the light”, says Debbie Travis (2012).



Fig. 7: Exterior Mandarin Oriental Hotel. in Barcelona



Fig. 8: Entry hall.

When entering the building, an enormous white-zenith-lit entry hall is traversed (Fig.8), before arriving in the lobby. The entry hall resembles a giant vertical white light beam, full of vibrant energy due to the reflection of light. In this case the colour white is used whereby optimal reflection is created (Vergés, 2007). This light accentuates the vertical form of the hall; in other spaces it creates hierarchy between objects and space and influences the human mind. It can guide us in a certain direction or it can make a room look optically small or large (Leydecker, 2013). In this case it guides us to the next space: the lobby (Fig. 9).

A reference for Urquiola to design the spaces of Mandarin Oriental Hotel is Antoni Gaudí (1852-1926). A good example of this inspiration is the gold transparent and translucent wall between the lobby and the entry hall that resembles a vegetal structure (Fig.10). It is similar to the *façade* of one of Gaudí's architectural creations just across the street (*Passeig de Gràcia*), namely the *Casa Batlló* (1904-1909). Other references are elements of the *Casa Milà 'La Pedrera'*, *Sagrada Família* and Gaudí's vegetal compositions in his interior

construction. Urquiola refers several times to this motive on the walls and on the ceiling of the dining area.



Fig. 9: Lobby.



Fig. 10: Vegetal structures by Antoni Gaudí. From left to right: *Casa Milà*, *Casa Batlló*, Vegetal structure by Gaudí, *Sagrada Família*, Interior *Casa Batlló*.

The lobby (Fig. 9) bathes in a warm indirect yellowish light provided by hidden linear lighting. The hotel guest thus immediately gets a very welcoming feeling. Urquiola also chooses her decorations carefully: the couch has a smooth and soft appearance as well as the rug with a flowery motif. It seems that Urquiola tried to recreate the feeling of coming home in a relaxing and comfortable atmosphere.



Fig. 11: Bistro Ángel León (dining area).



Fig. 12: Cutting snowflake figures.

Another space that the hotel guest encounters is the dining area *Le Bistro Ángel León* (Fig.11) situated in an open space one level lower. Like the contrasting rooms in *Casa Moroso*, also here, Urquiola aimed a special effect creating an almost complete white space in contrast with the gold glowing lobby (Fig. 9) and Banker's Bar (Fig. 13). The space, conceived in different shades of white with a few coloured accents in grey and some green plants, the use of different materials, textures and accessories, appears to be cosy and inviting to the hotel guests. The carefully chosen furniture carries Urquiola's brand name and focuses on making the guests' meal a comfortable event (Crockett, n.d.). In the air a return of the vegetal decorations, first encountered in the lobby, is noted. They resemble biological cells or a child's cutting pattern (Fig. 12). "Enter La Pedrera through a doorway of stone, wrought iron and glass that resembles a replicating cell" (Crockett, n.d.). The space well lit by zenithlight and some minor floor lamps creates different atmospheres during the day or in darker conditions (Dhillon, n.d.). It feels as if an immaterial lightness descended on oriental elements in combination with the Mediterranean exuberant architecture of the Catalan modernism (Crockett, n.d.). Arriving in Banker's bar (Fig.13), a lounge

room is bathing in the mystique and glowing atmosphere of an opium-bar of the nineteenth century. It is a rather dark space lit by sparse indirect linear lighting hidden in the central bar. Nevertheless the room enjoys a shimmering atmosphere due to the reflection of the old metal safe deposit boxes, which is alternated with direct light. Here Urquiola refers both to the former use of the building as a bank and to the sober aesthetics of the interior oriental culture.



Fig. 13: Banker's Bar.

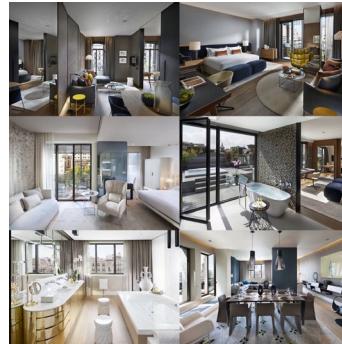


Fig. 14: View of some rooms.

Figure 14 shows a small peek of the bedrooms of the Mandarin Oriental in Barcelona. Some are similar to the lobby and the dining area, while others are more in line with Banker's Bar. The preference of the designer to these spaces goes definitely to the option for a 'clean' look. In this hotel's design Urquiola seems to like to clash different cultures and identities, choosing to mingle typical western European furniture with Mediterranean decorations referring to Gaudí and to add a little touch of the exotic orient in the bar, namely regarding the effect of light in the space's ambience. The Japanese author Jun'ichirō Tanizaki's in his book 'In praise of shadows' writes about forms of moulding the space through shadows. In the traditional Japanese aesthetics, the subtlety of shadows is an ally of beauty, and a key element to unveil the meaning of

the opacity of materials, the walls' natural colours, the object's reflexion, the silence and the shade in interior spaces. It seems that Urquiola tries to refer to this feeling in the bar by means of the reflection of the indirect light on the safe-deposit boxes that in turn beautifully reflect in the different kinds of drinks and crystal glasses. Urquiola with Mandarin Oriental Hotel starts again from the concept of identity both of the heritage and of the brand and builds up a complete story around it.

Missoni Stores in Milan and Paris

The last example chosen is the Missoni Stores in Milan and Paris. The Italian luxury brand Missoni was founded in 1953 by Ottavio and Rosita Missoni. The brand is recognizable for its geometrical motives and colourful knitwear and crocheting (Fig.15). Missoni uses this fabric with its notoriously known print for clothing, fashion accessories and home decorations. "Missoni inaugurated and affirmed an unmistakable way of dressing and living: with a colourful "put-together" of zigzag motifs, stripes, waves and slub yarns in a patchwork of geometric and floral jacquard" (About Missoni, website).



Fig. 15: Missoni textile patterns.



Fig. 16: Missoni store in Milan.

Urquiola mimicked these typical characteristics in her design and decoration of the *Missoni Stores* in Milan (Fig.16), Paris (Fig.17-18) and Bodrum (opened in 2014). Besides clothes, the company today also designs home decorations as cushions, blankets, carpets and tapestries (Missoni Home) (Living, website). For the occasion of the series *Gossip Girl*, Missoni collaborated with Vitra and covered an Eames Lounge Chair with a zigzag Missoni fabric (Brechtel, 2010). In 1983 Ottavio Missoni also made a contribution to his Italian heritage and designed costumes for Donizetti's opera *Lucia di Lammermoor* performed at Teatro alla Scala in Milan (Menkes, 2003).



Fig. 17: Missoni store in Paris.



Fig. 18: Missoni store in Paris.

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Urquiola plays with different colours, tones, textures and materials thus embodying the Missoni language. Both stores are the result of the successful combination of a creative designer and a brand. Typical are the multi-colour zigzag stripes on the wall, repeated in the wooden panels, the motive of the wooden floor and the beige wool rug. Urquiola opted for earthly tempered tones and dim direct and indirect light with a copper shell that reflects the light in golden tone. "The Missoni language is eclectic and versatile enough to be translated in this manner" Angela Missoni the creative director says.

“It’s a matter of giving form to one of its many possibilities” (Sullivan, 2013). When Urquiola was asked to renovate the Missoni flagship-store in Milan (Fig. 16) - the opening was in April 2013 - she joined forces with Angela Missoni (°1958). Urquiola was already familiar with the brand and used Missoni’s trademark multicolour knits for her ‘Big Bags,’ an installation for Milan’s *Salone Internazionale del Mobile* in 2012. The designer and the creative director deliberate choose for a space that replicates classic Missoni zigzag, striped, and patchwork patterns on its walls instead of a cool and neutral background where the merchandise would pop out. “That would have been the easy way”, Urquiola says, “but it would have been the wrong way” (Sullivan, 2013). Thanks to Urquiola the atelier was able “to produce textures and weavings in stained wood, pink perforated anodized aluminium, and other overlapping and enlaced materials”, Missoni continues (Sullivan, 2013). The final result is a bold collage of colours, textures and materials, which achieves the zigzag effect and that can be traced through the entire store. For the walls, ceiling and floor they used colour and materials as yellow glass, columns and partitions in brilliant red and pale blue, or soft grey back-painted glass. The present furniture and accessories are made of lacquered-wood displays, glass-topped tables, stacked cubes, illuminated cases clustered on columns. Because the store has already a bold furnishing, they decided to present the clothes in a simpler manner: on rods of copper-tinted steel (Sullivan, 2013; Missoni Milan, website). In January 2015 Missoni opened a new flagship store on the rue Saint Honoré in Paris (Fig. 17-18). The concept is the same as the Milan boutique and is also conceived by Patricia Urquiola and Angela Missoni. The concept incorporates, as in the Milan Boutique, wood, alicrite cladding and fabrics and rugs in muted tones. In this store the ready-to-wear collection is displayed alongside its fashion accessories and the Missoni Home collection (Sullivan, 2013). The hanging system is similar, an extra addition are the dresses that hang from metal rods finished in copper, and accessories that are presented in two to nine modular display cases. The Missoni language is present, but translated to a Parisian

spirit: green and blue are dominant colours in the iconic macro-zigzags on the walls. The soft lines of the staircase and the parquet floor are reminiscence to French palaces and gardens (Missoni Paris, website).

Conclusion

In the interiors presented in this text Patricia Urquiola succeeds in translating her client's language, needs and purposes in ambiances that tell about the identity image of the owners being individuals or brands. In the *Casa Moroso* and the two *Missoni Stores*, Urquiola had already a previous bond with the clients that might induce to conclude that it facilitated the final result. The impossibility to find in the sources the absolute answer to that assumption should not prevent the further thought that precedent familiarity with the client is not the key to understand the work of Urquiola. In effect the *Mandarin Oriental Hotel* in Barcelona was a new assignment and challenge to her, obliging the designer to make specific research about the hotel's policy and to dig in Barcelona's history. But a common attitude unites the three projects: stepping into the shoes of the client and create with each project an empathic relation. This is to say that Patricia Urquiola unfolds an intrinsic force between feeling and thinking during the creative process of finding the most suited solution for each interior space. She keeps important features in mind like gender, cultural origin, historical heritage, landscape, the 'spirit of the place' and works it together with architectural sensitive parameters (light, shadow, colour, textures, materials...) to materialize a space with architectural quality or, in the words of Zumthor, a space that manages to move someone. These projects of Patricia Urquiola emphasize that the design process depends on the interplay of rational and objective criteria with intentions, feelings and intuitions about the space the designer wants to design to a client that is singular and therefore unique. Interior architecture appears, in the interpretation of Urquiola's projects, as a discipline that envisions space as a comprehensive perception of unrepeatable places.

It is the aim of the abovementioned reflections to point towards an understanding of interior architecture that is not confined to an exercise but rather express a global concept of the relation between design and the human experience of space.

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Cómo citar este artículo: Aerts, A. & Pombo, F. (2016). Designed by Patricia Urquiola – three spaces for three identities. *Revista Kepes*, 14, 9-32. DOI: 10.17151/kepes.2016.13.14.2