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**Fashion metaphors. Authorial brand management in the context
of the market transformations - the designers' perspective**

ABSTRACT

The subject of the dissertation is an analysis of transformations of the Polish fashion market over the period 1989-2018. Fashion as a social and economic phenomenon is difficult to define unequivocally, therefore based on the actor-network theory and rejecting definitional reductionism, seven fashion metaphors have been proposed (fashion as: virus, spectacle, spider web, non-place, work of art, rapid stream and utopia). The use of metaphors also helps to avoid the problem of making a thesis that should be proven or refuted in the course of research. The research question became the starting point: Does the metaphorical understanding of fashion influence the way fashion brands are managed by Polish designers? The main question was broken up into two auxiliary questions: Do these metaphors find their confirmation in field studies? Is it necessary to distinguish additional metaphors?

In order to answer such questions, qualitative research methods were used in the form of fourteen interviews with designers - owners of fashion brands. The talks took place in Cracow, Warsaw, Lodz, Poznan and Gdansk from February to August 2017 and had the character of anthropological interview with certain features of a standardized interview with a list of unstructured questions about the ways of defining fashion and creativity, inspirations, design process, production, distribution, brand identity, customers, strategy and management, as well as opinions on the fashion market in Poland and abroad, and the use of media and social media as the marketing tools. The work deals with socially-relevant topics, is an attempt to apply to Polish Humanities the fashion studies experiences, which are popular in countries like USA, Sweden or United Kingdom. It is a pioneering work due to the use of the actor-network theory to study the Polish fashion market.

Keywords: fashion, fashion metaphors, fashion market, proprietary brand, fashion management

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