Pavel Matejovič

Transformations of censorship in contemporary literary-theoretical discourse (with examples from Slovak cultural space)

Censorship. Cultural regulation. Literary field. Censorship cases.

Since the 1990s, literary censorship has been a focus of scholars not only in terms of literary history but also as a specific literary-theoretical problem. Czech literary studies entered the new discourse on censorship in 2015 with an extensive two-part monograph on censorship and social regulation of Czech literature between 1749–2014, published by the Institute for Czech Literature of the Czech Academy of Sciences. This study follows upon the above-mentioned project, in particular the research mapping censorship mechanisms after 1989 in Slovakia. It draws from the theoretical works of Pierre Bourdieu, who sees censorship not exclusively as a legal authority that sanctions and punishes, but as a field that behaves similarly to the market. In this sense we can talk about a socially authorized discourse rather than censorship. The study includes some censorship “cases” from post-1989 Slovakia (concerning the authors Martin Kasarda, Peter Pišťanek and Dušan Taragel) that have been seen as efforts by certain religious groups to regulate cultural and literary processes.