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The thesis introduces the theory of social censorship, constructed to explore in a more in-depth manner one of the key issues in the sociology of literature, i.e. the problem of literary agents' autonomy (in Bourdieu's sense) and the sovereignty of literary fields with respect to its social surroundings. The main objective of the study was to identify its possible boundaries, points of (and causes of) breakdown, heteronomizing forces, mechanisms and techniques of heteronomization, as well as defensive strategies and tactics (immunization) employed by literary agents.

The proposed concept of social censorship covers the complex of institutionalized but non-formalized practices and phenomena producing effects in literary fields similar to those generated by official censorship (social control, restriction of information, reception management, sanctions and repression, capital redistribution, etc.). Special attention was paid to the operation of social censorship in the crucial sections of the literary field, such as the domain of literary criticism, publishing markets, editorial life, literary prizes, as well as in the realms from which the impulses that limit literary autonomy most often come from (politics, economics, media, social space).

The theory's application was demonstrated on the example of social censorship campaigns targeting the person and works of Joseph Mackiewicz.