

**State Project, Intellectuals and Legitimacy:  
Abolishing the Hungarian Textbook Market**

by

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores how a new state project is established in Hungary after 2010 by examining the controversies surrounding the abolishment of the textbook market. After 2010 there was a nationalist-conservative turn in Hungarian politics including the redrawing of the state's role and entitlements. This research aims to understand this transformation, building on Pierre Bourdieu's and Bob Jessop's state theory. In the analysis, I investigate the relations between centralization, legitimation and conflict in the process of complete nationalization of this long-standing field of cultural production, where the structural changes of the state apparatus cut through the social fabric of the previous order. Through interviews conducted with textbook editors, managers of both the national and the private publishers and employees of the Ministry of Human Capacities, I aim to understand these changes through the narratives of intellectuals, on how state power is exercised at its newly drawn boundaries. I argue that the abolishment of the field and repositioning of elites prevents the agents from effectively challenging the new state project's legitimacy.

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## Introduction

The Hungarian state went through a profound transformation since the Orbán governments came into power in 2010. The last two terms were described by many as bringing radical change in politics, but it was not analyzed systematically how the transformation of the state apparatus took place with the realization of the new state project, and how these changes of the state were legitimized. The centralization of textbook production, which entails changes in legislation as well as the nationalization of the main textbook publishers, showcases the complexity of the changes, as it allows one to understand the state in its most profound and everyday form, in the lived experiences of those who were the subjects of the struggles when the state's boundaries shifted.

After the educational policies of the left-liberal governments from 2002 to 2010, the consecutive Orbán governments established a new nationalist-conservative state project, which entailed a general tendency of centralization. This affected a vast array of policy branches, including the centralization and nationalization of the schooling system and textbook production. The new policies and legislation, the changing institutional context and the newly published national textbook series spurred great public debates and scandals in the media as well, that made the struggles over the redrawing of the state-society boundary especially visible.

In this research, I will map the process and consequences of the current changes in textbook production in order to understand how this social field is abolished, and its functions and agents incorporated into the state apparatus as part of the new dominant state project.

I focus on this case of centralization, because of the exceptional struggle of the intellectuals involved in textbook production to preserve this market, and because of the fact that this resistance proved to be unsuccessful in preventing the complete abolishment of it. While

textbook production as a field of knowledge production is crucial to any state project, thus the nationalization of this field is significant in itself.

I believe that mapping these struggles and the understanding the perceptions of the agents involved in them will shed light on the dynamics through which the new state project is established, and how it reorganizes the social relations surrounding the state. As I understand the establishment of a new state project to be a result of struggles of political and elite groups, I see the public debates as public manifestations of these struggles.

I aim to answer the following questions:

- How is the new state project reflected in the changes in textbook production?
- How do the structural changes of the state apparatus reorganize the relations within and between the elites?
- What are the dynamics of the struggle against the new state project in the field?

I aim to answer these questions building on the state theory of Jessop on state projects and the struggle for domination within and that of Bourdieu on the dynamics of fields and legitimacy of the state.

I met my informants in 2018 March and April, during and after the campaign for the general elections, where Fidesz-KDNP gained two-thirds majority for the second time after the 2010-2014 term. This is the third term that Fidesz-KDNP serves as governing coalition, and fourth in total, including the 1998-2002 term. My interviews focus on the two consecutive Orbán governments from 2010 to 2018, and also refer to the period before in depth.

This is a study about a disappearing sector, which means that it is a very difficult and painful topic for many of my informants.

Well, this is very said. If we look at it from above as a whole, this is a very sad story. In my personal case too, because I started working in textbook publishing after finishing university, and I've learnt all its practices and secrets, and I never thought that when I'm becoming a pensioner, and I would still like to continue this, this chance would be taken away from me. /manager, private publisher/

The feeling of “limbo”, as my interviewees call it, wafts through the narratives, and results in their emphasis on the historical embeddedness of the process. I talked with people who are in the process of closing the publisher that they have worked for the last 20-30 years, and who have lived through the liberalization, and now the abolishment, of this market. They see the period between the '90s and the 2010s as an interim phase. Many narrate the changes as a return to the previous conditions referring to the state socialist period, calling it a “restatization”. In contrast, others argue that it is not possible to halt the market forces for long, referring to historical examples to demonstrate that the revival of the textbook market is inevitable, they just have to survive until then. This timing, that I was contacting my interviewees in this transitional period, also helped me to reach people, who I assume would not give an interview otherwise, but this momentum made the encounter possible.

It should be noted in the beginning that in Hungarian, nationalization would be literally translated to “statization” (*államosítás*), thus it does not imply the nation as it is used as a strongly ideological word under the current regime. In the case of the newly created state bodies their names usually involve the word “national” (*nemzeti*). While “statization” resonates more with the vocabulary used for the state socialist period, which is also noted by my interviewees, when they commented on the historical embeddedness of this transformation.

I conducted fifteen interviews, I talked with five editors and managers of the national publisher, OFI, with one manager of the national maintainer of schools, KLIK, and with a previous employee of the Ministry of Human Capacities (=EMMI). I also tried to contact the current employees of EMMI, but the closest I got to a meeting was a last-minute cancellation. I also interviewed four current employees of private publishers, and two people previously affiliated



with one. I talked with three members of textbook related professional chambers and teachers' organizations. As it is the characteristic of the textbook publishing sector, my interviewees were mostly those who started working in this field during its liberalization in the 90s, there are very few younger editors, working for the state publisher mostly.

## 1. On the state

The two consecutive Fidesz-KDNP governments between 2010 and 2018 have brought a new governmental rationality to Hungarian politics. In this new political order, the role and function of the state is reinterpreted. This is what I am aiming to understand through the incorporation of textbook publishing into the state apparatus, building on Pierre Bourdieu's and Bob Jessop's state theory (cf. Althusser 2006). From Jessop I borrow the strategic-relational approach to understanding the state (Jessop, 2015). From Bourdieu I build on his notion of symbolic power, different types of social capital and habitus, which can explain the importance of textbook publishing to the new state project, and also help explain the dynamics of the debates and public scandals about the new system of textbook production (Bourdieu, 1994). Coupled with Jessop's ideas of the state, I can emphasize and explain the change and the struggles that arise from the establishment of the Fidesz-KDNP governments' state project, as he focuses greatly on this conflictual and changing nature of the state, which Bourdieu tends to downplay (Loyal, 2017).

### 1.1. The state in change

In the research, the state is considered as a form of political organization which is linked to and embedded in a wider set of social relations. The state is approached here as a complex and often messy structure involved in the exercise of political leadership, which is often mystified by attempts at creating a general theory and definition for it (Jessop, 2015). Following Timothy Mitchell's understanding of the limits of the state, it is considered to be an important characteristic of the state that it escapes such comprehensive definitions (Mitchell, 1991). One should rather understand the state as an expression of a changing balance of forces, which is manifest in the exercise of state powers by different actors who are located in different parts of the state (as the state itself cannot exercise power). What one can study is how this balance of forces is mediated discursively, institutionally, and with other governmental techniques, and

how the different actors exercise state powers, and the effects of these (Jessop, 2015). I understand the transformations I discuss in the thesis as a result of profound change of dominating forces within the state, which then aim to realize a state project significantly different from that of the previous governments.

One dimension of the state, which I will focus on is the state project, that consists of the political imaginaries, strategies and practices, that are creating and reproducing the institutional unity of the state, through defining its boundary and aiming to provide the state apparatus with internal unity. There are always more or less specific, competing state projects present. This is strongly connected to the other dimension of the state, the hegemonic vision, which entails the nature and purposes the state aims to take on (Jessop, 2015). In this case, the Fidesz-KDNP governments from 2010 to 2018 built a solid hegemony for their state project with the entitlements that their two thirds majority in parliament granted them. The state apparatus is never internally coherent, and the (relative) internal unity of the state is dependent on a state project, which is widely accepted by internal actors. A state project is strongly connected to a governmental rationality and pursuing of the unification of different branches of the state. State projects are typically also articulated through policy paradigms which frame policy orientations in specific policy fields (Jessop, 2015).

## **1.2. Legitimacy and symbolic power**

Jessop writes about the importance of the state project and the hegemonic vision being widely accepted, but he does not elaborate on how this is achieved (Jessop, 2015). I argue that Bourdieu's ideas regarding legitimacy and the state can be fruitfully employed here.

Bourdieu defines the state as follows: "the state is an X (to be determined) which successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical and symbolic violence over a definite territory and over the totality of the corresponding population (Bourdieu, 1994:3)." This means,

that the state is able to influence and modify not only organizational structures, but mental ones as well, and through appearing in these two kinds of structures, the state is able to exercise symbolic violence, thus naturalize these structures (Bourdieu, 1994). I will focus on symbolic violence, on which Bourdieu also lays most emphasis (Loyal, 2017).

What Bourdieu calls symbolic violence, mainly exerted by the state, is the naturalization of relations of domination, through (mis)recognition where positions in the social field appear to constitute a “social order” and appear not to be based on conflictual relations. Legitimate authority is asserted and maintained through this symbolic violence (Bourdieu–Wacquant, 2013; Bourdieu, 1994). Symbolic power is the power to “constitute the given” (Bourdieu, 1991:170), to impose one’s hegemonic vision to connect with Jessop’s terminology (Jessop, 2015). But it is not a given that the state is able to exert symbolic violence, as it is also required of the state to accumulate the necessary symbolic power, to achieve the recognition of being a legitimate authority, and thus naturalize state control (Loveman, 2005).

Symbolic violence is also exerted in several ways through the education system, as schools introduce and naturalize fundamental categories of perception (Bourdieu, 1994). Classical studies have proved that education is not peripheral to any state project. As Eugen Weber argued in his piece on the development of the French nation, education was just as an important cornerstone of constructing a relatively unified national identity as state infrastructure or urbanization (Weber, 1976).

Bureaucratic administration plays a vital role in how the modern state exercises symbolic power, as “the extension of the means of administration enables the state to gain control over the production, unification, codification, and dissemination of knowledge” (Loveman, 2005:1660). The state can establish the naturalized order of things through this knowledge production. One can see how centralized textbook production, which is examined in this research, is a site where knowledge production is performed in two ways by the state: through

its main activity as publisher, and also through the knowledge production of the bureaucratic administration itself.

### **1.3. Centralization and struggle**

The research aims to trace the ways through which the policy field of textbook production is sought to be incorporated into a unified state apparatus, under a shared governmental rationality. For this one needs to understand centralization not as an event, but a conflictual process which causes change in the material constitution of the state ensemble and state ideas or political imaginaries as well (Jessop, 2015). It is also important to reflect on the struggles that arise when the new state project is realized, which can be assessed through Bourdieu's understanding of legitimacy. He defines this as the production of symbolic power and thus the naturalization and neutralization of state authority. This way, the exercise of state power is closely intertwined with the success of a state project (Bourdieu, 1994).

I will narrate these changes, as the changes regarding the state's tasks, the redrawing of the imagined boundary between state and society (Mitchell, 1991). Incorporating a new responsibility to the state's workings means that there is a change in the political imagery of the state – how is the state portrayed, what does it do, what is its aim? Education, and the apparatus of textbook production as a site of knowledge production has a vital role in establishing the new state project after 2010. Through the centralization of textbook production, it can be examined how the new crystallization of state power is established (Jessop, 2015).

The struggles against the new state project manifest themselves as scandals in the media, as waves of education-focused protests, as frequent changes in textbook policy and as conflicts within the state apparatus too. These are challenges to the legitimacy of the state project, and the redrawing of the state-society boundary through which it extends the reach of the administration (Mitchell, 1991; Loveman, 2005). While on the other hand, the knowledge the

state transmits through textbooks is also in the center of the conflicts. Thus, the categories of perception that the state is trying to establish as natural are also questioned (Bourdieu, 1994).

#### **1.4. Textbook production as a field**

Textbook production has the dynamics of a social field, which Bourdieu defines as a relatively autonomous system of objective relations of agents and institutions in which positions are already won in previous struggles. These relations constitute the structure of a field, which could be also identified as power distribution within the field, or the structure of the specific capital of the field. The results of previous struggles are objectified in institutions and dispositions. What is at stake in these struggles is the authority over the field, thus the accumulation of a particular kind of social capital. This capital can be also reconverted into other kinds of capital under certain conditions. Accumulating the specific capital of a field means obtaining socially recognized capacities to act legitimately in the field and enables one to exercise power in the field and (re)define its mechanisms (Bourdieu, 1975).

The field of textbook production has limited autonomy, which should be considered a manifold issue. With a broader focus, it can be argued that under the conditions of globalization, the autonomy of the national educational policy field is reduced, due to the influences of the policies and agreements of international organizations (Lingard, Rawolle & Taylor, 2005). These tendencies are more observable in Hungary between 2002-2010. Simultaneously, there are tendencies of ‘destatization’, which means that the state reallocates its tasks, while it redraws the boundaries of the public-private divide (Jessop, 2002). But how do we understand the changing tendencies after 2010? As the educational policies drift away from the trends dictated by the EU and international organizations, the observed field is less and less influenced by these organizations, as it is becoming influenced by the state to a greater extent. Thus, the Hungarian case is especially interesting in this sense, as after the start of the tendency of

‘destatization’ under the liberal governments between 2002-2010 in Hungarian textbook publishing, since 2010 not only is this tendency reversed, but textbook production becomes renationalized altogether.

On a smaller scale, textbook production and the liberalized textbook market from the ’90s to the 2010s existed at the constructed boundaries of the state, always in close connection with it, being funded by it to a great extent through the financing of development of textbooks as well as through the subsidies for purchasing books provided for children. And except between 2004 and 2014, there was at least one state-owned publisher in the field too, while textbook production was always greatly influenced by the state’s educational policy.

The actors of this field were part of a broader field of intelligentsia. One could even say that the field of textbook production is a segment of this greater field, but in the form of professional recognition it has its own specific social capital. I will argue that the habitus of the textbook production field is greatly determined by that of the intellectual field. Bourdieu defines habitus as the embodiment of lifestyles, tastes, but more than that: it is the embodiment of one’s position in social space (Bourdieu, 1998). This overlap between the two fields is also because most of the agents of the smaller field become, in the biographical sense, intellectuals first, and then become affiliated with something textbook related, or work with textbooks besides their jobs as teachers or professors, thus besides their typical intellectual lifestyle. Thus, they are socialized in this field, and acquire its habitus first. I will develop on the specificities of contemporary habitus of the Hungarian intelligentsia in a following chapter.

I understand the intelligentsia theoretically in Bourdieu’s terms, as a social field rich in cultural capital and having a strategic position in social space, which, according to Foucault, enables them to “[use] his knowledge, his competence and his relation to truth in the field of political struggles” (Bourdieu, 1989, Foucault 200:128). Eyal and Buchholz argue that what characterizes intellectuals is “the movement, the maneuver by which historically specific truth-

making practice becomes an effective tool of intervention in the public sphere” (Eyal–Buchholz, 2010:123). Thus, these analysis focuses on the practices through which intellectuals exercise power in the public sphere, while also broadening the traditional characterization of intellectuals

### **1.5. The old and the new state project**

In the following sections, I aim to characterize the new state project of the Orbán governments in contrast to the previous dominant state project. I discuss the dynamics of the new state project in regarding the repositioning of elite groups. This is a mechanism of establishing a new governmental rationality, and a new understanding of legitimacy through the reevaluation of different types of capital in relation to each other.

I understand the previous state project as that of the “modernizing consensus”, using Sebők’s term. He argues that this consensus emerged before the regime change in 1989, and it was the defining ideology of Hungarian public policy between 1990 and 2010, even though not with invariable strength. To describe this consensus a bit simplistically for the sake of being concise, this modernization means the shared aim and belief in “catching-up” to Western living standards using economic liberalization as one of its main tools. Even though modernization and neoliberalism partly overlap, they are not interchangeable as both their ideology and the political and intellectual groups that advocate them differ, as it is also visible from the contemporary debates before 2010. This modernizing consensus failed politically in 2010, after a longer process of losing its ground discursively, ideologically and in the space of public policy (Sebők, 2016).

The ideology of the new state project was pronounced well before 2010, before the Orbán government won two thirds majority in the general elections (e.g. Stumpf, 2009, G. Fodor–Stumpf, 2007). In practice, the state project is not realized exactly as these programmatic



academic articles prescribe, but they demonstrate its main tendencies. These obviously normative and evaluative articles create a bipolar, deeply divided discursive world (Hajnal–Gábor, 2013), while also setting conservative and nationalist agendas for the state with a focus on “family policy”, workfare, supporting Hungarian entrepreneurs and strong centralization in general (Stumpf, 2009).

In this discourse, the state project is termed as the “Neo-Weberian State” and “good government”, but these expressions are used differently from the majority of the international academic discourse (Hajnal–Gábor, 2013). The ideologists argue that instead of the previous “neoliberal state”, a so-called “Neo-Weberian State” is needed, meaning the rethinking and strengthening of the role of the state, rediscovering bureaucracy as a holder of cultural values and as condition for normative government (Stumpf, 2009). The constructed “them” that they argue against is an image of a “neoliberal elite”, which dismantled the state, and even argued for the further retreat of the state as a solution for social problems, while this has lost its legitimacy in Hungary strictly on experiential grounds. (Stumpf, 2009:93). These are a few manifesto-like pieces of an academic discourse that is strongly tied to the current government. These thoughts greatly informed the nationalist-conservative state project that has replaced the previous “modernizing consensus” (Sebők, 2016).

## **1.6. The repositioning of elites**

State projects and hegemonic visions are that of political forces or elite groups that aim to challenge or maintain the balance of forces within the state (Jessop, 2015). This is why I also consider this a classificatory struggle of elite groups. The differences that are accepted and recognized as legitimate all work as symbolic capital, and thus contribute to establishing legitimate authority (Bourdieu–Wacquant, 2013). I will now focus on how this struggle of political forces is realized in the centralization of textbook production, which, I argued, is

especially significant because it encompasses two modes of the state's knowledge production: through the workings of the bureaucratic administration itself, of which textbook production is made to be a part of through the realization of the state project, and through the production of textbooks, which can serve as a plain tool in spreading the hegemonic vision of the political forces (Loveman, 2005, Weber, 1976).

The field of textbook production had its specific dynamics as a social field (Bourdieu, 1975). The main dynamics as a field highly dependent on the intellectual field, used to be the accumulation of cultural capital, which gave high prestige to the field and its products under the previous modernizing consensus, and even before (Sebők, 2016). The value attached to this form of social capital is highly dependent of the state, which Bourdieu defines as “the culmination of a process of concentration of different species of capital”. The state is able to exercise power over different fields and also to set the rates of conversion between different capitals, and thus the power relations between the fields which rely on the accumulation of these capitals and their holders. (Bourdieu, 1994). On the other hand, the professional recognition, which I argue is the specific form of cultural capital in this field, is understood to be distributed through the different relations between the agents, but also through market dynamics. Thus, according to my interviewees, the belief in the competition in the market rewarding the best book and mirroring the professional reception of the textbooks coexists still today with contradictory images, such as the criticisms on teachers' conservatism in choosing the books that they are used to instead of the pedagogically most developed ones.

The state as the holder of this meta-capital, which is a result of the accumulation of different kinds of capital, determines the power relation between different fields, and can modify the conversion rate between capitals (Bourdieu, 1994). I argue that the change in which capitals are valued or devalued is part of the new state project of the Orbán governments, and this is also manifested in the repositioning of elite groups. The repositioning is due to the devaluation,

because devaluation means that the capital is losing its legitimacy, thus its holders are losing their position in the field of power (Bourdieu, 1989). To translate it to Eyal and Buchholz's terms, the field losing its favorable position due to the devaluation of its capital loses its capacity to make interventions (Eyal–Buchholz, 2010).

To consider this transformation as part of a historical process, one must understand it in light of a longer course of change. Under the state socialist regime in Hungary the modernizing state project emphasized the role of cultural capital in its pursuit of social transformation. It was the main promise of the regime that it would improve the quality of life of workers, which included the state providing them access to cultural products and activities, while also opening up educational opportunities to those in the lower classes, aiming to renew the intelligentsia. Thus, already in the state socialist period, there was a relatively high value attached to cultural capital, which was also maintained under the coming era of liberal regimes (Szalai, 2018). Szelényi's classical works, on how the intelligentsia was becoming a unified dominant class with the bureaucracy in the '70s, or his claims on the primacy of cultural capital in contrast to economic capital in "postcommunism", testify to the experience of the intelligentsia of their relatively valued position in this political system (Konrád-Szelényi, 1979, Szelényi, 1995; cf. Gagy, 2018 on "intellectuals' utopias"). According to Szalai, after the regime change in 1989, there were two main intellectual groups: the left-liberal, mostly humanities and engineer intelligentsia which historically built itself on the technocracy of the late Kádár-era and the national-conservative technocrat-bourgeoisie that gained strength after the 2008 crisis. The intelligentsia was increasingly neglected by the political forces even before 2010, while the Fidesz-KDNP governments afterwards started to dismantle their institutions and directly attack them also on a personal level (Szalai, 2018). This change after 2010 was coupled with the Orbán governments' agenda of strengthening another elite group, the "national bourgeoisie" as they call it (Scheiring, 2017). This new elite consists of the upper strata of Hungarian entrepreneurs,

testifying to the growing value attached to economic capital. This group of entrepreneurs emerged from the medium-sized enterprises against the backdrop of the predominance of a transnational bourgeoisie, and according to Scheiring the Orbán regime is in a mutually dependent position with the “national bourgeoisie” (Scheiring, 2016).

In this course of events, the cultural capital that was previously produced and valued through the workings of the state became less valued, the intellectual field lost its favored position, and another elite group, called the “national bourgeoisie” was put to the fore, which means that economic capital and political capital in the form of loyalty became more valued, which was also mediated through the state. It is important to note the connection of these dynamics to the previous manifestos of the state project, which prescribed the state providing support to Hungarian entrepreneurs (cf. G. Fodor–Stumpf, 2007).

Within the state apparatus, this change is executed through the reorganization of the different segments of administration, with renaming and restructuring the ministries and departments regularly, and keeping the bureaucratic system constantly in change (e.g. Szabó, 2016). This is not a brand-new practice for controlling the power relations within the state apparatus, and in this case, it is also used as a tool in further building the new state project.

There was a reorganization within OFI, which used to be a relatively independent state-funded educational research center and is responsible for developing textbooks under the current government, and which thus became the monopoly of textbook publishing. My interviewee argues that the researchers in OFI with more than a decade of expertise are not that easily replaceable, which is seen as a disadvantage in the realization of this state project. This is also connected to how an elite which is rich in cultural capital is more difficult to replace, as it takes a lot longer to accumulate this form of capital than those with economic capital (Kristóf, 2017). The mechanisms of the state apparatus work in a way that these researchers’ knowledge in their field of expertise becomes less needed and valued, and they either leave OFI, or start to work

on projects not related to their fields expertise, as OFI's main activity changes. Thus, as the apparatus is redesigned, it produces this replaceability which is more favorable in this political system. Thus, governmental rationality was also enforced with OFI transforming from a state-funded research center to the national publisher, leading to the change of its main tasks and partly its employees.

## 2. Education policy and the new state project

### 2.1. From liberalization to Klik

I will paint a schematic picture of the past trends of Hungarian education policy to provide the necessary context to understand the complexity of the changes in textbook policy. The table below includes a summary of the main changes in this policy field. The overall transformation consists of a series of legislative and regulatory changes, which are complex and rich in particularities. This is the characteristic of the bureaucratic exercise of power, and it makes understanding the bigger picture and the significance of some details a challenge (Loveman, 2005).

<b>Educational subsystem</b>	<b>Before</b>	<b>Date of change</b>	<b>Currently</b>
New Public Education Act		2011	
New Core Curriculum		2012	
Maintenance of schools	Local governments	2012	Klik or KK (from 2017) [state body]
Textbook distribution	Private companies	2013	KELLO Library Supplier Ltd. [state body]
New Textbook Act		2013	
Professional body for textbook providers	TVOT	2014	-
Textbook developing and publishing	Private publishers (and state-owned publisher)	2014	OFI [state body]

**Table 1. Summary of main changes**

The second Orbán government promised and delivered radical changes in several policy branches after 2010, including education. These changes can be understood in contrast to the modernizing goals of education policy under the previous left-liberal governments between 2002-2010 (Halász, 2011, Sebők, 2016). This means that while the 2000s was an era of constant reforms, some priorities in education policy remained unchanged. So, the privatization and

marketization of education and textbook publishing was continuous since the 90s, but also the efforts to ensure the equality of opportunities in education (Rajnai, 2013). This system was coupled with financial issues that worsened after the austerity measures from the middle of the 2000s. There were also problems arising from the fragmented system of educational management, and with a general “reform-tiredness” from the constant changes (Rajnai, 2013, Radó 2011a).

The new agenda set by the Fidesz-KDNP government was framed as the counterreaction to previous reforms (Rajnai, 2013). There were increasing tendencies of centralization in educational policies with the new Public Education Act of 2011, and also with the establishment of the Klebelsberg Institution Maintenance Centre (=Klik) in 2012. Klik became the manager (*működtető*) of all schools maintained by local governments, thus they ceased to be institutions with independent legal personality and with their own budget, and became the sites of Klik, while all teachers and personnel became employed by Klik as well (Rajnai, 2013, Radó, 2014). Klik also automatically became the maintainer (*fenntartó*) of schools in towns with less than 3000 inhabitants, and by now it is the maintainer of all local government-managed schools (Riba, 2015).

The constant struggle over different state projects is also visible in the debates about centralization (Jessop, 2015). Nationalization was understood as a solution to the difficulties local governments had with financing schools and it was considered an answer to educational inequalities and even increasing ethnic segregation (Halász 2011). However, since the nationalization of schools there were also protests and scandals against the loss of autonomy of schools and the centrally appointed headmasters (Doros, 2016). Teachers having to buy chalk for the classes themselves became the symbol of the financially dependent schools in the media (Kolozsi, 2016a).

It is important to stress the conflictual proceeding of education reforms under the Fidesz-KDNP governments. In this period there were several waves of protests organized against the changes in education and textbooks, which actually even had results in halting some reforms or leading to the frequent changes of state secretaries responsible for education, which is quite exceptional in this political system.

In 2015 the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development (=OFI) published a volume on the effects of the centralization, arguing that there is no advantage deriving from the centralization. They claim that there is excessive administration, the lack of autonomy paralyzes the schools, the centralized education management lacks strategic thinking, and decisions are not made on professional grounds, as even the Ministry's researchers are denied data in the secrecy that is surrounding Klik (Kolozsi, 2016a). This publication is significant in itself, as OFI, this state-funded research center is the one currently responsible for textbook production. This shows the struggles within the state, as this previously relatively autonomously publishing research center was assigned the conflictual role of national publisher under the new state project. As they still proceeded with publishing a critical research of nationalized education, they stirred conflicts with the Ministry, according to my interviewee from OFI. I will later demonstrate, how these attempts at internal critique led to OFI losing its autonomy and becoming merged into a university as part of a "reduction of bureaucracy."

Narrated as a reaction to the ample critique of the centralization, since 2017 there are 58 educational districts (*tankerület*) under Klik (renamed to Klebelsberg Center), which work as regional units of educational management, instead of the previous one central state body. This is communicated as a step towards decentralization as the local units have autonomy in some issues, while simultaneously, local governments are no longer permitted to act as maintainers of schools, thus the nationalization of the state-funded schooling system is complete (Kolozsi,



2016b; cf. Prókai, 2017, Janecskó, 2017 on local governments struggling for keeping the schools).

## **2.2. Free textbooks**

The communicated political rationale behind the nationalization of textbook production was to provide families with free textbooks (Neuberger, 2017). The educational government referred to the ongoing debate since the '90s whether the constitutional right to free general education involves the right to free textbooks also. When in 2011 the new Public Education Act entered into force, it prescribed that in elementary school free textbook provision will be gradually introduced. Accomplishing this popular political agenda led to the state's interest in cutting the costs of textbook production, for which the main means was the centralization of this field.

It is important to stress how the justifications of the centralization reflects a more general logic of the state's workings. The aim of provide all children with free textbooks, is one in the line of popular social measures that were introduced since 2010 (Neuberger, 2017). This is an often-used tool in the Orbán governments repertoire, for which the iconic example is the reduction of public utility prices. These are both criticized for their questionable profitability for the state, and while these are framed as social regulations, they mainly support wealthier households (Szurovecz, 2015 on textbook provision, Ónody-Molnár-Szikra, 2018 on social policy). In the case of textbooks this means that disadvantaged families, single-parent households and many other received their textbooks state-financed before these changes also.

The aim of free textbook provision is similar to the regulations on public utilities, as they are both framed as symbolic acts against the excessive liberalization of the previous liberal governments, which led to the corrupt functioning of the market forces (cf. G. Fodor–Stumpf, 2007). Thus, the government claims to redraw the state's boundaries in order to aid these failings of the market.

### 2.3. Textbook provision and acquisition

Following the one subject - one textbook policy of the state socialist period, the textbook market became liberalized in the '90s while the state still owned the National Textbook Publisher (=NTK), the previously monopoly publisher, which held a continually decreasing share of the market. Then in 2004, this publisher was also privatized, sold to a Hungarian company and later to a Finnish media company, Sanoma. With this, the Hungarian textbook market only included private firms, and the state took a regulatory role only. This lasted until after 2010, when the nationalization of textbook production began as part of the broader trend of centralization, which seems to be the overarching logic of the newly installed state project.

If one really wants to centralize, then one wants to centralize everything, that belongs to that topic, and textbooks obviously belong to education. /manager, KK (previous Klik)/

As the first step, the state monopolized textbook distribution in 2012. This transformation can be seen as the model for the later remaking of the textbook market in terms of institutional solution. In this case it was KELLO Library Supplier Ltd., which as a previously existing state company handling libraries' book orders became the monopoly textbook distributor since 2013. Similarly, an existing state body with different tasks, was later trusted with taking on the role of textbook publishing. This also meant that publishers no longer have direct connections with schools. They only receive a cumulated order from KELLO and have no knowledge even of which schools order their books. The centralization of textbook distribution marked an important starting point not just by cutting several communication channels, but also in the state's nationalization of textbook related markets due to the claim on their corrupt functioning.

Later in 2014, through changing the Textbook Law, the Textbook Entrepreneurs' National Board (=TVOT) was also abolished, which previously had consulting rights on legislation regarding textbooks and served also as a communication platform between distributors,

publishers and other state bodies. As TVOT as a professional chamber ceased to exist, National Professional Association for Textbooks (=TANOSZ), which used to be only responsible for sharing information among its members, took up this role to some extent such as trying to communicate with the Ministry on behalf of the remnants of the industry.

After the nationalization of distribution, there were constant logistical complications with getting the textbooks to the schools, and due to the popular discontent with the late and lost orders, the Ministry for Human Capacities (=EMMI) appointed a Ministerial Commissioner responsible for textbook provision in public education. This status entails broad and vaguely specified responsibilities and entitlements and is appointed by the Minister when “there is a task of paramount importance” (Kormany.hu, 2018). In practice this translates to broad authority as this position is understood as the personal bailiff of the Minister. The Commissioner was responsible for two things:

So, regarding this [his] task was twofold. To get [the textbooks] to the schools in that school year, and two, to strategically ensure, that from that on there is no problem with textbook provision. [...] And the strategical question is, that after mapping the anomalies of textbook provision, how we can ensure that not only now, but in the long run, in the next 130 years, there is no problem in textbook provision.  
/manager, EMMI/

A long-lasting state project is unfolding in front of our eyes. Hegedüs was responsible for making the nationalized textbook distribution work, and also for handling the state’s purchase of textbook series and publishers. As he argued, these steps were necessary to increase efficiency in production and logistics, so that the government could provide more and more cohorts with free textbooks each year (Korompay, 2015). This is to be understood in contrast to their claims on the wasteful and immoral profit seeking activities under the previous market relations. According to my interviewee, the broad textbook offer was problematic for the educational government as it is more cost-efficient to have fewer books, especially when publishing is a state monopoly.

And it was the proposal in order to remove these anomalies, that textbook production should be the state's task. And a public task can only be competed, right, if that task, or at least its decisive part, the key sections are within the state's institutional system, if public institutions perform it. /manager, EMMI/

Thus, the Commissioner's task was to perform the acquisition of textbook publishing. At this point, it was not yet decided what institutional form this would take: either a state-owned new publisher or a previously existing state body trusted with this task. However, as one interviewee explained, it was European Union competition law, that prohibited the first option, and thus a long-standing state-funded research institute, the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development (=OFI) was chosen for the task of textbook publishing.

According to my interviewees, in the initial plan the state would have purchased textbooks. Some publishers even sold whole book series to OFI, which served as the basis of some of the textbooks developed by OFI, the experimental textbooks. When this proved to be unrealizable on a large scale, because the publishers were not willing to sell their popular series, the state, or rather the Ministerial Commissioner started negotiating to buy publishers.

Before the wave of changes occurred from 2012 onwards, there were 60-80 textbook publisher, and three of them held the majority of the market - Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó, Apáczai Kiadó and Mozaik Kiadó (Kaposi, 2012). In 2014, the two largest textbook publishers, Apáczai Kiadó and Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó (=NTK), were purchased by the state and were merged into OFI. This is significant also because by changing the property structure and the business scene, the state abolished a major part of the previous field of textbook production, which hindered major resistance, and the state did not have to face powerful counterhegemonic effects. As the latest development, OFI itself was merged into Eszterházy Károly University in the beginning of 2017, losing its financial autonomy, and removed from the state apparatus (Korompay, 2015, Korompay, 2017).

It is important to consider the cyclical European Union funding and the pressure for its most complete usage, as an external condition determining the form and the pace of the changes. The centralization of textbook production also provided the state with the advantage of keeping EU funding within its boundaries, and thus applying greater control on them. While EU regulations determined greatly the institutional form the acquisition of private publishers could take, as it has been adumbrated earlier in this chapter. The pace with which the funds were available was most likely responsible for limited time, that OFI had to produce the experimental books. This is important as these books are widely criticized, and the employees of OFI claim that the first version of the books was actually low-quality because of the limited time they had. I will develop on the issue of the scandals surrounding the books later, as I deal with the topic in depth.

During my interviews, the utilization of the EU funds was often mentioned as an explanation for the state's motivation:

I know that the money is plenty, we are the ones that do the work, and the money is still not landing in my bank account. But I think it is like this everywhere. /editor, OFI/

I don't know, it seems to me that spending the EU money is the main aim of this whole story, and the textbook thing is just the cover story. /manager, private publisher/

So, both my interviewee from OFI, the national publisher and a manager of a private publisher argue that there is possibly corruption involved in the used of funding, and that having the opportunity to handle the EU funds served as a motivation for centralization. Thus, they question the primacy of the motivation of providing free textbooks. They challenge the pronounced justification of the transformation, the ground for the legitimacy of the state project.

## **2.4. The new textbook law and the experimental books**

Another important thread in making the centralization possible, was the introduction of the new Textbook Act in late 2013, and the implementing regulation in the beginning of 2014. The law starts by stating:

In order to enforce the right to education (*művelődéshez való jog*) assigned in the Fundamental law, the realization of the pedagogical aims and tasks related to the curricula applied in general education, must happen through the high-quality textbooks which are provided for all students, and through the state taking responsibility. Ensuring the textbooks and their appropriate content is the state's task (2013. CCXXXII.).

Thus, this legislation made the textbook provision explicitly the state's task, building on the previous new Fundamental Law, and the Public Education Act of 2011.

The law was made public between Christmas and New Year's Eve in 2013, and even though the direction of the changes was already apparent, the exact content of the law and the bothersome timing caught the publishers by surprise.

Well, this is what we also did, we were basically alerting each other, because between the two holidays practically no one was working, and the publishers were passing the word along, that everyone should run to the offices, and submit the accreditation packages, or else they'll be left out from the textbook register.  
/member, professional organization/

The new law has changed the process of accreditation, so that it only allows private publishers to submit textbooks for accreditation if they were invited to do so by the Ministry of Human Capacities – which did not happen in subjects for general education since the law was introduced, only in textbooks for minority and special needs education. This is important, because only accredited textbooks can be used in schools (Hutter, 2016). The new law also limited the number of books per local curriculum (*kerettanterv*) to two, meaning the limitation of textbook offer per class.

Simultaneously, even half a year earlier than the introduction of the new Textbook law, OFI started to develop its own textbook series, called the experimental (*kísérleti*) textbooks, which could be tested in schools without having to go through the usual accreditation process

(Szurovecz, 2016). Later, after their accreditation, they were renamed to new generation (*új generációs*) textbooks. This project is significant in the process of centralization, because if the state-owned publisher is developing one textbook series, and due to the new law, there is only one other “spot” left in the textbook registry, then it creates a favorable position for the state in negotiating for the acquisition of the private publishers.

So, if I say, that I [=the state] will publish a book now, and there will be none for them to harvest from the field sooner or later [if they keep their publisher private], then the state will be better off regarding the prices. That is a different thing, that we [employees of OFI] were working our asses off, but that's another story.  
/manager, OFI/

The experimental textbooks are usually much cheaper than other textbooks, but they are extensively criticized for their quality. It became a frequent topic in media how scandalous these textbooks are, especially their first version, the experimental ones, how they contain several factual mistakes, and stylistic and pedagogical problems as well (Joób, 2014). The experimental textbooks were developed using EU funding, which coupled with the centralization made it possible to lower the prices of these textbooks (Dercsényi, 2016). The correction of the books was financed from 6.5 million euros of EU funding also (Kálmán, 2016). Despite the lower cost of the textbooks, as the costs of organizing the distribution of textbooks more than doubled, the new system's profitability for the state is often questioned by critiques in the media (Szurovecz, 2015).

The textbooks of private publishers that still received accreditation in 2013 are on the registry for now, but their five-year accreditation is running out, and their textbooks can be used in the next school year for the last time. The last five years thus mark the transition from the liberalized textbook market to the state monopoly, with private publishers still having accredited textbooks, but the legislation already prescribes the centralized textbook provision. In these years there were reports on how Klik, the national maintainer of schools, is putting pressure on the institutions, or even forces them to order the textbooks of the nationalized publishers. In 2014,

schools managed by Klik were only allowed to choose from a limited number of textbooks, not from the whole list of accredited textbooks (Joób, 2014). In 2015, even though the limited list did not exist anymore, the schools had to comply with the regulation setting a price limit on the textbook packages of students according to their cohort. In the case of first and second graders this meant that they could only order the experimental textbook package from the limited budget (Szurovecz, 2015). In 2016, it was reported that Klik changed the textbook orders of schools, so reportedly there were items from the private publishers centrally removed and replaced with the books of the national publishers. Klik rejects the allegations in all cases, that it was manipulating the orders in favor of the national publisher (Szurovecz, 2016).

It is important to stress that there are heterogenous strategies among the remaining private publishers to keep their businesses in spite of this shrinking sphere. They try to survive and aim for other international markets with their products, as Mozaik Kiadó does for example, the only publisher that stayed private from the previously dominant three. Few bigger publishers are shifting their focus to other kinds of publications for now, hoping that the textbook market would revive. However, in general there are significant layoffs, as the publishers try to reduce their expenses. The smaller publishers have been abolished and sold their books to the others, so that their products can live on. Some of them are closing up now as their last books are losing their accreditation.

These changes led to a near-monopoly of the state in the textbook market, as state-owned publishers were estimated to have a 90% share by 2015 (Korompay, 2015). There are widely used textbooks, that lost their accreditation in 2014 already, without any possibility for renewing it (Szurovecz, 2015). By 2017 all students from 1<sup>st</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade received their textbooks free, and Klik announced, that 85% of the students in public education are equipped by the state (Neuberger, 2017).



### 3. Field dynamics and legitimacy

In this chapter I explain the implications of the devaluation of cultural capital in its influence on the value of the knowledge produced by the agents, and also as limiting their possibilities of effectively exercising power and challenging the legitimacy of the new state project. I follow how the habitus of the previously existing field delimits the reactions of the agents to the transformation. I will conclude by explaining the significance of the devaluation of cultural capital in the deintellectualization of the state.

I begin with the remark of a general tendency which shed light on the defining dynamics of the field of textbook production. The actors of the field emphasize the professional side of their work, separating it from the economic, institutional, political aspects of the new state project.

Simultaneously [to the acquisition of publishers] the TÁMOP 312-B project [the development of experimental textbooks] began, which obviously for outsiders is very much connected with these things, but as [a professional] I considered a state-financed textbook testing and textbook development to have “*raison d'être*” even if the market conditions remain. Well, now naturally for outsiders these experimental textbooks became the scapegoat, so these appeared as if they were the reason for the abolishment of the old textbook series, the wide textbook offer in the market, but there was no logical or other connection between the two, the same would have happened with the purchase of the books of Apáczai and National Textbook Publisher. /manager, OFI/

Obviously this two cannot be totally separated, but it is still worth to separate the two, because even though I don't agree with the system, that doesn't necessarily mean that the experimental textbooks should have turned out to be this bad by definition, but they turned out to be bad. And this is the kind of professional criticism, that [our organization] could undertake. /member, professional organization/

The public debates or criticism regarding the abolishment of the textbook market were focusing predominantly on the content of the experimental textbooks, which were held to be full of professional mistakes. This is not to say that the agents had no understanding or opinion on the political aspects of the changes, but most of them were not willing to articulate this in public. If we try to understand why agents focus on professional mistakes rather than systemic political

and economic changes, it will shed light on the different struggles of the new state project reorganizes recognition and the position of elite groups.

### **3.1. On the value of knowledge**

I argue that the devaluation of cultural capital and thus the repositioning of the intellectual field as a less valued one, means that the knowledge they produce also loses its significance and prestige. As a manager from OFI perceives this change:

There is this other process, which means, that there is no policy-based governance anymore, but political governance, and as a result, there is not really a need for the policy research that OFI used to be conducting for a long time, and which significantly determined the policy decisions in the '90s and the early 2000s, because there is rather a need for performing the professional justification of the political decisions that are made. /manager, OFI/

As this manager argues, in this system the knowledge they've been producing is not valued anymore, thus OFI is not needed as a research center anymore but is put to use as the national publisher, when it becomes clear that it is not possible to establish a new national publishing house because it would be in conflict with the European Union's competition law. But devaluation of this knowledge concerns not only policy research, that OFI used to do, but also the textbooks as a product of intellectuals' work. And as it is not so highly evaluated in itself anymore, it is used more instrumentally. On the one hand the production of textbooks is instrumental in the sense, that it is a tool for keeping the control over EU funding within the state's boundaries as I argued in the previous chapter. However, it is at the center of public discussion whether the content of the textbooks is becoming politically instrumentalized. To demonstrate the different claims regarding this:

There was this presumption around '14, around the nationalization, that we are witnessing the start of a "Kulturkampf", but my experience from the inside is that the government didn't care about this, so this was not their main intention. /manager, OFI/

There would be an obvious political interest, which seems to be not realized, but every journalist asks us about that. [...] If there is some content imposed in the

subject materials, which could serve as the ideological justification of the system. And honestly, it cannot be said that there is something systematic, we can absolutely not say that there would be something obvious like this. So, we always stress this, that no. So, even this is not working [laughs], this doesn't seem to be the intention. /member, professional organization/

While all interviewees claim that they do not see systematic ideological modifications in the content of the textbooks from any governmental actors, many also affirm that the new generation textbooks are the most vulnerable to such pressure. This is because the new generation textbooks are developed in a copyright constellation, where instead of the previous royalty system with individual textbook writers, a content developer team is hired as employees of OFI. As all rights belong to OFI, it is much easier to modify the content of the textbooks, as it can be done without having to get permission from the authors who hold the copyrights. This new construct also contributes to how the new generation textbooks can be so cheap. Indirectly, this also means, that it is not as profitable to become a textbook writer as it used to be as you would not receive the yearly royalty, which is a quite high amount compared to other public-sector salaries. Moreover, the prestigious role of textbook author is transformed from a free-lancer, intellectual's job into a "bureaucrat's work", part of the state apparatus. So, when OFI started hiring textbook developers in 2013, this new constellation discouraged some experienced writers to participate, and thus helped facilitate the change of agents in textbook publishing

This change of becoming an employee of OFI instead of a free-lancer textbook writer also adds to the devaluation of this knowledge and work, which partly explains the decrease of interest from the part of the more experienced writers. However, I argue that this recategorization of this occupation is also a manifestation of the classificatory struggle, the reinterpretation of relations which is the way the new state project is established (Jessop, 2015). Also, this change greatly influences a main element of the intellectual habitus, which is strongly related to the independence that the free-lancer lifestyle ensures. Thus, the newcomers in textbook

productions under these conditions will acquire already a somewhat different habitus due to this transformation (Bourdieu, 1998).

### **3.2. Dismantling the field**

With the nationalization of textbook production, the previously existing field is gradually dismantled. This means that its institutions are abolished, the dynamics that drive the field are terminated, such as market dynamics. This lead to the elimination of communication among the agents of the field. Parallel to the nationalization of schools and centralized coordination, the educational policy since 2010 is characterized by the elimination of debate and negotiations on all levels (Radó, 2011b). With the abolishment of the field of textbook production this general tendency appears on several layers. In this section I will map this dismantling of the field.

The abolishment of the field started with the state eliminating its institutions. In 2014, as a result of the new Textbook law, the Textbook Entrepreneurs' National Board (=TVOT) was abolished. As a consulting body of the state, it organized professional events and regular assembly meetings for its members, for textbook distributors and publishers, and it served as a communication platform between agents of the field and state bodies. Previously the minister used to attend their annual meetings, which was seen by some publishers as carrying great prestige, and someone from the state's side always participated in their regular meetings.

When TVOT as a professional chamber ceased to exist, National Professional Association for Textbooks (=TANOSZ), which used to be only responsible for sharing information among its members, took up this role. But TANOSZ was focusing not only on professionals previously, but also its members were mainly teachers. Still, they are now trying to communicate with the Ministry on behalf of the remnants of the industry. Today, their main advocacy tool is writing letters to state secretaries and the Minister with the certainty of not receiving a meaningful

answer, as according to their experiences from letter exchanges the replies are formal and vague.

The state withdraws from the previous forms of communication with the remaining private publishers.

There is no such channel today [to the government]. So, the possibility for communication is shrinking. I think that the government is moving in a void in terms of information. /manager, private publisher/

There is no communication with the state through administrative procedures, because they cannot hand in books for accreditation, and the educational government doesn't order studies from them anymore either. The private publishers have also lost their access to schools, as today they receive the textbook orders from KELLO, the national textbook distributor, thus they do not have a direct connection with their consumers anymore, and they are only allowed to organize events to promote their products in schools, if the local KK, the national maintainer of schools rents them the rooms in the institutions.

In this regard it is also significant how little connection and information is available to the agents regarding other agents in the remnants of the field. While I don't want to underestimate the significance of the decade long personal acquaintance between the agents, in most of the interviews they claim that they have no knowledge of the others' workings recently, and my interviewees were very interested in asking me what others' opinion is on them, or what others were working on recently. This all demonstrates the lack of communication within the previous field.

After the new Textbook Law in 2014, the market dynamics in textbook production gradually come to a halt, and with that, and after the abolishment of TVOT and the nationalization of two major publishers, Apáczai Kiadó and National Textbook Publisher, there are no communication

platforms left for the agents of the dismantling field, besides the media and some occasional meetings.

The dismantling of the field and the establishment of the new system of textbook production can be understood as the state accumulating symbolic capital. Through redefining the way of textbook production, and with time naturalizing this new system, it becomes able to exert symbolic violence. This also means that it naturalizes that the state is responsible for textbook production and free textbook provision, thus with time the new image of the state is established as a given (Bourdieu–Wacquant, 2013; Bourdieu, 1994). In the next sections I will discuss the struggles against the establishment of this new system.

### **3.3. The “scandalous” experimental textbooks and the textbook debates**

Educational policy is a widely discussed topic in the media and it is one of the issues that has engendered the most protests in the last decade. The changes in education are quite popular topics altogether, but the experimental books received even more attention than other reforms. The experimental textbooks, first published in 2014 and developed by OFI, received a tragic reception in the media as well as harsh commentary from textbook professionals and professional organization. As my interviewee affirms, the experimental textbooks were distinguished as “proverbially” faulty, and plenty of articles were written on the factual and editorial mistakes that the books had. There were also some scandals about the ideological content of some parts. In all cases the employees of OFI found it greatly unjust. These quotes demonstrate the tensions of my informants regarding the books:

I only call these national books brochures, because you cannot prepare properly for the final exams using these, I think it is impossible to prepare for law school, or for ELTE if you use these. /manager, private publisher/

I’m really bothered by the limited number of textbooks, but I’m also really bothered by this hysteria. /editor, OFI/

They write, that there is a professional mistake. [...] But this is presented in the plain public of the press, that the books are full of mistakes, while what is going on,

is that someone would write in detail about the disintegration of the Roman Empire, while the author said, that we will not focus on this, because there are other topics.  
/manager, OFI/

There was the primitive discussion of a complicated topic going on in the media.  
/manager, OFI/

While there were such articles about the content of textbooks, it escalated in these years and it is still a popular strand in the criticism about textbooks. Everybody agreed, including the editors, that the first version of the experimental textbooks was full of mistakes. However, the editors of OFI also claim that these were due to the limited time they had, and the mistakes were corrected in the following editions of the textbooks, and now the new generation books are not perfect, but just as good quality as those produced under the market relations before. And they also argue that there were blamed for the mistakes that have been in the textbooks for a long time, but as the state bought the publishers, and their books were reprinted with the OFI logo, they got the blame for those. As the quote above demonstrates, an interviewee argued that in a lot of cases there are different pedagogical perspectives framed as mistakes behind the scandals.

The fact that the textbooks' mistakes has been such a recurring topic in the media cannot be only ascribed to the quality of the experimental books. But the popularity of this topic is also due to the otherwise complicated functioning of bureaucratic systems, as the changes are hard to follow for the general public and the journalists, and the discontent with the new system is expressed through this easily communicable topic.

However, the experimental textbooks were the most debated segment of the changes in public by the textbook professionals too. There were some public debates organized by professionals and some professional organizations of teachers published detailed criticism of the new textbooks. These debates were really disappointing for all the participants, and they still talk about them tensely.

The point of this whole thing would have been, besides us telling that this and this is problematic, to have some meaningful debate. Well, now this wasn't. In the beginning there were still some attempts, at least we were saying our opinion, and [the editor] from OFI who still came for the first big textbook debate, and he was saying his thing, his arguments, and it was not a real debate there either, but at least there were some differences faced with each other. [...] So, the kind of debate where we could go into depth, how could have they mess it up so much and. So, I never experienced this kind of a debate. /member, professional organization/

The partner in the debate was not assuming that there is an initiative with good intentions, to make good books with a new approach, but it was the vision that the state wants to force its opinion on the system, to manipulate and get a monopoly over public opinion with these textbooks. Right? /manager, OFI/

I think that I understand [critiques'] motivation, but they misused it a lot, and very very much, how to say it, not in a professional manner, not in a fair way. Teachers' organizations too. [...] They were malevolent, and I accept, that they actually wanted to discredit the abolishment of the textbook market as a political decision, and this is what they wished to use all opportunities [to discredit] the experimental textbooks. /manager, OFI/

What happened at these debates was that there were different expectations from the parts of the participants. The professional organizations wanted OFI's editors to unveil the immorality and unprofessionalism of the state that they assume, and they expected them to admit from the inside that the system is wrong as it is. While the editors of OFI were representing their own work, which they separate from the political system and the transformations, even if personally they are critical of it. In these debates they wanted to have a discussion of the books as a product of professional work from the community they expect recognition for that. Besides the publicity of the events also limit what the participants feel comfortable sharing, as they are participating as representatives of OFI. The public debates ended in great fights, and since then the employees of OFI do not attend these events, which further strengthens the otherwise great divides in the previous field.

While my interviewees all realize the political dynamics in the transformation, and many find it problematic, they think that is not part of their role to voice these criticisms. What they can voice in public is their criticism of the content of the textbooks, as the quotes in the very beginning of the chapter also suggest, and just as they did in the textbook debates. In other



words, this also mean that from the two modes of knowledge production of the state, thus the implicit one in terms of the production of symbolic capital and thus legitimacy, and the explicit one in terms of knowledge production and dissemination through education and in the form of textbooks, the public reactions of the agents are focused only on the explicit modes of knowledge production.

However, it is important to stress, that the textbooks produced by the state become tools of enforcing categories of perception by the state. As I explained above, my interviewee from OFI was upset about having to take the blame for the books that were produced before by other publishers, but since they are reprinted now with OFI's logo, the mistakes are attributed to them, and scandalized in the media. This change of meaning in the case of these old textbooks now bearing the logo is only understandable, if we consider them to be attempts of exerting symbolic violence. Thus, I argue that those criticizing the textbooks' content produced in this system of state monopoly, are critical of the books because of they are seen as imposing categories as natural. This also explains the constant search for the state's systemic attempts at changing the content of the textbooks. While it is also an important implication of my interviewees reaction, that those working at OFI are not perceiving this change so starkly from their position, which I will develop on later.

I argue that the reaction of my informants from the field is also delimited by their dispositions acquired from the field of intelligentsia. Scheiring claims, that after the regime change the dominant left-liberal intellectuals understood the transformations in a technocratic, modernizing frame, which negates the importance of values and visions and considers political issues as professional ones (Scheiring, 2016). This became a decisive logic of the intellectual field, on which the field of textbook production is greatly dependent. Thus, the intellectuals in the field of textbook production are maintaining this same discourse. They aim to perpetuate their role as only articulating their professional opinion and not political. For this reason, they

mostly frame their criticism in public as professional problems regarding the experimental textbooks.

The case of Mozaik Kiadó indirectly confirms this claim, because this publisher, the only one of the three major publishers in 2013 which remained private, voiced its political problems publicly because of their specific position within the field. The director and the owner of Mozaik Kiadó, has been very active in voicing political problems and has been giving interviews to newspapers on this and they are also suing the state for the loss it caused them (Farkas, 2014). As one of them describes their role:

And there is this odd indifference. And we are not indifferent. We speak up everywhere, and we are not really favorites for that either. But we see that the majority looks away, turns its back, well, as if it were not their problem. And then those like us, who should we be angry at? [...] We as a publisher has spoken up because of ten times as many things, as the others altogether. /manager, Mozaik Kiadó/

I argue that the management of Mozaik Kiadó can articulate their criticism because it always occupied a different position in the field compared to the publishers of Budapest. In contrast to Budapest-based OFI, and the nationalized National Textbook Publisher, the fact that Mozaik Kiadó operates in Szeged. The other nationalized publisher, Apáczai Kiadó was previously based in Celldömölk, but there are very few people from that staff who still work at OFI. Mozaik Kiadó also implemented a strategy when they realized that the centralization is going to happen, which ensured their economic independence from the state.

I for one, when there was this change in 2010, then we saw, that no more grass will grow here. So, we started dealing with things that can be sold abroad. And this is digital education. /manager, Mozaik Kiadó/

Mozaik is not dependent on the state economically as their products are very popular abroad. This strategy coupled with the fact that they suffered the largest loss as previously having a huge share of the market explains their political activity in public. Moreover, the owner of the publisher is a Hungarian man working very closely with the management since the beginning,

and he is also active in the political critique of the changes. Thus, their increasing independency from the field of textbook production, the state and also the lack of possible negative consequence on the part of the owner explains their activity compared to others abstention from such critique. The case of Mozaik Kiadó highlights the heterogeneity of the strategies within the field, while it also confirms my claim on how the more central positions within the field of textbook production, and specifically the Budapest-based intelligentsia delimits other agents' actions while they are freer from these constraints.

### **3.4. The wish for professional recognition**

The narratives of all publishers emphasize, that it is really hurtful for them that the textbooks are not valued as a professional product. In the case of the independent publishers, they are indignant at how the accumulated knowledge and expertise of the last decades is going to waste with the abolishment of the textbook market.

There is a huge professional basis, well, the past, it is not nothing. There were serious developments, and there are serious values. /manager, private publisher/

While OFI's managers and editors recognize this as a loss, it is especially painful for them that they do not receive the professional recognition that they think their work deserves. They consider the developing of the new generation textbooks as a unique opportunity in textbook production, as they had the chance in this EU funded project to develop textbook series for all subjects with an overarching pedagogical concept, and to have each book tested by 30-50 teachers for a year and giving detailed feedback for each chapter, which they build in the new generation textbooks. While the editors and managers of OFI agree, that they could only partly accomplish the goals of the project, and the textbooks are not perfect, they would expect more empathy and sympathy from others in the field.

I think that in 70%, [the editors] identified [with the project] professionally, undertook it publicly, and tried to complete this thing the most decently way it was possible, as the whole project was trying to do the same, while we a lot of unfair

criticism and attacks were surrounding the textbooks. So, how to say it, for years, it was used as an epithet that the experimental books are poor-quality, while they were not. /another manager, OFI/

It is really hurtful that there is no proper professional debate about the books. [...] We started our [textbook] from scratch. It is quite extreme to come in from the street, and put down two books in half a year, but we did it. And I could be proud of that. [...] Yet this is not complete, because the plenty of negative overtones spoiled it. /editor, OFI/

Well it changed, that now one doesn't see the concurrence, because it is practically dead now, so to day. So, one doesn't feel that wow, this book is finished now, published, how will it be received compared to the others. Well, personally this was good for me, that there was this bustle or competition or booming. / editor, OFI/

With the gradual disappearance of the field of textbook production, as its institution ceased to exist, and market dynamics are abolished, the field dynamics are also fading. On the one hand, with the disappearance of the market dynamics, the previous mode of distributing professional recognition is terminated too. This is how I understand the editors longing for the market dynamics. They do not only believe in the market facilitating innovation and so on, but they consider its functioning as being a means of feedback for the quality of their professional work and a means of communication between the agents of the field, that the “bustle or competition or booming” refers to in the quote above.

The redrawing of the state's boundary in the middle of this previously outer field cut through the relations that constituted the social fabric of this field. With the new boundaries there is a rupture between those within the state and those of the private publishers, and this divide cannot be bridged by solidarity or cooperation that was expected in the previous field dynamics in spite of all the previous tensions and conflicts among the agents. Even though the field was differentiated before also, there were no such strict divisions, and there were writers employed by several publishers over times, as it was not understood as an issue of loyalty. This new divide is perceived differently from the two sides.

So, I really think, that it was optimal, now not considering the time limitations, but since then there were years for [improvement]. So, if they invested so much in the

textbooks, tested them, spent time and resources on them, so then how [are they so bad], I simply don't understand. /member, professional organization/

[On OFI and its director] The problem is, that you can roughly guess their answers. So, between the two of us, there is not much he could say, well, what could he say. Obviously, he will say what [they always say]. /member, professional organization/

But what I'm saying is that there was a lot of criticism that was made out of emotional uproar. I personally understand, because I know how people react to situations and what motivates them. /editor, OFI/

From the inside, a wish for recognition and solidarity is strongly present, while they also turn to the tensions on the part of the public and the other publishers with emphatic understanding. They are also stressing how complicated this transformation was for OFI with the new employees, the new task of textbook publishing and with the hostile representation in the media, and they want others to acknowledge their difficulties. While naturally they don't raise the question of the morality of working as part of the state apparatus, of which they have a quite precise and often critical understanding. Here the topic of professionalism reappears, as OFI's employees talk about their job in purely professional terms and explain why they started to work at OFI as career choices, thus in all respects distancing themselves from the invasively political workings of the current state project.

While from the outside, there is no empathy expressed towards them because of the detriment that the centralization caused them. OFI's employees are either blamed for the inferior quality of the textbooks, which I argued is at least partly the articulation of the critique of the political changes, or they are handled as part of the state apparatus, their work is considered as instruments of the transformations and they are neglected as independent actors. When the member of the professional organization argues, that those from OFI will just say that the government always says is an illustrative example for the later.

I argue, that these reactions translate to them still exercising the habitus of the previous field dynamics, and the agents act accordingly as even though the institutions and the main dynamics of the field are gone, the dispositions are still in place, and these inform their reactions. This is

part of the ‘limbo’ that they experience now, when they know that the legislation actually already abolished the textbook market, but the institutions and the personal connections withers gradually, and the dispositions are still in place.

I also argue that these different perceptions of the other agents in the field is due to the changing representation of OFI’s employees, which is less palpable for those working at OFI. Their representation reflects how the state modifies the conversion rates of different capitals. For example, when the director or managers of OFI appear in the media, they are not represented as researchers, as they would’ve been before as the employees of a relatively independent, even though state-funded research center. But they are represented as the bureaucrats of the new state apparatus. And there is not the expertise attached to this representation as before, but the economic interest and the loyalty to the government, that is the logic of this new state project (Kolozi, 2016c). Thus, this state effect influenced the public representation of the field, in contrast to the habitus of the agents.

### **3.5. Deintellectualization of the state**

As the state’s workings devalue cultural capital, and it repositions the elites and the value attached to the knowledge they produce, there are explicit tensions within the state apparatus also. I close this chapter with reflecting on the tensions within, and how the realization of the state project is conflictual among the agents in the state apparatus.

As carrying the habitus of intellectuals’ as I argued above, the agents of the previous field of textbook production value the textbooks in themselves very highly, as a result of a common accumulation and development.

The fact that our publisher will be destroyed, because we cannot function anymore, that’s only a small part of this. It is a lot more major part, that with these books, which [teachers and students] like, which they would want to use but they cannot anymore, such value goes to waste, which has been the first in the market for twenty-five years. /manager, private publisher/

This is also true for those working at OFI, that as agents of the intellectual field they handle the textbooks as carrying in inherent value. This is apparent in their refusal of KELLO's offer, when the national textbook distributor wanted to buy the copyrights of the textbooks from OFI.

As a manager of OFI described the negotiations to me:

[To this offer] I could not reply anything else in 2015, A., as an intellectual, B., as a textbook author, that I could not accept this offer at all, for which [KELLO] with a generous gesture said, that they offer not 10% but 11. And this is where the negotiations ended. Just think about it, that with this they were claiming that in a textbook the intellectual value means 10%. /manager, OFI/

It is clearly visible from this quote, that this manager of OFI highly values the books, and takes pride in his position as an intellectual – in this sense even though he is a high-level bureaucrat in the state apparatus, he also thinks about knowledge production and his role in terms of the habitus of the intelligentsia which is in stark contrast to the new state project.

As my interviewee argues, OFI's relation to the Ministry became more conflictual because of their critical studies on the educational centralization which I also cited before, and also because they were not willing to sell the copyrights to KELLO. In 2017, OFI was merged into Eszterházy Károly University, Eger, and lost its financial, academic and personnel autonomy. While in public, this change was called to be part of the "bureaucracy reduction", my interviewees list other reasons (24.hu, 2016). According to them, the rationale for merging OFI was that KELLO owed OFI around 4 billion HUF for the textbooks (the total of the textbook market before the nationalization was estimated to be circa 15 billion HUF) and now this debt is nonexistent, and also that Eszterházy Károly University was struggling financially, and now EU funding for OFI arrives to the university directly, and according to my interviewees, it often stays there also. As a result of the merger, OFI's previous director resigned, and a previous state secretary took his place.

I understand this latest turn of events as the culmination of a struggle within the state in the establishment of the new state project, and a struggle for the internal coherence of the state

under the logic of the new governmental rationality. I argued that the new state project of the Orbán governments involves the modification of the conversion rates of different species of capital. Political and economic capital becomes more valued at the expense of cultural capital becoming devalued, and the fields dependent on the accumulation of this capital, and thus intellectuals lose their favorable position. This change shows how this specific state body, that OFI used to be, part of the state apparatus, but as a research center mostly consisting of agents especially strong habitus of intellectuals cannot function as part of this apparatus anymore. This mirrors the way the intellectual field loses its favorable position, as OFI, an organization of intellectuals within the state loses its favorable relatively autonomous position. As they were not willing to give up their pride in being intellectuals and their values completely, and to become the instruments of the new state project and were made to become anyway. With OFI's new position within Eszterházy Károly University, and with its director being a previous state secretary under the current government, the deintellectualization of the state is further continued.



## Conclusion

The thesis mapped how the new state project established in Hungary after 2010, following a nationalist-conservative turn politics. I aimed to understand this through the nationalization of textbook production, as this process was criticized by intellectuals publicly and spurred scandals in the media regularly. Thus, the struggles surrounding the transformation was especially visible, but the resistance did not succeed, and the textbook market was abolished. Through interviews I reconstructed the agents' narratives of the changes, and their perception of the rationale of the transformation (Bourdieu, 1975).

The research demonstrated, that the centralization of textbook production can be understood as a part of this broader state project. This means that it follows its general logic in building a stronger state, while the structural reorganization of the state apparatus is also a tool with which the legitimacy of the new state project is established (Jessop, 2015). The new state project also resulted in elite groups' repositioning in social space, as I argued building on Bourdieu's theory of the state. As the previous state project of the "modernizing consensus" is replaced (Sebök, 2016), the new state project put the "national bourgeoisie" to the fore, while removing the intelligentsia from its previously favorable position. This happened through the state's mechanisms of modifying the conversion rates of different capitals. Cultural capital was devalued, which meant that it lost from its legitimacy, and the ability of its holders to exercise power effectively decreased (Bourdieu, 1994, Bourdieu, 1975).

The social field of textbook production was abolished through legislative changes, which terminated its institutions and the market dynamics. The termination of the field and the devaluation of cultural capital resulted in the agents not being able to induce counterhegemonic effects against the new state power.

As the state's new boundary is drawn across the previous field of textbook production, the agents become separated in social space and acquire various positions under the new system (Mitchell, 1991). Even though the field is abolished, the agents' habitus acquired there under the previous state project is still lasting, which greatly determines their reactions to the transformation (Bourdieu, 1998).

I argued that it is a common attitude deriving from the habitus of the field, that most agents do not voice their opinion on what they consider political, only on "professional" issues. I demonstrated the different strategies for the agents. Those working for the national publisher, OFI become the co-producers of the new state project through becoming the part of the state apparatus, and also by producing the new textbooks themselves. They understand their position though as if it would remain unchanged, while they long for the feedback of the field dynamics and wish for professional recognition.

Those positioned in the remnants of the textbook market mainly criticize the professional mistakes in the newly developed experimental textbooks. I argue, that this can be understood as a reaction determined by the habitus of the previous field. However, as the textbooks themselves, as being the product of the state monopoly publisher, become a tool of establishing the hegemonic visions of the state, exerting symbolic violence. In both readings, the agents challenge publicly the production of knowledge in the form of textbooks. While they do not challenge the legitimacy of the state project itself publicly. With the redrawing the state's boundaries and devaluation of cultural capital, their critique does not become an effective form of resistance.

This analysis demonstrated the several layers of struggle surrounding the establishment of a new state project. I think that the inquiry could be continued with exploring the imaginaries such as state and market in depth, and how are these used and influenced by the new political regime. I recommend this for further research.

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