

SCAPING THE BORDER



In the mid-1920s, a verbal battle over the recruitment of borderland pupils to either Polish-speaking or German-speaking primary schools escalated in interwar Polish Upper Silesia, involving local, regional, national and supranational authorities, as well as individual children, parents and teachers. Whereas many fought that battle out of a belief that an intertwining of one language, one nation and one state would legitimate their nation-state, others vehemently rejected such categorisations.¹ Statesmen, administrators and lawyers in Geneva developed a detailed understanding of Polish Upper Silesia during this period. Of the more than 1,200 requests and petitions handled by the League of Nations between 1920 and 1939, more than 300 came from Poland, with most being sent in between 1926 and 1932, and the battle over primary schools in Polish Upper Silesia played a prominent role in these deliberations.² A detailed analysis of the dispute will illustrate how the search for meaning through categorisation that obsessed so many people ultimately caused meaning to collapse altogether. The main purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that meaning over language learning in primary schooling imploded just as much in the Belgian border regions of Eupen, Sankt-Vith and Malmedy as it did in Polish Upper Silesia. Accordingly, it is argued here that although the system of power that came into being was very different, it evolved in a similar way.

The analysis is worked out with the help of key concepts introduced within the three axes of comparison elaborated in the second chapter of this book. Much attention is devoted to human territoriality, which is here approached through the prism of Alexander Murphy's complementary understanding of Robert Sack's and Claude Raffestin's concepts. The chapter begins by describing how the state border lines through which Polish Upper Silesia and Eupen-Malmedy had come into being following the Treaty of Versailles were challenged in the mid-1920s, but neverthe-

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less remained in place. The Locarno Agreements laid bare the fact there was no alternative politico-geographical framework for the European continent. The interwar patchwork of nation-states was a 'highly sticky system', in which borderland inhabitants needed to accept or renegotiate power structures and power strategies within the individual nation-states to which they now belonged.³

The chapter then homes in on the dynamics of negotiations regarding borderland pupils' language learning in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and shows how these dynamics bore similarities in Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy. In both case study borderlands, a circulation of divisions over language learning policies and practices was driven by the desire of borderland inhabitants to acquire as much autonomy as possible, as described in Claude Raffestin's understanding of human territoriality. Raffestin's definition of human territoriality reads: 'the ensemble of relations that a society maintains with exteriority and alterity for the satisfaction of its needs, towards the end of attaining the greatest possible autonomy comparable with the resources of the system'.⁴ Human territorialities can be found in the diverse and changing interactions between human beings and 'material and/or immaterial reality'.⁵

Language learning in this chapter is interpreted both as a material reality codified in schools, teaching branches, textbooks, language exams, school curricula and suchlike, and as an immaterial reality of ideas on education and styles of teaching. The research will show who was in a position to change borderland pupils' social environment and under which circumstances. Throughout the chapter, it will be shown how the actions of state institutions and individuals in both case study borderlands not only accentuated the abnormalities and contradictions in language learning rules, but also intensified them. As a result, the physical border regions became the focal points for battles over a demarcation of the inside and the outside that was of wider significance within and beyond the Polish and Belgian nation-states. Despite the obsession with developing an abundance of legal rules on language learning for borderland pupils, however, state institutions, interest groups and individuals were unable to prevent legal normativity from crumbling.⁶

In order to compare the dynamics of negotiations over language learning in Polish Upper Silesia with those in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, attention first needs to be paid to how these negotiations appeared within different spaces. This requires an in-depth reconstruction of the specific system of power in each of the two case study borderlands along the second and third axes of analysis (namely, 'power and multiple loyalties' and 'microhistory within a multilayered context') of the frame-

work of comparison. The reconstruction enables us to understand how within two different systems of power, decisions were made at different levels of decision-making and were documented differently as well.

In the case of Polish Upper Silesia, thanks to the protection measures for national minorities laid down in the Minority Treaty and the Geneva Convention, an arena was set up in which grievances were aired and a variety of factors were documented in great detail: the perpetual efforts to forge ever more precise language learning policies, the changing motives of guardians when deciding which primary school to send their children to, and the compulsory language test results of individual borderland pupils. Meanwhile, in decisions over primary education that fell outside the remit of the League of Nations, it was increasingly the new governor of Polish Upper Silesia since 1926, Michał Grażyński, who had a decisive say. He opted for the power strategy of domination in order to define the place of the region within the power structure of the new Polish Second Republic. As was the case in the rest of interwar Poland, that power structure was heavily influenced by developments within the three empires to which the now Polish lands had previously belonged. In Polish Upper Silesia, for example, Grażyński put much effort into reducing the influence of the Catholic Church on the language education of borderland pupils, which had strengthened within Silesia, but not the Kingdom of Poland, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.⁷

In the case of the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, the system of power was very different. As will be shown in greater detail, these newly acquired borderlands lost their status of political and administrative autonomy in 1925 and were integrated within the district of Verviers in the province of Liège. Borderland inhabitants now received the right to participate in Belgian elections, but their representation in national politics was severely restricted. However, educational policymaking in Belgium was highly decentralised and offered councils of cities and municipalities significant decision-making capacity. As a result, borderland inhabitants in Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy were able to show political agency by making their own decisions over language learning in local primary schools. In contrast to Polish Upper Silesia, where the battle over language learning was fought over the language capacities of individual borderland children, here it was primarily fought over schools and their programmes of foreign language learning. Whereas the language tests in Polish Upper Silesia could provoke individual borderland pupils to question the manifestation of power, thus possibly influencing their future expressions of loyalty, in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, the individual child was not the focus of concern. Moreover, whereas authorities in Polish Upper Silesia opted for the power strategy of domination in order to

bring about a stable Polish Second Republic, within Belgium, the power strategy of prevention was used in order to guarantee the preservation of the power balance, such as, for example, between the Belgian state and the Catholic Church.

In calling this chapter ‘scaping the border’, what is being emphasised is the first meaning of the suffix ‘-scape’ in the word ‘borderscape’, the continuous multidimensional dynamics involved in ‘shaping and carving’ the border, since language learning for borderland pupils took the form of a battle within and between different layers of decision-making.⁸ The outcome of that battle, as we will see, was a circulation of social divisions within networks reaching well beyond the physical borderlands. The battle laid bare the contradictions and inconsistencies of existing systems of power but did not overcome them. In this period of time, the two case study borderlands did not show themselves to be spaces where the border was approached as a resource.⁹ The chapter will end with a discussion of the most important new textbooks designed for borderland pupils at the time and how they did not display cultural innovation. Within these textbooks, the aggregated representation of the border, as referred to in the second meaning of scape,¹⁰ was one of fragmentation.

Challenging the State Border Line

The Polish-German and Belgian-German state border lines, newly drawn in the aftermath of the First World War, faced two important challenges in the mid-1920s. For inhabitants in both Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, the meaning of the state border line changed as a result of international negotiations. Moreover, significant amounts of financial and material support for primary school children in Polish Upper Silesia and in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy were now being sent in from Germany with the purpose of challenging primary school policies in the two countries. At the same time, the number of pupils from Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy crossing the state border line in order to receive their primary education in Germany was limited and did not challenge borderland school education.

Polish Upper Silesia

In 1925, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gustav Stresemann, proposed to the Allied partners that they revise the Weimar Republic’s western borders. Negotiations resulted in the Locarno Treaties, which stated

that the geographical disposition established under the Treaty of Versailles was inviolable, led to Allied occupation troops withdrawing from the Rhineland in 1930, and facilitated Germany's membership of the League of Nations.¹¹ Although the Locarno Treaties secured Germany's western border, Polish state representatives noted with concern the weakening in the international order's capability to protect Polish sovereignty. The Locarno Treaties did indeed increase the uncertain status of Germany's eastern borders. At the very moment when Germany entered the League of Nations, France, which had formed the spine of Polish and Czechoslovakian foreign policy, withdrew from its obligations in Central Europe.¹² Gustav Stresemann used the League's international position to legitimise the protection of what he considered ethnic Germans living outside the Weimar Republic, especially in the East.¹³ Stresemann's ambition was to turn the League of Nations into an international defender of their rights, despite its having been established as a prudent interlocutor in minority protection.¹⁴

An additional challenge was the German tax money that had increasingly been invested in borderland pupils in Polish Upper Silesia since the mid-1920s. This relief arrived at a time when Polish Upper Silesia's international economic competitiveness was in decline, and intensified during the financial crisis of the late 1920s. By 1924, Poland's economic situation started to improve. Throughout the 1920s, the average gross domestic product per capita in Germany remained more than the double the Polish one, but the difference steadily diminished.¹⁵ A monetary reform in 1924 succeeded in getting inflation in Poland under control. A new currency was introduced, the zloty, and the fact that 30 per cent of its value was sustained by gold or foreign exchange engendered the prospect of economic stabilisation.¹⁶ However, merely a year later, German statesmen imposed a tariff on Polish products and suspended the import of Silesian coal, after which the Polish government abolished the tax relief for goods imported from Germany. Since Polish Upper Silesia was more dependent on industry than the rest of Poland, these measures hit the region hard, and while the new market for Silesian coal in Scandinavia mitigated the damage, it could not undo it.¹⁷ Later in the 1920s, Germany agreed to more favourable import and export rates, but soon afterwards the global financial crisis reached Poland.¹⁸ Whereas German decision-makers devalued the mark in the early 1930s, Polish bankers never relinquished the gold standard for the zloty in an attempt to remain attractive for foreign capital and be able to pay off its foreign debts.¹⁹ These developments caused Polish products to lose their competitiveness on the German market, and brought about a reduction in Polish government spending. As a result, in 1933, Polish exports were at 38 per cent of where they had been in 1928.²⁰

The economic conflict over Upper Silesia ended in 1934, when Germany needed raw materials in order to build up its economic power, and all zinc mines lay on the Polish side of the Upper Silesian border.²¹

A close look at the school chronicle of the bilingual school in Lubliniec shows us how relief measures now launched in the name of the Polish and German nations dwarfed the efforts of previously established grassroots aid initiatives. Children attending the German-speaking branch were wealthier, better clothed, and therefore less ill during winter than pupils enrolled in the Polish-speaking branch. Moreover, the girls in the Polish-speaking branch were more often absent than boys because they needed to help at home.²² In order to reduce the number of absences of pupils attending Polish-speaking branches, Silesian authorities provided material support.²³ By the end of the 1920s, during the economic recession, a third of all such children in Polish Upper Silesia received food for free.²⁴ Another important product distributed through Polish aid programmes was shoes.²⁵

These relief measures were initially small, if compared to the aid offered by local pro-German welfare organisations supported by German state subsidies, such as the Association for Germanness Abroad (*Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland* – hereinafter VDA).²⁶ This organisation initially arose in the 1880s, ceased to exist during the First World War, and resumed work in 1925 in order to promote German culture abroad. The phantom pain caused by Germany's loss of territory, as well as the decrease in birth rates within the Weimar Republic, generated social support for the investment of German tax money in the education of children abroad.²⁷ From 1926 onwards, the *Volksbund* became an active distributor of aid, not least within German-speaking schools.²⁸ Outdoing German aid providers became an important aim for Silesian authorities, one they managed to achieve. The coordinator of the German school association in Polish Upper Silesia, Andreas Dudek, wrote in 1935 that its budget was smaller than the 77,700 Polish zloty of their Polish competitor.²⁹

On the other hand, borderland pupils crossing the state border line in order to receive their education in German Upper Silesia were perceived as more of a challenge than they really were. There was no incentive for inhabitants in Polish Upper Silesia to receive their education in Polish across the border because, as has been shown in the previous chapter, education in Polish there was provided merely to fulfil the requirements of the Geneva Convention and lacked initiators and leaders. Given the political pressure on the German-speaking school system in Polish Upper Silesia, there could have been an incentive for inhabitants of Polish Upper Silesia to send their children to a German-speaking school in German Upper

Silesia, but three factors impeded most children from doing so. The reason most well documented in archival sources is that Polish state officials prevented borderland pupils from crossing by means of control measures. Despite the fact that Polish Upper Silesia boasted the highest percentage of children fulfilling their school obligations within the Polish Second Republic, and that the Geneva Convention guaranteed pupils' right to receive education abroad, school principals needed to keep detailed records of school absences. Parents were penalised for these absences not out of a concern that their children would remain illiterate, but because children's 'souls' were not to be 'stolen'.³⁰ In addition, policemen searched for children who had started education in Germany without having been given the permission of Silesian authorities.³¹ In the bilingual school of Lubliniec, one such case was eventually brought to court. The mother of Ernest and Helena Rataj was found guilty and fined the equivalent of a third of an assistant teacher's monthly salary. When she was unable to pay, she was imprisoned for four days.³²

Although sources do not document this as accurately, the fact that children needed to work in their after-school hours may well have been a more prevailing reason for not attending primary schools across the state border line. Every member of the family had his or her tasks on the farm, Józef Ulfik observed in his elaborate chronicle of life in the village of Koszęcin.³³ However, children workers seem to have been recruited orally instead of through local newspapers. It would not be a cowherd or domestic servant, the most common types of child workers, who responded to a rare job announcement for an office boy in the Lubliniec weekly newspaper but someone 'from a good Polish family and with sufficient education'.³⁴ Domestic service and farm work appear to have remained undocumented. Child workers only appear in archival sources when something extraordinary happened, such as when the three-year-old child of a master plumber in Lubliniec fell into a barrel full of water because the domestic servant had not been paying enough attention, with the child having to be rescued by two eleven-year-old girls passing by, an incident mentioned in one of the biggest newspapers of the German national minority in Polish Upper Silesia, the *Kattowitzer Zeitung*.³⁵

Another reason to prefer a Polish education in Polish Upper Silesia to a German education in German Upper Silesia was the hope among Silesian inhabitants that they were now living in a socially just country in which they no longer had to assimilate to the culture of their German-speaking superiors in order to be able to advance professionally.³⁶ It was believed that more people holding a degree in higher education were needed in order to establish a Polish-speaking intelligentsia in the borderlands.³⁷

Whereas secondary school education had previously been reserved for the wealthy, it could now be enjoyed by socially underprivileged children.³⁸

The Regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy

Because Belgian politicians played an ambivalent role in the international appeasement during the Locarno talks in the middle of the 1920s, the Belgian-German state border line was also challenged, and although its physical location remained in place, its meaning did change considerably for the inhabitants of the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy. In addition, since Belgium was and remained in a better economic position than Germany, the financial and material support sent in from Germany for borderland children could not seriously challenge the Belgian educational system, as it did in Polish Upper Silesia. And although borderland children were not hindered in receiving their education on the other side of the state border line, as the borderland children of Polish Upper Silesia were, few actually went. Each of these three aspects will now be examined more closely.

The Belgian National Bank had set a disadvantageous exchange rate for the German occupation marks issued during the First World War in the belief that the cost would soon be paid by Germany, but no international support was found in Versailles in order to regulate this pending issue. Belgian politicians therefore secretly asked Stresemann to resolve Belgium's monetary situation in exchange for the retrocession of the German language zone of Eupen-Malmedy.³⁹ Stresemann offered 200 billion German gold marks for the region.⁴⁰ The negotiations leaked out and caused an international uproar because it had not been foreseen in Versailles that states would redraw their borders voluntarily. French state representatives argued that Germany's western borders were the safeguard of Europe's political stabilisation and succeeded in annulling the deal.⁴¹ These negotiations also caused an uproar within the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, not least because one of the Belgian statesmen in favour of the retrocession, Léon Delacroix, had welcomed the regions within the Belgian Kingdom in his former capacity of Prime Minister.⁴² In 1929, the idea of retrocession re-emerged during talks about the reparation debts Germany owed to Belgium after the First World War, but it was swept from the table.⁴³ Two years later, a new strategy for Belgium's military defence was implemented, prescribing that in the case of a German attack, the kingdom would not defend its eastern state border line but settle for the defence of the lands up to the Meuse and Scheldt rivers, thereby voluntarily giving up three Wallonian provinces, including the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy. Having been heavily discussed

in the media for the next two years, this strategy was changed to a defence of Belgium's state border lines in 1933.⁴⁴ All these measures caused deep confusion among borderland inhabitants about the kind of integration Belgian state representatives had in mind.

Compared to the prospect of a change in state sovereignty, the financial aid for borderland children being sent in from Germany was less of a disturbing factor in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy than it was in Polish Upper Silesia. The average GDP per capita remained significantly higher in Belgium than in Germany until the 1930s.⁴⁵ In 1926, the Belgian government launched a monetary sanitation programme, which restored the competitiveness of Belgian companies and led to an economic boom.⁴⁶ Local businesses in Eupen-Malmedy benefitted from the improved economic situation, thanks to which the tariffs Germany introduced in 1925 did not put a burden on their activities, as was the case in Polish Upper Silesia. The financial crisis at the end of the 1920s, however, hit Belgium – an export country par excellence – particularly hard. At the deepest point of the recession, in 1931–1932, up to 40 per cent of insured employees were unemployed.⁴⁷ It was only during this recession that Belgian politicians began to complain that the Treaty of Versailles had done little to assist Eupen-Malmedy with its economic transition.⁴⁸ The tariff barrier Germany erected during the world economic crisis especially disturbed the borderlands; local businesses appeared unable to reorient their export flows during recession.⁴⁹ Belgian politicians ran budget deficits in order to offer relief measures to Belgian citizens. These support measures were relatively higher than in Poland and Germany and made the Belgian regime more attractive among inhabitants in the new borderlands.⁵⁰ The German tax money sent over the state border line could not yet compete with that attractiveness on a mass scale; nevertheless, it planted some seeds. Supported by a yearly budget of around 60,000 German marks, organisations tied to Germany started to blossom in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy after the abolition of the Baltia regime.⁵¹ The goal of the biggest of these organisations, the Heimatbund, illustrates just how intermingled culture and politics had become. Upon its founding in 1926, it aimed to promote 'cultural and thus also political *Selbsthilfe*' (self-help) for borderland inhabitants, including children.⁵²

It thus needs to be underlined that the economic reality in Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, and therefore also the living conditions of borderland pupils, were substantially different. Instead of archival documents about the distribution of shoes among poor pupils, in the city archive of Eupen, we find a document issued by a school principal in 1931, reporting that he sent some of his pupils home because they had turned up at school wearing sandals without socks.⁵³

The third phenomenon, the cross-border mobility of borderland pupils, was approached differently in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy than in Polish Upper Silesia. Since the Belgian-German border had been secured by the Locarno Treaties, Herman Baltia's ban on attending primary schools in Germany was lifted in 1928. Now that Belgium's eastern borderlands were an integral part of the Belgian state, moreover, the right of guardians to choose their children's school needed to be guaranteed.⁵⁴ Belgian authorities did not question these choices or require schools to keep detailed lists of school absences. Nor did Belgian policemen penalise parents for sending their children to a school across the state border line. And while for those borderland pupils in and around Malmedy who preferred their education in French, a primary school in Germany was, by definition, not an option, there were a couple of factors that diminished the appeal of attending a primary school in Germany for borderland pupils who wanted their education in German.

Aside from the better economic situation in Belgium, the mentality of rural borderland inhabitants made such a crossing less likely.⁵⁵ Work was an essential part of the everyday life of many borderland children, and the legal demarcation line between a schoolchild (six to fourteen years of age) and a working child was somewhat blurred in practice. In interviews conducted with adults who grew up in the late 1920s and 1930s, many respondents recalled how their parents taught them the virtue of work from early on.⁵⁶ In the regional journal *Sankt Vither Zeitung*, advertisements for young male and female cowherds, who took care of the cattle in their hours after school and during harvest season, were regularly printed.⁵⁷ A second reason can be found in the lack of any prospect of social advancement through an education in German. The largest and most prestigious secondary school in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, the Bishop's College in Eupen, for example, witnessed only sixty-eight pupils successfully finishing their school curriculum between 1924 and 1936.⁵⁸ The training provided by the Bishop's College was intended to reinforce the distance between social and confessional classes by reducing the number of secondary school degree holders in comparison to Prussian times in order to guarantee a consolidation of Catholic order.⁵⁹

In sum, the Polish-German and Belgian-German state border lines drawn in the aftermath of the First World War were challenged by the course of the state border line and its meaning in terms of border security, transnational flows of relief measures and cultural support for borderland pupils, and the pupils crossing the state border line in order to receive their education in Germany. In Polish Upper Silesia, it was primarily the transnational flow of material and financial support that posed the greatest challenge to the Silesian authorities, leading to an intensive arms race in spending

on relief measures for borderland pupils. In the regions of Eupen and Sankt Vith, by contrast, the secret negotiations over a possible retrocession provoked deep confusion among borderland inhabitants. The historian Victor O'Connell has come to the ostensibly paradoxical conclusion that for as long as Baltia was spreading his quasi-colonial rule over Belgium's eastern borderlands, there was at least a policy for these regions, whereas from the moment they were fully administratively integrated within the Belgian Kingdom, their future was in the hands of politicians often acting opportunistically in order to keep their own heads above water within the fragile and rapidly changing coalition governments.⁶⁰ Crossing the state border line to receive a primary education was not a major phenomenon in either of the borderlands at the time, not primarily because borderland pupils were prevented from crossing, but because they needed to take up work after school.⁶¹

Immaterial Reality: Ideas on Education and Language

After an investigation of the different ways in which the state border lines through which Polish Upper Silesia and Eupen-Malmedy came into existence were challenged in the mid-1920s, this chapter moves on to an analysis of the negotiations between institutions, teachers, parents and children over language learning through 'immaterial reality'.⁶² In order to understand the role of ideas on education and language within the language learning policies and practices of relevance for the two borderlands, the reader first needs to be introduced to the discussions taking place at the national level. In the second half of the 1920s, governments in both Poland and Belgium were indeed discussing their ideas on education and language for primary school children, although they had not yet managed to formulate or implement them. Within these discussions, the inhabitants of Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy complicated the matter by exposing just how fragmented the Polish Second Republic and the Belgian Kingdom actually were.

Poland

During the first years of the Second Polish Republic, coalition governments succeeded each other too rapidly to enable the implementation of a programme of national or state upbringing, but that changed in the spring of 1926 when Piłsudski staged a coup promising to 'sanitise' political culture: to save it from corruption and to re-establish economic stability.⁶³ Paradoxically enough, the man who had stood up against anti-democratic

forces during and in the aftermath of the First World War now started to make use of such forces in order to consolidate his so-called Sanacja regime.⁶⁴ The kind of authoritarianism Piłsudski developed over the following years has been referred to as 'extra-constitutional' because executive power gradually hollowed out constitutional rights.⁶⁵ Schools became important instruments in the hands of the state enabling the training of a new generation of future citizens who shared Sanacja ideology.

Some leading scientists at the time supported Sanacja ideology. They strove to create primary schools where pupils were to discover their individual capacities in order to support and further develop the norms of the new state.⁶⁶ In his book *The Sociology of Education*, published in 1928, Florian Znaniecki stated that education was 'an activity seeking to influence people's behaviour'.⁶⁷ He considered it a matter of the utmost importance to let children discover and develop their creative capacities. In working together, these creative individuals would then be able to form a society capable of dealing with its own problems.⁶⁸ The pedagogue Henryk Rowid published a book about the 'creative school' in 1926, which was mainly based on Helen Parkhurst's Dalton Plan, and aimed to develop pupils' social skills and foster their feelings of responsibility for the community.⁶⁹ He was paid by the Polish Ministry of Education to make the newest pedagogical insights from around the world available to Polish teachers by editing pedagogical journals and lecturing at summer schools for Polish teachers.⁷⁰ According to another influential pedagogue at the time, Zygmunt Mysłakowski, the new Polish state could only be built on the basis of the rich cultures of non-Polish speakers.⁷¹

During the brainstorming process to establish suitable pedagogical methods for pupils in the Second Polish Republic, Polish Upper Silesia hardly played a role. The border region did not turn into a laboratory where creative propositions emerged on how the traditions and practices of non-Polish and bilingual speakers could be employed in order to raise pupils who would embody the virtues of the Sanacja regime. A good example is the Pedagogical Institute (Instytut Pedagogiczny) erected in Katowice in 1928 with the purpose of disseminating new pedagogical ideas among teachers in Polish Upper Silesia. In the first years of its existence, it published translations of Western pedagogical works, such as the Belgian guidebook *Towards a Reformed School. A First Step*,⁷² but it would take until the 1930s before the work of Polish scientists reached Silesian primary schools and research on education within Silesian schools would be conducted.

In Polish Upper Silesia, the political camp of the Endecja, the National Democrats, resisted reform pedagogy. The new governor Michał Grażyński, who originated from Galicia and had been active in the Sile-

sian Uprisings, made use of his increased capacity for decision-making following the change in Poland's state structure after the coup to develop an educational policy rooted in *Endecja* ideology.⁷³ Although he was a supporter of the *Sanacja* regime, Grażyński was able to introduce a policy that in practice resembled an *Endecja* policy in the only region in the Second Polish Republic enjoying autonomous decision-making over educational matters. The political conflict at the time was indeed not only an ideological one but also a spatial one rooted in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century activities of Polish national movements. Whereas the *Endecja* had been the dominant Polish-minded political movement in Prussia (and later the German Empire), the political factions which later grouped together in the *Sanacja* camp had developed their activities within the Russian Empire (more precisely in the Kingdom of Poland) and the province of Galicia within the Habsburg Empire.⁷⁴ In the particular context of Polish Upper Silesia, *Sanacja* policy bore many similarities to *Endecja* policy.

Michał Grażyński did, however, make use of the *Sanacja* practice of governing to flout the rule of law. This allowed him to accelerate the Polonisation of national minorities. Grażyński also tried to break the hegemonic position of the Roman Catholic Church in Polish Upper Silesia, thereby repudiating the *Endecja*'s stance on religion. The Catholic Church manifested itself as an increasingly fierce antagonist of liberal concepts of education, especially after Pope Pius XI spoke against pedagogical neutrality in 1929.⁷⁵ While clergymen found support for their resistance among the National Democrats in the rest of Poland, in Polish Upper Silesia this support was not forthcoming. Grażyński's obsession transformed Wojciech Korfanty, the leader of the largest party in the Silesian Parliament, into a popular precursor of regional and religious autonomy.⁷⁶ In the Lublinieć district, as was the case in Polish Upper Silesia in general, Korfanty's party enjoyed more political support than Grażyński's.⁷⁷ Although this did create a power battle between the governor and parliament, national, linguistic and religious tensions increasingly began to be resolved outside participative bodies of decision-making by Grażyński, who was gradually turning into a local autocrat, and protests against his decisions aired at the Mixed Commission, the League of Nations, and the International Court in The Hague.⁷⁸

Belgium

Whereas political discussions about language learning in Poland concentrated on competing ideas of education, in Belgium, they focused primarily on the use of language. The unpleasant legacy of collaborationism

during the First World War had silenced the political aspirations of Flemish nationalists for almost a decade, but in the late 1920s they put their minimum programme again on the agenda. In 1928, a law on language use within the army was approved. It introduced monolingual (French-, Dutch- or German-speaking) war units and required army officers to be bilingual (in French and Dutch) but continued to position French as the sole language of command.⁷⁹ The law came about through arduous compromise-oriented negotiations in the coalition government. As a result, Catholic and liberal circles began to contemplate an alternative to mass democracy, one in which Flemish nationalism and socialism would be prevented from further influencing political practice.⁸⁰ The threat of Flemish nationalism increased when August Borms, a Flemish collaborationist who had been sentenced to life in prison, won an interim election for a seat in the Antwerp city council following the death of his predecessor. His election was, however, abrogated in the run-up to the parliamentary elections of 1929 because it had taken place before the discussion in the Belgian Chamber of Representatives over a proposed law to annul the sentences of collaborationists, a majority of whom were Flemish. Afraid that Flemish nationalists would benefit from the tumult, the socialist opposition party published a blueprint for a framework on the use of languages: *Le Compromis des Belges*. While the monolingual status of Wallonia needed to be preserved, Flanders was to be given bilingual status, and the decennial *talentelling* (language survey) would determine the language status of Brussels and municipalities situated along language borders.⁸¹

Out of fear that political representatives of the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy would complicate political decision-making within the Belgian Parliament and Senate, borderland inhabitants, while entitled to participate in elections, were denied favourable conditions of representation. This decision was made after the new national government revoked the border region's autonomous status in 1925 and prescribed its inclusion into the province of Liège, despite Herman Baltia's conviction that it would take at least two decades to integrate Eupen-Malmedy into the Belgian Kingdom.⁸² The socialist party in particular considered it no longer acceptable that the Belgian Kingdom included an autonomous entity entirely left to the devices of a High Commissioner, against whose decisions the Belgian government had no right to appeal, and expressed the fear that denying borderland inhabitants the right to participate in political decisions would fuel irredentism.⁸³ The regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy were included in the voting district of Verviers, and 75 per cent of local voters would need to opt for the same candidate in order to see him elected.⁸⁴ Mainly thanks to the votes of the newest cohort of Belgian voters, Marc Somerhausen, born in the vicinity of Brussels as the son of a

German lawyer, who had completed his studies at the German school in Brussels, spent the war years outside the country, and joined the Belgian Socialist Party in the early 1920s, was elected for two terms (1925–1929 and later 1932–1936). Through an interpellation in the Belgian Parliament in March 1927, he requested a plebiscite on self-determination in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy. The discussion following his request exposed the difference of opinion within the coalition government between the Catholic and Socialist parties.⁸⁵ While the Catholic Party did not consider the socialist Marc Somerhausen entitled to speak for an almost exclusively Roman Catholic region, his party colleague Louis Piérard was convinced the inhabitants of the region of Malmedy were ‘true Walloons’ and would therefore have to be interrogated separately.⁸⁶

The region’s administrative inclusion into the province of Liège caused the inhabitants of the German-speaking language zone to fear their right to education in German could no longer be guaranteed. Although Baltia’s special measures were abolished and the right to administer local primary schools and appoint teachers was, as a result, transferred to city councils, school inspectors could still use one of the exemption clauses in the 1914 educational law allowing them to change the language of education to the dominant language in the children’s social environment if they considered that language had changed. This is precisely what happened in the Walloon municipalities where German had ceased to be offered as the main language of instruction in the nineteenth century but had started to be taught in again after the First World War. In the mid-1920s, school inspectors recommended changing the language of instruction back to French.⁸⁷

It should be clear by now that inhabitants from the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy faced a power structure in which their opportunities for political decision-making were extremely limited. Borderland inhabitants opted for two power strategies in order to challenge these conditions. The first strategy was to try to change their status within the Belgian Kingdom through the ballot box, such as in the parliamentary elections of 1929. Borderland inhabitants founded their own political party, the Christian People’s Party (Christliche Volkspartei), which demanded a new consultation on self-determination. Together with the revisionist Belgian Workers’ Party (Parti Ouvrier Belge), who proposed a secret plebiscite, they received 75 per cent of the vote.⁸⁸

In these national elections, the Socialist Party’s *Compromis des Belges* did not bring it the success it had hoped for. The Catholic-Liberal coalition government led by the Catholic statesman Henri Jaspar, which had ruled the country since the end of 1927, returned to office but saw its Flemish nationalist wing strengthened.⁸⁹ The second power strategy lay in the hands of local city councils, which were eager to exploit their power in

decision-making over primary education. This power strategy will be elaborated upon further in this chapter.

Material Reality: Battles over Language Learning Regulations

We will now see how borderland inhabitants developed power strategies within the power structure in which they operated at the time in order to not only articulate their dissatisfaction, but also maximise the language learning opportunities for borderland pupils. Notwithstanding the fact that Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy displayed different systems of power, the carving out of the contours of primary education intensified in both borderlands in the second half of the 1920s. This phenomenon took the form of negotiations over language learning between state institutions at various levels of decision-making, on the one hand, and parents, teachers and children, on the other. An abundance of regulations was introduced to steer the language learning conditions of borderland pupils. In Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, there were similar attempts to reduce teaching in an unwanted language, either by closing down schools offering teaching in a specific language or by influencing when foreign language teaching needed to be introduced into the school curriculum. Given the prevalent assumption in Poland that one nation correlated with one language, more attention was paid to the former measure in Polish Upper Silesia, whereas in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, more importance was paid to the latter.

We will now discuss successively the interactions of human beings in the creation, implementation and alteration of regulations concerning the closure of specific primary schools, as well as the (foreign) language learning on offer in borderland primary schools. A deep analysis of the conflicts, division lines and how these changed will reveal how the borderlands became focus points of excessive power struggles, where interpretations of the inside and the outside could either be expressed, and possibly altered, or were prohibited from being articulated.⁹⁰ Despite the collective obsession with developing an abundance of rules for the language learning of borderland pupils in their primary schools, however, it proved impossible to prevent legal normativity from crumbling. As a result, both Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy became the places where the meaning of what was to be shaped as national space collapsed.⁹¹

Attempts to Close Primary Schools

Whereas there were 69 German-speaking schools in Polish Upper Silesia in 1923/24, by 1927 that number had risen to 100.⁹² By that time, it had become clear to the Volksbund and Silesian authorities that borderland children who did not speak German, or spoke it poorly, were applying to attend German-speaking schools. While the Volksbund explained this practice as resulting from the better quality of education on offer in German-speaking schools, Silesian authorities saw instead a violation of supranational law and decided to check the school applications of guardians of borderland pupils.⁹³ This provoked a battle over school applications that would last until Germany left the League of Nations in 1933. Some formulations in the Geneva Convention concerning the criteria children needed to fulfil to belong to a minority had been phrased rather imprecisely. In Article 106 it was written that minority schools were to be established if the guardians of forty children belonging to a linguistic minority supported their establishment, and in Article 131 that the language of a child was determined by the declaration of a guardian. The Convention explicitly stated that this declaration was not to be verified or disputed by authorities. Nor was the question whether a child belonged to a linguistic minority (covered in Article 74).⁹⁴ The Silesian authorities' decision to ask guardians to accompany their children's school applications with a formal declaration about the language of the child provoked the Mixed Commission to pronounce in favour of a subjective interpretation of what it meant to be a national minority, which nevertheless explicitly went beyond the dictates of the Geneva Convention: 'It would be a mistake in educational terms to teach children who do not understand the German language in a German school.'⁹⁵ Michał Grażyński was not willing to accept this outcome and asked the League of Nations to acknowledge that the language of a child mentioned in Article 131 referred to a child's mother tongue, not to the language used in school. His appeal provoked the decision of the League of Nations, in March 1927, to begin directly intervening in educational policy in Polish Upper Silesia. It decided to temporarily organise a language committee under the lead of a neutral pedagogue, testing the language knowledge of those children who Polish authorities considered did not know German well enough to benefit from receiving education in that language.⁹⁶ This decision went against the right of guardians to choose a school for their children and was motivated by the need to guarantee pedagogical quality in borderland primary schools.⁹⁷

This was the moment in time when the struggle began over the closure of the public German-speaking primary school in the village of Koszęcin in the Lubliniec district. Silesian authorities attempted to abolish the dis-

trict's last existing public German minority school in 1927. Based on the Geneva Convention, a public minority school could be closed if the number of pupils fell below forty for three full school years in a row.⁹⁸ Since the opening of the school in 1924, the guardians of more than forty pupils had applied each year to have their children attend the school, but the number of applications approved by Silesian authorities had always been lower. In 1927, teachers and parents became embroiled in a battle over the survival of the school's public status. A detailed description of that battle here serves to illustrate how language operated as the decisive marker for representatives of both the Polish and German nations. The battle shows how an ensemble of social relations at the time led to an obsessive search to define the language of borderland children, until the meaning of their search got lost amid the turmoil of the myriad control measures issued by supranational, national and regional institutions, as well as the impassioned protests of the participants themselves. It became apparent that language was as much of an imaginary construct as nations were.⁹⁹

Thirty children were allowed to attend the school in 1927, while guardians of an additional eighteen pupils saw their applications rejected. School representatives went to the Mixed Commission, which declared that eight applications had been rightly rejected by Silesian authorities, but that ten had been evaluated incorrectly. In three cases, the Mixed Commission demanded that Silesian authorities respect the documented consent of the absent family father mothers had provided.¹⁰⁰ The Mixed Commission cited here the Geneva Convention, which had stated that only fathers were legally responsible for their children's education and left mothers without the right to apply for a school for their children.¹⁰¹ Five other children, the Mixed Commission concluded, could join the school after they had passed the language exam the League of Nations had just decided to introduce.¹⁰² A Swiss pedagogue, Wilhelm Maurer, was to decide whether a child was capable of receiving education in German.¹⁰³ The five children of the Koszęcin school all passed that exam in 1927.¹⁰⁴

Polish and German nationalists quarrelled in particular over the applications of Jan and Gertruda Noczyńska, as a positive decision would allow the public German-speaking school of Koszęcin to stay open. The father of these siblings had applied to have his children taught in the minority school, but their mother had withdrawn that application without the knowledge of her husband. In the meantime, the husband had left without leaving a trace. Silesian authorities were of the opinion that her case resembled that of unmarried mothers. Silesian authorities had provided unmarried mothers with a tutor to decide the education of their children. These tutors were chosen without consulting the mothers and often enrolled the children in schools following the Polish-language cur-

riculum. The practice was put under scrutiny by the Mixed Commission, which concluded that unmarried mothers were entitled to apply to a minority school for their children independently.¹⁰⁵ According to Silesian authorities, the mother of the Noczyńska family had the authority to sign a resignation form for her children. The Volksbund, however, accused Silesian authorities of blackmailing her and took their grievance to the Mixed Commission.¹⁰⁶ The mother was called up and testified to the Mixed Commission that it was her own independent decision to withdraw the applications for her two children.¹⁰⁷ The Mixed Commission concluded that thirty-eight pupils were entitled to attend the Koszęcin school, as a result of which the school lost its public funding.

Teachers at the Koszęcin school asked the Mixed Commission to look at the cases of four pupils from the previous year. The pupils had started their education at the school while waiting for the decision of the Silesian authorities over their school applications. Their applications were eventually rejected and the children were denied the right to continue their education. However, the Mixed Commission stated these pupils should be allowed to finish the school year and then take a Maurer language test, which the four pupils did, and one passed.¹⁰⁸ How must it have felt for the three children to receive their test results? Their fathers had declared them to be German speakers and they had followed a year of instruction in a German-speaking school. But the Swiss pedagogue now told them they had not mastered German well enough to benefit from further education in that language and decided a Polish-speaking school met their language demands more accurately. Every failed exam had vast implications. The new verdict of the Mixed Commission declared that the successful child was to be included among the pupils entitled to attend the German minority school of Koszęcin, thereby increasing its number of pupils to thirty-nine, but not to forty. The school lost its public funding.¹⁰⁹

A year later, parents responsible for fifty-one children applied to the school and demanded that public funding be regained. Polish authorities required each parent to fill in a school application, as well as a formal declaration form about the language of the child. They later approved twenty-five of the fifty-one applications and justified their restrictive behaviour on the basis of the first invocation of the Permanent Court at The Hague, which had meant to offer a longer-term outcome for the temporary Maurer exams.¹¹⁰ Whereas German representatives explained that the guardian was to choose a school for his children (based on Articles 74, 106 and 131 of the Geneva Convention), their Polish counterparts argued that the right to attend a school should be based on the factual language knowledge of the child (based on Article 9 of the Minority Treaty, which appeared in the Geneva Convention as Article 69). The international court decided

that the right to start a school was ‘une question de fait et non de pure volonté’ (a matter of fact and not purely of desire) and that applications to German-speaking schools from now on needed to be accompanied by formal declarations stating the mother tongue of the child. Furthermore, Polish authorities were not allowed to question these declarations.¹¹¹ As a result of this decision, the number of children enrolling at German-speaking schools in Polish Upper Silesia fell by 36 per cent over the next four years.¹¹²

Parents of the twenty-six pupils who were not approved complained to the League of Nations that Silesian officials had questioned the language declarations. Silesian authorities must have felt they had a high chance of losing the case because they did not wait for a decision; they invited guardians responsible for the twenty-six children to repeat the application procedure and again collected formal language declarations for the children. Of these guardians, sixteen decided to renew the application for their children, and Silesian authorities later approved four of these.¹¹³ But twenty-nine pupils still weren’t enough. As a result, Silesian authorities refused to give the school its public status back. The other parents wrote to the League of Nations demanding a justification for the rejection of twenty-two out of fifty-one applications.¹¹⁴

The rejections offer us a different picture to the one Polish and German nationalists wanted to see. A majority of parents, thirteen to be precise, did not feel comfortable filling in the formal language declaration for their children.¹¹⁵ Among these were seven fathers who wanted to declare their children bilingual and, when they were not given that possibility, refused to fill in the form. When they were later informed their refusal had made their application invalid, they started litigation against the Polish state.¹¹⁶ Rather than raising the issue with administrative decision-making bodies, they preferred to demand criminal justice in court, which indicates how little they trusted local and regional authorities. Their striving for a recognition of bilingualism found a deaf ear not only among Polish judges, who sentenced four of these fathers to two weeks in prison, but also among German nationalists.¹¹⁷ A reporter of a leading German-language newspaper published in Polish Upper Silesia portrayed the fathers as martyrs of German education: ‘Koszęcín, the name of an idyllic town in the Lubliniec district, is currently the name on everybody’s lips. It is inseparably linked with the faith of German *Volkstum* abroad. The men of this town, who leave prison today, where they had to spend two full weeks inside because of the German education of their children, are martyrs of their conviction and their sense of justice.’¹¹⁸ Alongside the thirteen fathers who did not fill in the declaration form, nine fathers declared they did not know what the language of their child was. Although Silesian authorities initially invalidated all their applications, some children were eventually allowed to

attend the school. The most telling case is that of a father applying in 1928 for three of his children who had taken the Maurer language exams a year earlier, when the Swiss pedagogue had considered two of the three siblings to not know German well enough to attend the German-speaking school, while declaring the third child bilingual.¹¹⁹ Here is a clear example of how the elaborated system set up to define the language of a child could not prevent meaning from collapsing. The system of power set up for Polish Upper Silesia was based on Wilhelm Maurer's ultimate decision about the prevailing language of a child. And yet, even he could not come up with a solution. Between the three children taking the Maurer test and the Polish authorities invalidating the applications of their father, however, the legal framework had changed. The first invocation of the Permanent Court at The Hague had replaced language tests by formal language declarations, but the Mixed Commission later decided that the declarations of parents should be given priority over the former negative decisions of Maurer in the future. It was recognised, however, that this measure could not immediately be put into practice, because children were considered unable to learn enough German in the year between these two decisions.¹²⁰ In 1930, parents of the so-called Maurer children raised the case again at the Mixed Commission, and their children were allowed to attend German-speaking schools, a decision Silesian authorities appealed against at The Hague, but in vain.¹²¹ In the end, the siblings were therefore allowed to attend the German-speaking school in Koszęcin, but that school had by then lost its public funding.¹²²

Based on Article 8 of the Minority Treaty, the German-speaking school of Koszęcin was able to continue to operate as a private school.¹²³ In 1935, the German-speaking private school of Koszęcin was one of twenty-two German-speaking private primary schools and one of thirty-two private schools in Polish Upper Silesia. In that year, there were 684 primary schools in Upper Silesia, of which 608 were Polish-speaking (598 public and 10 private), and 76 were German-speaking (54 public and 22 private).¹²⁴

Notwithstanding the switch in state sovereignty, money remained primarily in the hands of German citizens.¹²⁵ The private school in Koszęcin was owned and run by Karl Gottfried zu Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen, a German prince and the biggest landowner of the district.¹²⁶ In a considerable part of the Lubliniec district, the prince offered practically the only source of employment. While many local inhabitants who had supported the Silesian Uprisings had fostered the dream of living in a new independent Polish state, a state without German *Lords*, by the time Michał Grażyński was in power, however, it became clear that the jobs left by state officials of the German Empire were being filled by members of the Polish nobility imported from outside the region, who were not interested in the social

advancement of the local inhabitants.¹²⁷ With the global crisis hitting the region's economy and unemployment numbers shooting up at an unforeseen speed, the prince could guarantee parents job security and private loans, and their children warm breakfasts and a free ride to school.¹²⁸ In Koszęcin and its surroundings, state institutions had found a strong competitive legitimisation of power in the form of the prestige and the money of the prince. The school also enjoyed financial support from the German state.¹²⁹ After German nationals had left the civil service in Polish Upper Silesia, German statesmen saw in local landowners the last strongholds of German culture.¹³⁰ Money turned out to be an effective tool to counterbalance Polish nationalist strategies.

It could be argued that the French-speaking school in Eupen was the equivalent of the German-speaking school in Koszęcin. There was also an interest here in closing the school so as to diminish the influence of its language on the direct social environment. But the system of power in which this decision was taken differed. As explained earlier, given the fact that political representation of the Belgian eastern borderlands in the Belgian parliament was almost non-existent and municipalities held decision-making power over primary education, the city council of Eupen could put itself on the political map with decisions such as the closure of the municipal French-speaking school in order to challenge the flexibility of the country's system of power.

The city council of Eupen decided to close the French-speaking school and move the children to a newly opened French-speaking branch within one of its German-speaking primary schools. With the aim of creating a monolingual German-speaking zone, it wanted to close the school launched by Herman Baltia for the children of immigrating Belgian civil servants. Four days before his defeat in the municipal elections of October 1926, Léon Xhaffairé, who had been installed as mayor of Eupen by Herman Baltia before he left office, wrote to the Belgian minister responsible for education, out of anger at being overruled:

I believe, sir, that if the Belgian government wants to be soo [sic] correct that, if it respects the German language in everything, it also needs to respect the right of Walloon guardians to a French education for their children . . . Should these measures be carried out, it will soon be possible to say that the inhabitants of Eupen have incorporated the Belgians who came to live with them.¹³¹

In contrast to many other places in Belgium, French-speaking representatives did not hold a majority of the votes in the city council of Eupen. It was therefore possible to achieve in Eupen what was impossible in Dutch-speaking Flanders. Flemish nationalists applauded the decision in a leading newspaper: 'The liberated brothers of the beloved Eupen

taught the *franskiljons* a lesson.¹³² ‘Franskiljons’ functioned as a demeaning term for Flemish people favouring the usage of French in Belgium, but in this newspaper article the term referred to German-speaking Belgians privileging French. In the end, the closure was prevented by Camille Huysmans, the minister responsible for education, who argued that the school was the only operative French-speaking educational institute in the German-speaking zone. The overruling of a city council had previously been unheard of; the system of power in the Belgian Kingdom had reached the end of its flexibility.¹³³

At the same time, those guardians who, while identifying themselves as German speakers in Baltia’s language survey, wanted to send their children to the French-speaking school – in order to learn the dominant language of the Belgian nation – were also forbidden by the minister from realising their dreams.¹³⁴ Although these guardians had also been denied the right of free choice over the primary school for their children during the Baltia regime, after the dissolution of Eupen-Malmedy, at least one parent had nurtured the hope that his right to choose the education of his child would now be respected. In 1925, the city council in Eupen thwarted this hope. It demanded that the family move to the Roman Catholic parish to which the French-speaking school belonged.¹³⁵ It does not come as a surprise, then, that the city council was eager to support the minister in his prohibition one year later.¹³⁶ Whereas guardians all over Belgium had the right to choose a primary school for their children, either in Belgium or across Belgium’s state border lines, German-speaking guardians in Eupen were not entitled to send their children to the local French-speaking school.

Teaching a Foreign Language

Having dissected the battles over the closures of primary schools offering teaching in an unwanted language in the two case study borderlands, either in German in Polish Upper Silesia or in French in Eupen, we will now see how reducing teaching in an unwanted language could also be achieved by means of a second strategy: through foreign language training.

In 1926, the decision of Polish authorities to finally make use of a provision outlined in the Minority Treaty to require the state language to be taught in minority schools was also implemented in Polish Upper Silesia. It became the practice to offer pupils Polish from the third year in primary school onwards. This lasted until 1929, when the Polish Ministry of Education decided to postpone Polish language learning until the fifth year on the grounds that the children should have a good command of their

mother tongue first.¹³⁷ German minority organisations, in turn, asked Polish authorities in vain to begin teaching Polish earlier in German-speaking schools, arguing that German-speaking Polish citizens also needed to speak good Polish.¹³⁸

In a city like Eupen, by contrast, the dynamics in negotiations over foreign language learning were more complicated, as they referred to the detailed regulations and variety of practices in other places within Belgium at the time. By taking a stance on foreign language training, the city council of Eupen aimed to fight a battle about the kind of space it was to take within the Belgian Kingdom. The city council did not want to find itself in a similar situation to that of the schools in Brussels and municipalities on language borders because it had seen that the right to a German education had been reversed there in the first half of the 1920s. It therefore demanded the same status as Flanders, where language regulations had a permanent character. In 1926, it asked the Belgian minister responsible for education, the Flemish socialist Camille Huysmans, whether Baltia's special measure to start foreign language education in the first year remained in force after the region was integrated into the province of Liège. In a more detailed interpretation of Article 20 of the 1914 law, the minister adhered to the language regulations in Brussels and municipalities along language borders and suggested that a foreign language in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy could not be taught before the third year of primary school. All the schools were to erase it from their first- and second-year curricula. But the city council of Eupen decided to disregard the suggestion and to maximise the freedom provided by the Belgian municipality law. It voted to offer French in its German-speaking primary schools from the fifth year onwards for five hours a week, just as Dutch-speaking schools in Flanders did.¹³⁹ Nowhere else in Belgium did primary school teachers see the beginning of their second language training programmes change from the first to the fifth year in the course of only eight years.

Interestingly, the French-speaking school in Eupen also went against the ministerial suggestion.¹⁴⁰ The 1930–1931 school curriculum shows that pupils still had one hour of German conversation in their first year. The school started foreign language learning not only earlier than every other school in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, but also earlier than any other school in Belgium. Paradoxically enough, they kept in force a special measure that Baltia had introduced to make German speakers speak French, merely by introducing it in their school out of consistency.¹⁴¹

It is impossible to retrace the motivation behind this decision, as the school, including its archive, was set on fire during the German invasion in 1940.¹⁴² But if we compare its practice with what happened in

Polish Upper Silesia, its motives can be understood. Just as German minority organisations asked Polish authorities to start teaching children in German-speaking schools Polish earlier, because German-speaking Polish citizens also needed to speak good Polish, children in the French-speaking school were also to learn the prevailing language in their daily social environment, German, without endangering the dominant position of the French language. Such a supposition seems plausible and shows the school to be a forerunner of bilingualism in a country where other French-speaking schools had only occasionally started to offer Dutch on a voluntary basis from the fifth year. It is a more logical explanation than the improbable notion that a school set up for civil servants migrating to the border region decided to continue teaching in German from the first year (a consequence of Baltia's measure to nationalise borderland children by making them speak French) out of an indifferent stance towards the use of languages. Any argument, moreover, that a nation-state of the masses was to include children with different mother tongues in its ranks does not apply to this school, which was attended by the children of well-educated French-speaking parents.¹⁴³

Language Learning in Practice

The introduction of an abundance of regulations on the access of borderland pupils to schools within and beyond the borderlands, as well as the closure of certain schools, along with their (foreign) language learning, failed to comprehensively secure language learning conditions in Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt-Vith and Malmedy. Whereas in Polish Upper Silesia, Silesian authorities chose the power strategy of forceful domination in order to force improved conditions for Polish language learning upon primary schools, in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, Belgian state representatives put their hopes in the preventive power strategies that had come to consolidate the Belgian Kingdom throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in order to integrate borderland schools into the Belgian school system.

Polish Upper Silesia

In Polish Upper Silesia, both Polish and German nationalists displayed their interest in, and concern over, the everyday school context in which the language learning of borderland pupils took place. A journalist who wrote for the Polish nationalist newspaper *Western Poland* (Polska Zachodnia) visiting a primary school teacher on the occasion of a school festival in

Pawełki, a small village in the Lubliniec district, was full of admiration for the difficult job the Polish teacher was undertaking:

Cracks, holes, and full of mud, into which the axles of our carriage sank. Surely such a godforsaken backwater dump, and such a road as the one leading to Pawełki, can only be found somewhere in the tundra of deepest Siberia. . . . Here in this isolated spot a few kilometres from the German border, a Polish song was pealing out like a battle cry announcing to the enemy that we are vigilant, that we *won't forsake the land we come from*.¹⁴⁴ I was chatting for a while with the children. I was surprised that they were so daring, resolute and assertive, and the older ones could speak Polish with the correct pronunciation. 'What is your name?' I asked one kid, maybe six years old, with a nice rosy face. 'Zelfik,' he responded resolutely. 'Tell me, Zelfik,' I asked him, 'what did you get from Santa Claus?' 'A horse,' he replied enthusiastically. 'Maybe it was a cow?' I joked. 'No, the cow calved at Christmas time,' he said in his dialect. What a good-hearted kid! I left the village thrilled by this pioneer of Polishness in this godforsaken dump, but there was nothing to envy him.¹⁴⁵

In fact, teachers in Polish-speaking branches themselves called bilingualism, which 'still greatly flourishes at home and in the environment of the pupil', the reason for a majority of the children's inability to read and write at the end of their primary school education.¹⁴⁶ The Polish-based members of the Regional Association of German Teachers (*Landesverband Deutscher Lehrer und Lehrerinnen*), which professed itself the bearer of German culture, also had their doubts. In their periodical, for example, they published an essay of a child of fourteen who had attended a Polish-speaking school in order to openly lament the fact that the girl wrote German while using Polish orthography.¹⁴⁷

Provincial governor Michał Grażyński increased measures to gain more control over the language learning conditions of borderland pupils but met with resistance on all fronts. Soon, he faced battles over religion, teachers and textbooks. Religious space became the primary bone of contention between state officials and clergymen. In 1930, for example, local priests in the city of Lubliniec allowed the school inspectorate to inspect the school but refused entrance to the church where religious classes, often held in Silesian or in a mixture of German and Polish, were taught.¹⁴⁸ In 1931, on the other hand, a Polish priest in Koszęcin did not want to celebrate the first communion of children attending the private German-speaking minority school, even though these children were Roman Catholic.¹⁴⁹ Grażyński continued to prefer immigrating Polish teachers over local talent, but the Silesian Parliament was able to reduce that influx by voting in favour of requiring immigrating female teachers to leave the profession upon their marriage.¹⁵⁰

Grażyński also ordered new textbooks for his Polonisation campaign. The most well-known reading book for pupils in Polish Upper Silesia, *Our*

Readings (Nasze Czytanki), was compiled by Jan Żebrok, a teacher from former Galicia. The book was used in Polish and German teaching curricula, with the children in the latter having to read selective parts.¹⁵¹ This textbook was not a significant contribution to Zygmunt Mysłakowski's inclusive pedagogy of different cultures. Although the language was to be 'beautiful, but accessible and understandable, especially for youth living in Upper Silesia', Silesian was not to play more than an auxiliary role in order to enable pupils to learn proper Polish.¹⁵² Set out in the old-fashioned Galician pedagogical tradition, the book resembled an encyclopaedia, with texts from local newspapers, legends, Upper Silesian authors, and Polish literature classified from easy to more difficult.¹⁵³

In his self-composed story 'The Joy of School', Żebrok wrote from the perspective of a pupil:

In front of me sits Władek, whose father is an engineer. How beautifully he speaks Polish! Every once in a while, he says 'Of course!', 'Indeed!' or 'Yes, sir!'. You know, Dad, I really like it when somebody speaks Polish so beautifully. But I am also learning, because my teacher also speaks beautifully. And when I grow up, I will also be an engineer or an army officer. 'Why not?' said my father. 'You can be who you want to be, but you'll have to study hard! Thank

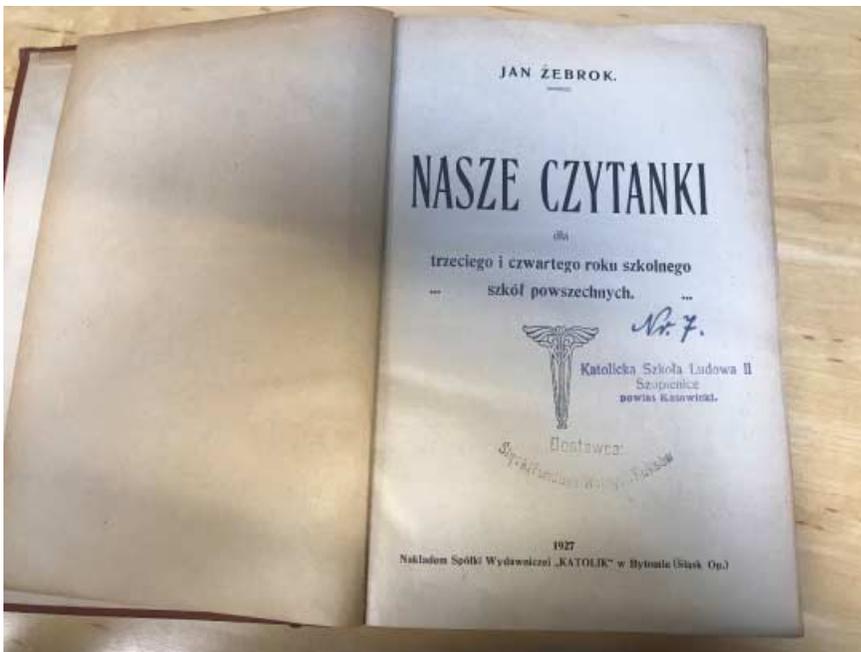


FIGURE 4.1. New textbooks, such as *Our Readings (Nasze Czytanki)* compiled by Jan Żebrok, were the most well-known products of the Polonisation campaign directed towards borderland pupils in Polish Upper Silesia in the late 1920s and early 1930s (copyright: The Silesian Library).

god we now have Polish schools, so the son of a blue-collar worker can become somebody better.¹⁵⁴

The textbooks of Grażyński's Polonisation campaign were highly unpopular. As parents were responsible for buying school textbooks, which many in times of economic hardship were unable to do, and with public financial support remaining limited, the distribution of these textbooks was limited.¹⁵⁵ When the teacher of a class preparing pupils for vocational school in Lubliniec (all aged between sixteen and eighteen) asked them to buy another textbook, *Polish Readings, part 1*, most only bought the book after the municipality administration made their parents pay fines of up to 3 PLN.¹⁵⁶ An unemployed father complained that the alphabet book he had bought for his son did not mention God: 'it is like writing a book without a dot on the letter i'.¹⁵⁷ Until 1932, most of the primary school textbooks in use in Polish Upper Silesia had been first published before 1918.¹⁵⁸

The Regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy

German nationalists also expressed their indignation that many of the primary teachers in the regions of Eupen and Sankt Vith had not mastered the German language well enough. This led to situations in which, for example, 'the children starting the third year know their mother tongue worse than they knew it in the first year'.¹⁵⁹ In the local press, it was reported that pupils laughed when they noticed their school inspector had not mastered German, and lamented: 'The form and face of the school are so often the face of a nation. As the school goes, so goes the country.'¹⁶⁰

In their approach towards the language learning of borderland pupils, Belgian politicians tended to endorse a continuation of the preventive power strategy and left the responsibility for education to the Catholic Church.¹⁶¹ The councils of Catholic-dominated individual municipalities within the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy were given the task of recruiting locally acceptable teachers, a strategy that eventually succeeded and led to the steady disappearance from newspapers of voices protesting against the quality of teaching.¹⁶² In addition, because the regions of Eupen, Sankt-Vith and Malmedy were mostly composed of traditional families, with a male breadwinner and a stay-at-home mother who looked after the children, in contrast to Polish Upper Silesia, there was little to debate.

We will end this chapter with the alphabet book we began this book with: Joseph Lousberg's *Fibel*, published in 1929.¹⁶³ The book was commissioned by the city council of Eupen following the decision of the Belgian minister responsible for education to forbid the import of textbooks from

Germany, owing to his belief that German historical narratives could endanger the upbringing of borderland pupils and that a majority of these books were not in accordance with the Belgian school curriculum. As is the case with Żebrok's reading book composed for borderland pupils in Polish Upper Silesia, Lousberg's book is not a culturally innovative creation. Instead, it is an eclectic mixture of elements from former Prussian textbooks, such as the Gothic alphabet and children's illustrations, as well as a Belgian letter-reading method of teaching the Latin alphabet. Far from comprehensive, the book did not make use of the best of the different teaching methods available. The anonymous pedagogue from the Rhineland, for example, called the book a missed opportunity to educate children through the method of art education (*Kunsterziehung*), which had flourished during the late years of the German Empire, because the images were not associated with the letters children were to learn.¹⁶⁴ The secretary general of the Christian People's Party in Eupen, Stephan Gierets, in turn remarked: 'Instead of introducing a German alphabet book here, [Lousberg] twisted the German alphabet book so much that everything is a mess and teachers can no longer do anything reasonable with it.'¹⁶⁵

Conclusion

This chapter concentrated on language learning in primary schools in the two case study borderlands in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Language learning played a pivotal role in the process of recurring order in the borderlands following changes to the state border line. This scaping of the border was analysed by means of key concepts from the framework of comparison presented in the second chapter. Through a reconstruction of systems of power in Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, with the help of the second (power and multiple loyalties) and third (micro history within a multilayered context) axes of comparison, we came to see how different the fragmented countries Poland and Belgium were at the time. Whereas in the new Polish state, power manifested itself through domination in an extra-legal constitutional regime, in the old Belgian Kingdom, it took the shape of well-known preventive measures to ensure social stability in times of political volatility. These systems of power worked out differently in the two borderlands. Whereas in Polish Upper Silesia, in times of economic hardship, Polish state representatives were capable of reducing but not erasing the loyalty of inhabitants to a German former prince, in the regions of Eupen and Sankt Vith, the political retrocession scandal taught inhabitants to remain sceptical towards the Belgian state.

The scaping of the border in primary schools through practices and discourses impregnated with power initially aimed to reduce the influence of an unwanted language within each of the two case study borderlands. Both borderlands, in addition, functioned as the physical spaces where debates were held or control measures were installed that generated an impact far beyond their geographical area. The concept of human territoriality (included in the first axis of comparison) enabled us to see how institutions, teachers and parents in both Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt-Vith and Malmedy steered discussions towards the contradictions within language learning policies in order to not only test but also bend the limits of a certain system of power. In both borderlands, the circulation of division within the system of power that obtained at the time in interwar Europe took a similar path.

The following similarities of borderland schooling were revealed during an analysis of language learning conditions and practices in Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy in the 1920s and the early 1930s. First, the systems of power applicable to Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy were more dependent on geopolitical and internal political changes than elsewhere in Poland and Belgium. In the mid-1920s, the systems of power applicable to Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy changed under the influence of changes in international cooperation and politics at a national level. Owing to the Locarno Agreements, Belgian state representatives needed to respect the stability of the German western border and could not sell the regions of Eupen and Sankt Vith to Germany. At the same time, the capability of the international order to protect Polish sovereignty in Polish Upper Silesia weakened.

Second, both Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy became the physical places where discussions were held over language learning that proved crucial for much wider social networks within Poland, Germany, Belgium and the League of Nations. It was in these border regions that an ensemble of human relations interacting with the material and immaterial reality of language learning combined to achieve the 'greatest possible autonomy', as Claude Raffestin described in his multi-perspective programme on human territoriality.¹⁶⁶

Borderland inhabitants were also eager to point out inconsistencies and contradictions within the system of power applicable to them because their positions turned out to be more negotiable than elsewhere in the country. In both borderlands, this resulted in a collective obsession to improve existing or introduce additional legal rules. As a consequence, borderland pupils experienced much more control than pupils growing up elsewhere. These control measures could not, however, prevent borderland schools

from experiencing the excesses of systems that defined a nation through its language. This was the case in Poland, Germany, and even Belgium, where French remained privileged over Dutch and German in language regulations for primary education.

The independent Swiss pedagogue Wilhelm Maurer was made responsible for indicating the prevailing language of Silesian children, but even he ended up defining children as being bilingual. Moreover, the French-speaking school in the German-speaking zone of former Eupen-Malmedy provided German language lessons from the first year onwards (the only school in Belgium to do so), despite an existing regulation opposing this practice. These are examples of how the outcome of the spiralling division of power was not a stable solution but a collapse of meaning. The kinds of solutions on offer differed. Whereas in Poland, authorities increased measures of control over language learning and fuelled battles over governance, in Belgium, local teachers were relied upon to combine traditionalism with pedagogical expertise in order to reduce tensions. In Germany, out of fear that the German nation would lose what it perceived as its children, science was used to pathologise bilingualism and to dismiss as inferior the German language teaching on offer in borderlands. Chapter five will show how systems of power changed when the League of Nations ceased to play a decisive role in Silesian school politics, how Polish and Belgian authorities took pains to bring new pedagogical methods to the borderlands, and how more attention was paid to the role of teachers in pupils' language learning.

Notes

1. Bjork, 'Monoglot Norms', 127.
2. Borodziej, *Geschichte Polens*, 133.
3. Murphy, 'Entente Territorial', 169.
4. Raffestin, 'Space', 121.
5. *Ibid.*, 123.
6. *Ibid.*, 183; Teubner, 'Fragmented', 327–41.
7. Linek, *Kulturelle Eliten*.
8. Brambilla, 'Critical Potential', 23.
9. Feyissa and Hoehne, *Borders*.
10. Dell'Agnese and Amilhat Szary, 'Introduction', 10.
11. Pawley, *Watch on the Rhine*.
12. Wandycz, *Twilight*, 19.
13. Fink, *Defending*, 295; Kolb, *Weimarer*, 195.
14. Mazower, 'Minorities', 51; Maxelon, *Stresemann*, 297.

15. The average GDP per capita in Germany was 3,331 USD in 1922 and 4,051 USD in 1929. The average GDP per capita in Poland was 1,382 USD in 1922 and 1,994 USD in 1929 (Broadberry and O'Rourke, *Cambridge Economic History*, vol. 2, 190).
16. Slay, *Polish Economy*, 16.
17. Borodziej, *Geschichte Polens*, 169.
18. Novikov, *Shades*, 206.
19. Slay, *Polish Economy*, 17.
20. Borodziej, *Geschichte Polens*, 177.
21. Greiner, 'Historia gospodarcza', 309ff.
22. In March 1926, for example, 21.34 per cent of the children attending the Polish teaching branch were reported absent, whereas only 6.3 per cent of the pupils in the German teaching branch were. In June 1926, however, around 6 per cent were reported absent within both teaching branches (ASPL, School Chronicle, Wykaz stanu szkoły powszechnej, Lubliniec, September 1926); APK, 1376/1269, 252 (Wykaz uczniów, który bez słusznego powodu lub bez usprawiedliwienia opuścili naukę szkolną w listopadzie 1926 r., Lubliniec, November 1926). See also *ibid.*, 430 (Odpis obowiązujących rozporządzeń w Województwie Śląskim w przedmiocie kar za opuszczenie nauki szkolnej, Lubliniec 29 October 1929); *ibid.*, 31 (Wykaz uczniów, którzy bez słusznego powodu lub bez usprawiedliwienia opuścili naukę szkolną w październiku r.b., Lubliniec, October 1926); *ibid.*, 366ff. (Lista kar za zaniedbywanie nauki szkolnej, Lubliniec, November 1928).
23. Regorowicz, 'Rozwój szkolnictwa', 64; Fałęcki, *Niemieckie szkolnictwo mniejszościowe*, 47–53; Górski, 'Organizacja', 184, 189. ASPL, School Chronicle (Statystyka według stanu z dnia 1 November 1926, Lubliniec, 25 November 1926).
24. Regorowicz, 'Rozwój szkolnictwa', 93ff.
25. APK, 1376/1186, 39 (Do Województwa Śląskiego przez pana radcę szkolnego Świerczka w miejscu, undated); APK, 1363/707, 3 (Protokół z posiedzenia Komitetu Gwiazdkowego gminy Kalety, Kalety, 18 December 1936).
26. Wanatowicz, 'Aktywność', 143; Eser speaks of 1,500 German marks of humanitarian aid for children in Polish Upper Silesia in 1926 and 77,700 Polish złoty in 1935 (Eser, 'Volk, Staat, Gott!', 385).
27. Raitz von Frentz, *A Lesson Forgotten*, 142–44.
28. *Ibid.*, 344.
29. Eser, 'Volk, Staat, Gott!', 385.
30. Quoted from APK, Insp. Szk. Kat., 177, Protokoły z. . . 17 January and 11 April 1929, 97–98, in Glimos-Nadgórska, *Polskie szkolnictwo*, 92.
31. APK, 1376/1269, 430 (Odpis obowiązujących rozporządzeń w Województwie Śląskim w przedmiocie kar za opuszczenie nauki szkolnej, Lubliniec, 29 October 1929).
32. APK, 1376/1269, 524 (Wyrok zaoczny w sprawie Anny Rataj, Lubliniec, 28 January 1931).
33. Ulfik, 'Rodowód', 32.
34. 'Rolnik Spl. Akcji w Lublińcu szuka ucznia biurowego', *Tygodnik Powiatowy na powiat lubliniecki*, 4, 28 January 1933, 146.
35. 'Zwei elfjährige Mädchen', *Kattowitzer Zeitung*, vol. 65, 144, 26 June 1933, 7.
36. Kopeć, 'My i oni', 17.
37. Wanatowicz, *Inteligencja na Śląsku*, 8 and 16.
38. Janik, 'Zespół Szkół', 10.
39. Grathwol, 'Germany', 221–24.
40. Lejeune, *Die Säuberung*, 28; O'Connell, 'Left to Their Own Devices', 18ff; Enssle, *Stressemann's Territorial Revisionism*.

41. Belgium and France had signed an agreement in 1920 that they would take up arms for each other in the event of a German invasion (Gerard, 'De democratie gedroomd', 946), but when Great Britain committed to provide military support, Belgium pushed its bilateral agreement with France into the background (Grathwol, 'Germany', 249; Bariety, 'La France', 61).
42. O'Connell, *Annexation*, 284.
43. Pabst, 'Eupen-Malmedy', 453.
44. Gerard, 'De democratie gedroomd', 952 and 1038–40.
45. The average GDP per capita in Belgium was 4,413 USD in 1922 and 5,054 USD in 1929. The average GDP per capita in Germany was 3,331 USD in 1922 and 4,051 USD in 1929 (Broadberry and O'Rourke, *Cambridge Economic History*, vol. 2, 190).
46. Gerard, 'De democratie gedroomd', 959.
47. *Ibid.*, 1044.
48. O'Connell, 'Left to Their Own Devices', 34.
49. Quadflieg, 'Elitenkontinuität', 113.
50. Klefisch, *Dritte Reich*, 119.
51. The figure is for the working year of 1928/29 (Lejeune, *Die Deutsch-Belgischen Kulturbeziehungen*, 126). One German mark in 1929 was worth 3.6 EUR in 2008 (*Deutsche Währungsgeschichte*).
52. Lejeune, *Die Deutsch-Belgischen Kulturbeziehungen*, 125.
53. SE, 661/55/168 (Auszug aus den Verhandlungen des Schöffengerichtes vom 7 July 1931, Eupen, 9 July 1931).
54. As will be shown in the section entitled 'Attempts to close primary schools' in this chapter, an exception was made for the French-speaking school in Eupen.
55. van Banning, *Gebiedsovergang*, 75.
56. See, for example, Gertrud Comès-Heinen, born in 1918 in Holzheim (Förderverein des Archivwesens in der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft Belgiens (Eupen), *In Stellung*, 35).
57. See, for example, 'Junge gesucht, der Melken kann', *Sankt Vithers Volkszeitung*, 6 June 1934, 4; 'fleißiges Mädchen oder Jungen die melken können gesucht', *Sankt Vithers Volkszeitung*, 21 April 1934, 10.
58. SE, X/168-8, 7, 3–4 (Rapport sur le Collège Patronné d'Eupen, Eupen, January 1936).
59. SE, E/2/8 VS II 91 30, 5 (Das College vom konfessionellen Standpunkt betrachten im Vergleich mit einem Athenäum); BABL, 1051, 36, unpagged (Von den Schulen Eupens, 1927, 3).
60. O'Connell, *Annexation*, 290.
61. DuVal, *Borderlands*, 3.
62. Raffestin, 'Space', 123.
63. Borodziej, *Geschichte Polens*, 124ff.
64. Suleja, 'Józef Piłsudski', 190.
65. Quote in Borodziej, *Geschichte Polens*, 164; See also Chernov, 'Joseph Piłsudski', 146–55.
66. Jakubiak, *Wychowanie*, 44–45; Sońnicki, *Podstawy*, 255–56.
67. Kojkoł, *Polska*, 32.
68. *Ibid.*, 37.
69. Rowid, 'Szkoly pracy'; Parkhurst, *Education on the Dalton Plan*.
70. Sobczak, *Nowe wychowanie*, 68; Rowid, *Szkola twórcza; Majewiczówna, 'Konferencja'*, 215.
71. Kojkoł, *Polska*, 139 and 142.
72. Decroly and Boon, *Vers l'école rénovéé*; Sobczak, *Nowe wychowanie*, 47.
73. Polak-Springer, *Recovered*, 41.
74. Müller and Struve, 'Einleitung', 35.

75. Jędrzejczak, 'Recepcja', 452.
76. *Ibid.*, 41; Kaczmarek, 'Zwischen Regionalismus', 175.
77. The party Wojciech Korfanty belonged to was called the Christian-National Labour Party (Chrześcijańsko-Narodowe Stronnictwo Pracy) before 1925, and the Polish Christian Democratic Party (Polskie Stronnictwo Chrześcijańskiej Demokracji) afterwards (BABL, 1529, fol. 307r (Gesamtbeurteilung, Katowice, 18 March 1939)); Polak-Springer, *Recovered*, 29. The party always received more votes than the representatives of Sanacja ideology led by Michał Grażyński (Wanatowicz, 'Województwo śląskie', 245). German political parties in Polish Upper Silesia, on the other hand, garnered 42 per cent of the vote in the 1926 municipal elections, and 18.4 per cent in the 1930 elections for the Silesian parliament, when Korfanty's party was heavily supported by German speakers. 18.4 per cent was still more than the number of German-minded local inhabitants (then estimated to constitute approximately one-seventh of the population), and has been interpreted as a sign of acclimatisation to Polish rule (Ther, 'Schlesisch', 183).
78. *Kattowitzer Zeitung*, 15 April 1926 and 18 March 1927; Chojnowski, *Koncepcje*, 113.
79. Brüll, 'Entre méfiance et intégration', 135–66; Gerard, 'De democratie gedroomd', 1023.
80. Gerard, 'De democratie gedroomd', 980 and 985.
81. *Ibid.*, 1021–23.
82. Pabst, 'Eupen-Malmedy', 322.
83. O'Connell, *Annexation*, 223.
84. Pabst, 'Eupen-Malmedy', 331; Lejeune, *Die Säuberung*, 29. Women in Belgium received the right to vote in 1948.
85. Brüll, 'Dazwischen-sein', 66.
86. Warny, *Belgiens wiedergefundene Brüder*, 160–256.
87. Wenselaers, *De laatste Belgen*, 76.
88. Lentz, *Wahlverhalten*, 333.
89. Wils, *Vlaanderen*, 380.
90. Mezzadra and Neilson, *Border as Method*, 183; Mohanty, *Feminism*, 2.
91. Price, *Dry Place*, 118; Teubner, 'Fragmented', 327–41.
92. Fałęcki, *Niemieckie szkolnictwo mniejszościowe*, 96; Tomiak, 'Education', 200.
93. Kneip, *Die deutsche Sprache*, 93.
94. Junckerstorff, *Schulrecht*, 59 and 96.
95. In Polish 'pisemne oświadczenia o języka dzieci'; in German 'Förmliche Erklärung über die Sprache des Kindes' (Gemischte Kommission für Oberschlesien, *Amtliche Sammlung*, vol. 2, 412–15; Fałęcki, *Niemieckie szkolnictwo mniejszościowe*, 71). See also 'Stellungnahme des Präsidenten der Gemischten Kommission vom 15. Dezember 1926', printed in Junckerstorff, *Schulrecht*, 101–2.
96. 'Die Resolution des Völkerbundsrats vom 12. März 1927', in Junckerstorff, *Schulrecht*, 104–6.
97. Kneip, *Die deutsche Sprache*, 95–96.
98. Geneva Convention, Article 106 (Kaeckenbeeck, 'Convention', 622).
99. Kamusella, *Isomorphism*, 79 and 89.
100. Gemischte Kommission für Oberschlesien, *Amtliche Sammlung*, vol. 3, 110.
101. Novikov, *Shades*, 101.
102. Eser, 'Volk, Staat, Gott!', 423–25.
103. Schot, *Nation oder Staat?*, 190.
104. APK, 27/304, 75 (Wydział Oświecenia Publicznego, dotyczy szkoły mniejszościowej w Koszęcinie, Katowice, 20 October 1927).
105. Novikov, *Shades*, 101–2.

106. Both Polish and German nationalists went from door to door when fathers were out at work in order to convince mothers to send their children to schools following their respective teaching programmes (Regorowicz, *Wspomnienia*, 91).
107. APK, 27/304, 115 (Deutscher Volksbund für Polnisch Schlesien in der Beschwerdesache Nr. 326 betreffend Auflösung der Minderheitsschule in Koszęcin, Katowice, 2 May 1928).
108. APK, 27/304, 87 (Deutscher Volksbund für Polnisch Schlesien in der Beschwerdesache Nr. 326 betreffend Auflösung der Minderheitsschule in Koszęcin, Katowice, 11 February 1928).
109. Gemischte Kommission für Oberschlesien, *Amtliche Sammlung*, vol. 2, 108 and 112.
110. APK, 27/304, 127 (Śląski Urząd Wojewódzki do Wydziału Prezydyjalnego, Dotyczy: szkoły mniejszościowej w Koszęcinie, Katowice, 1 May 1929, 1); APK, 27/304, 166–67 (Wojewoda Śląski do Ministerstwa Spraw zagranicznych, Departament Polityczny w Warszawie, 7 May 1929, 7–8).
111. Schot, *Nation oder Staat?*, 196–97; Hudson, *World Court Reports*, vol. 2, 268–319.
112. Whereas in 1928, 2,964 children were enrolled for teaching in German-speaking schools in Upper Silesia, in 1932, the number had fallen to 1,913 (Regorowicz, *Wykonanie*, 41).
113. APK, 27/304, 152 (Société des Nations, Cinquante-troisième Session du Conseil, Procès Verbal, Tenue à Lugano, le samedi 15 décembre 1928, 9); *ibid.*, 130 (Śląski Urząd Wojewódzki do Wydziału Prezydyjalnego, Dotyczy: szkoły mniejszościowej w Koszęcinie, Katowice, 1 May 1929, 4).
114. *Ibid.*, 139 (Deutscher Volksbund für Polnisch-Schlesien betr. Errichtung der Minderheitsschule in Koschecin, Kreis Lubliniec, Katowice, 22 March 1929, 3); *ibid.*, 174 (Petycja Niemieckiego Związku Ludowego w sprawie nieotwarcia szkoły mniejszościowej w Koszęcinie, Genewa, 25 September 1929); PAAAB, R 82322, fol. 964v (Oberschlesischer Grenzbericht für die Monate Juli, August und September 1929, 15).
115. APK, 27/304, 127 (Śląski Urząd Wojewódzki do Wydziału Prezydyjalnego, Dotyczy: szkoły mniejszościowej w Koszęcinie, Katowice, 1 May 1929, 1).
116. *Ibid.*, 166 (Wojewoda Śląski do Ministerstwa Spraw zagranicznych, Departament Polityczny w Warszawie, 7 May 1929, 7); *ibid.*, 205 ('Draußen in Koschentin!', *Kattowitzer Zeitung*, 60, 13 March 1930).
117. PAAAB, R 82322, fol. 119v–20r (Oberschlesischer Grenzbericht für die Monate Januar, Februar und März 1930, 10–11).
118. APK, 27/304, 207 ('Draußen in Koschentin!', *Kattowitzer Zeitung*, 60, 13 March 1930).
119. *Ibid.*, 128 (Śląski Urząd Wojewódzki do Wydziału Prezydyjalnego, Dotyczy: szkoły mniejszościowej w Koszęcinie, Katowice, 1 May 1929).
120. Gemischte Kommission für Oberschlesien, *Amtliche Sammlung*, vol. 2, 156–71.
121. Fałęcki, *Niemieckie szkolnictwo mniejszościowe*, 82ff.; Hudson, *World Court Reports*, vol. 2, 703.
122. Gemischte Kommission für Oberschlesien, *Amtliche Sammlung*, vol. 3, 250.
123. APK, 27/304, 42 ('Der Oberschlesisches Kurier', *Neue Klage der Salonder*, 57, 9 February 1928); Raitz von Frentz, *A Lesson Forgotten*, 265.
124. APK, 1363/406, 2 (Wykaz szkół inspektoratów szkolnych w Województwie Śląskiem, 1936).
125. As late as 1937, the 6.7 per cent German citizens inhabiting Polish Upper Silesia possessed 50 per cent of its financial capital (APK, 1363/413, 8 [Znaczenie wpisów wobec wygaszania Konwencji Genewskiej i sposoby ich przeprowadzania, 1937]).
126. APK, 1363/1, unpaginated (Mapa powiatu lublinieckiego).
127. Kopeć, *'My i oni'*, 29 and 33.

128. The number of people unemployed in 1929 was 802, and in 1931 1,270 (see *Tygodnik Powiatowy na powiat lubliniecki*, 15, 13 April 1929; *ibid.*, 1, 3 January 1931). APK, 1363/413, 7 (Protokół z posiedzenia z dnia 15 April 1935. W sprawie akcji wpisów do szkół powszechnych); Raitz von Frentz, *A Lesson Forgotten*, 229.
129. Eser, 'Volk, Staat, Gott!', 161; Cygański, *Z dziejów Volksbundu*, 20ff.; Brey, 'Das deutsche höhere Schulwesen', 303.
130. Krekeler, *Revisionsanspruch*, 66.
131. PAAAB, R 76475, unpagged (*De afschaffing der Fransche Gemeenteschool te Eupen*, 'De Standaard', 6 October 1926). After the municipal elections on 10 October 1926, the city council of Eupen proposed Léon Trouet as a mayor, but the Belgian government did not want to approve that choice because he had played a leading role in the establishment of the pro-German association Heimatbund earlier that year. In 1927, the city remained officially without a mayor, before the Belgian government voted through a resolution in April 1928 that enabled the opinion of the city council to be bypassed, and directly appoint Hugo Zimmermann as the new mayor. He would remain in power until 1958 (Kontny, 'Bevormundung', 132–33).
132. *Ibid.*, PAAAB.
133. Minke, 'Schule und Unterricht', 222–24.
134. Fittbogen, *Schulrecht*, 111.
135. See, for example SE, 647/55/88 (Bürgermeister an Herrn Nikolas Claessen, 26 October 1925).
136. Nachlass Benker 23/75-76: Brief St. Gierets an Herrn Stadtbüroinspektor Benker, 3 February 1930.
137. Madajczyk, 'Dokumenty', 143; 'Gegen die Verkürzung des Polnisch-Unterrichts in unseren Volksschulen' (Against the Reduction of Polish Language Classes in our Primary Schools), *Schlesische Zeitung*, vol. 5, 6, 1929, 30.
138. Fałęcki, *Niemieckie szkolnictwo mniejszościowe*, 57; Eser, 'Volk, Staat, Gott!', 555.
139. Minke, 'Schule und Unterricht', 222.
140. SE, 651/55/113, unpagged (Protocol of the Permanent Deputation of the Province of Liège, no. 6169, 76–77 'Elementar- und Mittelschulunterrichtswesen, Sprachenregime', 7 November 1932).
141. 'Was die Heimatpresse schreibt?', *Echo der Gegenwart*, 1931, vol. 5, 12, 151.
142. Massenaux, 'Blick auf das Schulwesen', 32.
143. Nachlass Benker 23/75-76: Brief St. Gierets an Herrn Stadtbüroinspektor Benker, 3 February 1930.
144. This is a phrase from the poem 'Oath' (Rota) written by the Polish poet and activist Maria Konopnicka in Cieszyn Silesia in 1908. The poem, calling for independence, was a celebratory anthem widely known at the time.
145. 'Twórcza praca nauczyciela na ciężkiej placówce', *Polska Zachodnia*, [L. Sz.], 5, 5 January 1928, 4.
146. Glimos-Nadgórska, *Polskie szkolnictwo*, 89 and 108.
147. 'Schatten über der Schule. Der Aufsatz eines 14 jährigen Mädchen, das bisher die polnische Schule besuchen musste', *Deutsche Schulzeitung*, 1930–1931, 11, 119.
148. Dziwoki, *Kościół katolicki*, 250.
149. Loben-Guttentager Kreisblatt, Picture 'Kommunionkinder der deutschen Minderheitsschule in Koschentin', vol. 6, 4, 16 March 1961, 3; Arbeitsgemeinschaft Lublinitzer Bürger, *Lublinitz*, 8; Ulfik, 'Dzieje Koszęcina', 276–80.
150. In 1935, immigrating teachers still accounted for 74.5 per cent of the teaching force in Polish Upper Silesia (Wanatowicz, *Ludność napywowa*, 60–61 and 71–72). See also Glimos-Nadgórska, *Polskie szkolnictwo*, 164 and 184.

151. Novikov, *Shades*, 91.
152. Jan Żebrok, quoted in Glimos-Nadgórska, 'Naszyc czytane', 122. See also Glimos-Nadgórska, *Polskie szkolnictwo*, 21.
153. Glimos-Nadgórska, 'Naszyc czytane', 118–19.
154. Żebrok, *Nasze czytanki*, 3–4.
155. AAK, AI 1031 (Sprawozdania wizytacyjne z roku szkolnego 1925, 1).
156. Polish title: *Czytania Polskie*, vol. 1 (1st edition, 1922), see Madeja, *Elementarze*, 157; APK, 1376/1269, 118 (Miejski Urząd Policyjny Lubliniec, Mandat karny, 1926).
157. *Gość Niedzielny*, 1936, 47, 657.
158. Wojtas, 'Learning to Become Polish', 203.
159. BABL, 1051, 36, unpaginated (Von den Schulen Eupens, 1927, 1).
160. *Eupener Nachrichten*, 30 September 1927, 1.
161. Warny, *Belgiens wiedergefundene Brüder*, 235.
162. Fittbogen, *Schulrecht*, 32–33.
163. SE, 657/55/147, unpaginated (Hauptschulinspektor über Fibel von Herrn Inspektor Lousberg, 1930 or 1931).
164. SE, 657/55/147, unpaginated (Urteil eines hervorragenden rheinischen Methodikers über die Fibel des belgischen Schulinspektors Lousberg, 1930 or 1931); see also the *Kunsterziehungsbewegung* of Alfred Lichtwark (Berg and Herrmann, 'Einleitung', 23).
165. Nachlass Benker 23/75-76: Brief St. Gierets an Herrn Stadtbüroinspektor Benker, 3 February 1930.
166. Raffestin, 'Space', 121.