

## INTRODUCTION



There is something peculiar about the German alphabet book Joseph Lousberg composed in 1929 for the borderlands that had switched to Belgian state sovereignty in the aftermath of the First World War, having formerly belonged to the German Empire.<sup>1</sup> The alphabet book was commissioned by a local city council in order to assist borderland pupils learning to read and write in their German mother tongue.<sup>2</sup> Born in Montzen, a Walloonian village in Belgium where German was spoken, Joseph Lousberg (1892–1960) graduated with a degree in pedagogy from a Belgian teaching seminary. After a career spent working in a private school, teaching the children of German merchants in the Flemish city of Antwerp, as well as in a primary school close to his place of birth, he was appointed school inspector of Belgium’s newest borderlands.<sup>3</sup>

Pupils throughout Belgium learned French or Dutch by beginning to read and write lower case letters, before progressing to upper case ones. However, since the German language requires all nouns to be capitalised (for example, *Haus*), pupils in Germany started off by learning capital letters. What Lousberg did was to apply the pedagogical methods he had learned in Belgium to his German primer, making borderland pupils learn all the lower case letters in German. Only once they had mastered these would they be introduced to upper case ones.<sup>4</sup> Borderland pupils had to be capable of writing full sentences, such as *was hören wir? wir hören rufen* (what do we hear? we hear shouting), before they were taught how to write nouns, such as *Baum* (tree).

Lousberg’s book became the standard German primer in Belgium’s newest borderlands and would be reprinted on a regular basis until the mid-1950s.<sup>5</sup> In an anonymous letter to the author on the occasion of the first edition, a local inhabitant wrote: ‘I spent an enjoyable hour browsing your book. My boys did the same. It is the ultimate proof. Wonderful!’<sup>6</sup> An anonymous German pedagogue, however, did not share this reader’s

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Notes for this chapter begin on page 33.

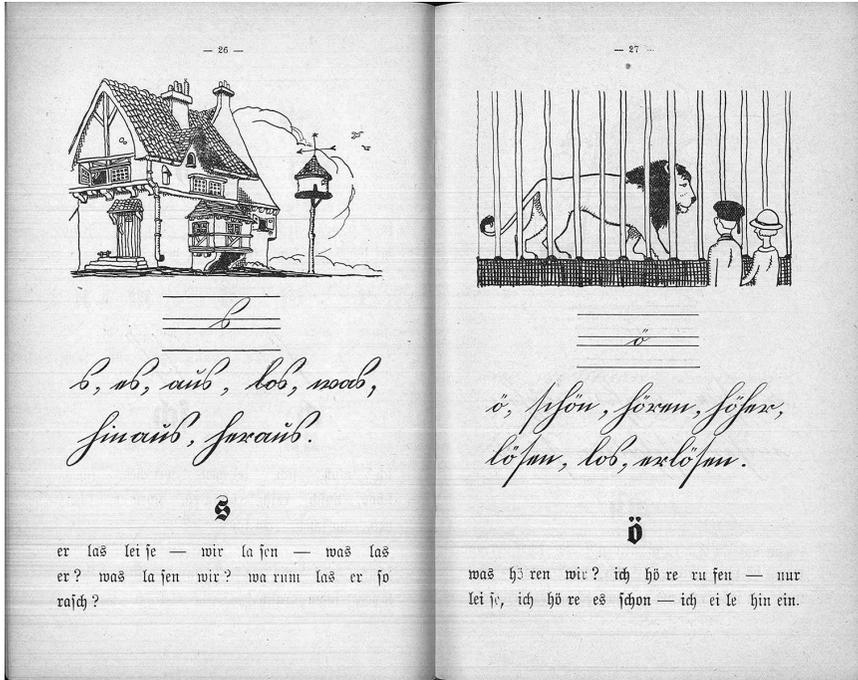


FIGURE 0.1. Joseph Lousberg's alphabet book developed for German-speaking pupils in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy (Lousberg, *Fibel oder Lesebüchlein*, 1929, 14 – copyright: State Archive in Eupen).

excitement. Making no allowances for a low-budget production published in times of economic crisis by a local editor, he considered Lousberg's book the 'most inadequate' of all the 'ABC booklets of the twentieth century'.<sup>7</sup> Drawing upon a scientific understanding of pedagogy developed within the German Empire, and underscoring the prevailing concern within the Weimar Republic that German culture was to uphold its hegemonic role abroad, he did not shy away from introducing child psychology to support his aversion for the absence of nouns. 'The child is at a formative age and longs for real things', he complained: 'a cohesive whole with a case-sensitive mixture is nowhere to be found.'<sup>8</sup> He was not alone in his concerns. German-language educators working outside the Weimar Republic's state borders also feared that an improper learning of the German language would cause borderland pupils to grow up improperly and develop personality problems.<sup>9</sup>

Belgium's eastern neighbour had a history of compulsory primary education that dated back to the early 1800s, and had grown into a giant in terms of reform pedagogy at the end of that century, since science was con-

sidered a means to reduce the latent social tensions between the working class and the bourgeoisie that had accelerated during industrialisation.<sup>10</sup> The Belgian state, by contrast, only implemented compulsory education after the First World War, and made sure to formulate vague pedagogical requirements so as not to antagonise the freedom of the church in Catholic schools. It happened to be the case that all the primary schools under the jurisdiction of Joseph Lousberg's inspectorate were Catholic.

This book starts from the observation that in the interwar years three ways of thinking came together on the European continent: thinking in terms of borderlands, thinking in terms of language and thinking in terms of children. Through a symmetrical comparison of two case study borderlands – Polish Upper Silesia, which switched from German to Polish state sovereignty in the aftermath of the First World War, and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, which switched from German to Belgian state sovereignty – the argument is put forward that borderland schools were elected to play a crucial role in the creation of a stable, peaceful Europe. The book is an investigation into how schools, their curricula and the pupils they educated were reconfigured in interwar continental Europe after the switch in state sovereignty. In this introduction, it will be shown how thinking in terms of borderlands, language and children gained in importance across Europe throughout the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, as well as how that happened in similar or different ways within the political entities of relevance for this book: Prussia and later the German Empire, the Habsburg and Russian Empires, as well as the Southern Netherlands and later the Belgian Kingdom.

## Thinking in Terms of Borderlands

The idea of self-determination became somehow interlinked with that of peace. Whereas self-determination arose as a theoretical concept in the texts of Lenin published in 1915 and early 1916, it only later became the motor for political action in the steppe rebellion of 1916, which laid bare how the problem of the Russian imperial regime was, as the historian Joshua Sanborn recently concluded, 'precisely that it was imperial. Unable to understand indigenous peoples on the periphery, it oppressed and exploited them. A revolution would have to end Russian ignorance and chauvinism and grant a measure of self-determination to non-Russians across the country.'<sup>11</sup> Soon after the February Revolution had come to an end, Bolshevik leaders started to speak of self-determination and peace. Peace was to bring an end to the oppression of people hitherto considered at the margins of society by granting them their own sovereignty. Impe-

rial paternalism needed to be exchanged for national self-determination.<sup>12</sup> Upon the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty in March 1918 between the Bolshevik government and the Central Powers in order to end Russia's involvement in the war, Trotsky fulminated: 'This is a peace which, whilst pretending to free Russian border provinces, really transforms them into German States and deprives them of their right of self-determination.'<sup>13</sup> The Western Allies despised German expansionism and responded by making the dissolution of imperial regimes and the self-determination of people in Central and Eastern Europe their war aims.<sup>14</sup>

Once the war had come to an end, statesmen and diplomats gathered in France in 1919 to lay out the conditions and prospects of peace. Different imagined visions of Europe occupied the minds of the main architects of Europe's recomposition. These political representatives have often been referred to as the Big Four. Alongside Woodrow Wilson of the United States were Georges Clemenceau of France, David Lloyd George of the United Kingdom and Vittorio Emanuele Orlando of Italy, the latter being absent when the Treaty of Versailles was negotiated.<sup>15</sup> In the last year of his life, Georges Clemenceau, for example, defended the Treaty of Versailles, as a result of which Germany handed over a considerable amount of its territory on its western, northern and, most significantly, eastern borders to neighbouring states, as a treaty engendering a 'Europe founded upon right' and aiming at bringing about universal peace.<sup>16</sup> Clemenceau was attacked by nationalists in France, who were afraid of German aggression and believed that the Rhineland, a region that belonged to the interwar German state and held borders with France, should have been annexed following the First World War, instead of being temporarily occupied by the military. In the Anglo-Saxon world, however, politicians grumbled that Clemenceau's bold attempt to overpower Germany would spark a desire for vengeance.<sup>17</sup> Woodrow Wilson, by contrast, spoke of installing a supranational order based on liberal principles. Situating the cause of the war in Prussia's militarism and the autocratic ruling style of the Hohenzollern dynasty, Wilson argued that Germany's power needed to be restricted. The principle of self-determination he so vehemently supported was often given a national interpretation and used as an authoritative rhetorical means by all parties involved at the negotiation tables in Paris.<sup>18</sup> The Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sidney Sonnino, commented: 'The war undoubtedly had had the effect of over-exciting the feeling of nationality. . . Perhaps America fostered it by putting the principles so clearly.'<sup>19</sup>

Since the concept of self-determination remained vaguely defined and, therefore, contentious (did it refer to elaborated democratic self-government, or should all be given the opportunity to live in what they imagined as their own state?), it did not rectify the world's problems.<sup>20</sup> In-

stead, the different visions of the architects were heavily debated over the maps laid out on French tables in order to bring the continent to peace.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, whereas German historiography has long been preoccupied with researching questions related to the burden of guilt on German shoulders, or Germany's duty to deliver reparation payments, the most important change brought about by the Paris Peace Conference was the reshaping of the continent, which ended the long-lasting era of multinational empires in Europe.<sup>22</sup>

Negotiators at the Paris Peace Conference made use of scientific knowledge in order to redraw state border lines in Europe. State border lines were first created in the Peace of Westphalia (1648), in order to separate polities holding sovereignty over populations and to seal former borders operating as zones between areas where more control was asserted.<sup>23</sup> The arrival of the modern state system and the invention of the state border line was accompanied by a belief in the principle of *cujus regio, ejus religio*, pointing at the desire to create homogeneity among populations within state border lines.<sup>24</sup> With the scientific discipline of geography increasingly being used as an important paradigm for understanding social phenomena since the late nineteenth century, it comes as no surprise that maps played a prominent role in the peace-making process after the First World War.<sup>25</sup>

However, the contours of Europe's interwar state border lines were not drawn by statesmen and diplomats in France alone, but came about through a dynamic interplay between diplomatic negotiations and the violence erupting in several Central and Eastern European borderlands.<sup>26</sup> That an intertwinement of self-determination and peace did not mean much in Central and Eastern Europe had already been made clear when, within a couple of days of the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty, the military of the Central Powers engaged in fighting with Bolshevik troops in Ukraine.<sup>27</sup> Once the Great War had come to an end, the competing aspirations of self-determination within the lands of the former multinational and multiethnic empires often took the shape of civil wars and generated facts that the architects of Europe's peace could not ignore.<sup>28</sup> The results sometimes took the form of consensus decisions about the shape of state border lines as predetermined by the Big Four, decisions that were later to be discussed and ratified by representatives of existing or emerging nation-states.<sup>29</sup> Sometimes, however, they were dictated by troops on the ground. This was the case with the Habsburg city of Teschen in Silesia, which was invaded by Czechoslovakian troops in January 1919, and would, after having been discussed in international forums for eighteen months, mainly remain under Czechoslovakian sovereignty, leading to the city being split into a Czechoslovakian part called Těšín and a Polish

part called Cieszyn.<sup>30</sup> In the case of Upper Silesia, a region formerly part of the German Empire, moreover, a complex decision-making process with different and changing voices in Paris, on the one hand, and three uprisings within the region, on the other, would eventually lead to the region being divided into Polish Upper Silesia and German Upper Silesia.

A majority of historians have come to agree that the Paris Peace conference did not establish a stable peace order.<sup>31</sup> That the problems were paramount, and that decision-makers acted under the pressure of time, was already known at the time. When the French Marshall Ferdinand Foch saw the Treaty of Versailles, for example, he fumed: 'This is not a peace. It is an armistice for 20 years.'<sup>32</sup> Even Woodrow Wilson, when he left Paris, told his wife: 'Well, it is finished, and as no one is satisfied, it makes me hope we have made a just peace.'<sup>33</sup> Later, he appeared unable to mobilise enough senators in the United States to vote in favour of membership of the supranational institution he had designed and advocated: the League of Nations.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, the Treaty of Versailles kept Germany on the map of Europe, shrinking its territory by 13 per cent and its population by 10 per cent, while reducing, but not ruining, its economic power.<sup>35</sup> With the hindsight of time, it might be tempting to make the Treaty of Versailles the scapegoat for the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939. But the past could have turned out differently if interwar European states had had other leaders, if democracy in Germany had been rooted more profoundly, and if people had lived under a more favourable economic horizon.<sup>36</sup>

The Paris Treaties determined the conditions of life within interwar Europe to a considerable extent. This monograph offers insight into the interwar past of three nation-states whose borders changed as a result of the Treaty of Versailles: Poland, Germany and Belgium. Whereas Poland and Belgium were surrounded by larger countries exerting not only political and economic pressure but also cultural and social prestige, Germany struggled to overcome its compounded power and to act once more as the great nation it had previously been. The leading aim in German foreign policy in the interwar years was to revise the Treaty of Versailles.<sup>37</sup> German politicians never lost their national aspirations towards the people they considered to have been left behind after the reshaping of Europe, and supported revisionist movements in the borderlands Germany had ceded.

The various treaties that resulted from the peace negotiations in Paris and restructured Europe entailed a certain ambiguity.<sup>38</sup> Interwar Europe gathered a patchwork of nation-states, but the Western and Central Eastern states receiving borderlands were treated differently. Unlike Belgium, France, Denmark and Italy, the states more to the east of the European continent had to adhere to the supranational supervision of the newly

founded League of Nations over the way they treated their inhabitants categorised as having a minority status.<sup>39</sup> Poland's case provoked Europe's architects into setting up the supranational body of the League of Nations. It was to shape and control the preconditions under which the new Polish state could be established and would function.<sup>40</sup> As a result of the Treaty of Versailles, Poland gained most of the former Prussian provinces of Posen and West Prussia (including a Polish corridor to the Baltic Sea), as well as areas in Upper Silesia and East Prussia.<sup>41</sup>

By contrast, as victors of the war, Belgian representatives in Versailles were of the opinion that they should be rewarded for their war efforts and be granted an extension of their borders. However, during the negotiations, Belgian diplomats acquired less territory than all the other victorious countries on the European continent, with the exception of Portugal.<sup>42</sup> The Belgian delegation left the negotiations in France with the guarantee that Belgium could control Ruanda-Urundi, which it had occupied during the First World War, under the supervision of the League of Nations, the promise that the inhabitants of a small piece of land on the eastern border of the Belgian Kingdom, the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, would receive the opportunity to reject a change to Belgian state sovereignty, and the right to annex a square-mile piece of land called Neutral Moresnet that had arisen a century earlier as a result of careless formulations during the Congress of Vienna.<sup>43</sup> Owing to the fact that in Western Europe states received the right to exercise unlimited control within their own state borders, the Belgian Kingdom could steer the public opinion of borderland inhabitants in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy without having to fear supranational control.<sup>44</sup> Following a public expression of opinion, which remained contested throughout the entire interwar period, the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy were included within the Belgian Kingdom as its new eastern borderlands.<sup>45</sup>

The creation of a Europe of nation-states did not solve the question of how to include borderland inhabitants who differed from each other on national, religious, linguistic, cultural and/or ethnic grounds.<sup>46</sup> Although it was meant to be set up as a national state, interwar Poland was very much a replica of the multinational empires it had been dissolved from, albeit with changed power dynamics between ethnic groups.<sup>47</sup> The Belgian Kingdom, meanwhile, had transformed into a multilingual political democracy of the masses. Political representatives in Poland and Belgium developed policies to make their inhabitants participate in their systems of collective values and to distinguish themselves from what became constructed as the others. They established or consolidated institutions spreading political, societal and cultural ideas with nationalist content. They faced the challenge of coming up with a convincing programme for

identification capable of competing with the much older and stronger traditions and programmes of collective belonging. Borderlands turned out to be the places where national programmes were most vulnerable to competing markers of loyalty.<sup>48</sup> At the same time, the power structures and power strategies of nation-states remained deeply influenced by bilateral and international negotiations and decisions. When the Locarno Treaties were signed in 1925, for example, the geographical disposition established under the Treaty of Versailles at Germany's western border was rendered inviolable, while at the same time the competency of the international order to protect Germany's eastern border decreased, inevitably leading to a relative weakening of Polish state sovereignty. This book will demonstrate how the interwar borderlands became the places where the visions of a peaceful and just Europe that underscored the political geography of the interwar period experienced their deepest challenge.

## Thinking in Terms of Language

The redrawing of borders and reshaping of borderlands according to the principle of self-determination was accompanied by an obsession with language. 'Nationalism', as Thomas Paul Bonfiglio concluded, 'was born, in the early modern period, *of* and *in* language and articulated in the apparently innocent kinship metaphors of maternity and nativity', which made 'the notion of the linguistic birthright of the native speaker' self-evident.<sup>49</sup> While maps were being stretched out on tables in Versailles, ethnographical statistical data on knowledge of languages was used in order to establish peace. The question of how to mark out nations had appeared on the agenda of the International Statistical Congresses organised since the mid-nineteenth century, and by 1872 statisticians had agreed that a question concerning language use needed to be included in state censuses.<sup>50</sup> Data that had been gathered through a compartmentalising of people's practices into boxes not only documented the scope of nations, but could also be selectively cited by nationalists as elements of scientific proof of the use of a specific mother tongue in order to call new nations into existence.<sup>51</sup>

In 1919, language was considered the primary denominator of national belonging, while the national paradigm was to become the foundation stone of the new political world order.<sup>52</sup> Inspired by the *oeuvre* of Herder and Fichte, nationalists throughout the European continent accepted as self-evident the belief that linguistic allegiance established the essence of national or ethnic unity.<sup>53</sup> This book will show how these convictions resonated throughout the interwar years. Language did find itself at the

heart of the political agenda and the everyday lives of inhabitants in both of the two borderlands at study, Polish Upper Silesia and the border regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, at certain moments during the interwar period. In Polish Upper Silesia, language learning policies bore witness to the belief that a monolingual upbringing of borderland pupils was deemed most appropriate. In Belgium, disputes between state representatives about equal use of the French and Dutch languages resulted in new language learning policies for primary school children. The question at the centre of the debate – in a country where compulsory education was introduced in 1919 and bilingualism was considered a noble goal to strive for – was when second language learning in primary schools should start. As will be expanded upon in this book, within the newly gained border regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, that debate took an interesting twist. Before this book offers a detailed analysis of interwar language learning in the two case study borderlands, this introduction sheds light on how these borderlands joined, respectively, the Polish and Belgian nation-state at moments in time when certain important struggles about language had come to an end, and new ones were to arise. A focus on these language struggles enables us to understand the relationship – the tensions and dynamics – between spaces bounded by state border lines, through political decisions and the execution of political power, and transnational spaces of interaction transcending these politically bounded spaces.<sup>54</sup> These spaces were not in opposition to one another, but instead bolstered and eventually perhaps came to constitute one another.<sup>55</sup>

The largest part of Upper Silesia joined Prussia when the region was divided between Prussia and the Habsburg Empire in the year 1740. Upper Silesia found itself under the rule of the Polish king or Polish princes until the early fourteenth century, and had later been part of the Czech crown lands. In 1526, the terrains previously governed by the kings of Bohemia came under Habsburg rule.<sup>56</sup> At the time, the inhabitants of Upper Silesia communicated with each other in Silesian, a West-Slavic dialect most closely related to Polish but also significantly influenced by German, and local inhabitants were used to switching between their vernacular and German or Polish when they were talking at home, communicating with authorities or engaging in trade.<sup>57</sup> There was not sufficient incentive to impose one vernacular or language upon another community, since the absence of accessible education caused social and economic mobility to be limited. As a result, speaking Silesian long remained a normal and widespread phenomenon.

The privileging of the German language and the attack on Roman Catholicism launched during the *Kulturkampf* in the late nineteenth century, however, contributed to the mass politicisation of the predominantly

Catholic population in Upper Silesia, giving rise to the establishment of bilingual political parties and social organisations directing loyalties to religion; as Roman Catholics, Upper Silesians could continue to operate as bilinguals.<sup>58</sup> The institutionalisation of bilingual everyday practices in a time of increasing nationalist German, Polish and Czech mobilisation gave birth to the regional specificity of Upper Silesia, a specificity that would remain characteristic long after state border lines had been redrawn following the First World War.<sup>59</sup>

Although the relationship between language and nation was specific, highly complex and volatile, during the conflict over self-determination in the aftermath of the First World War, language was used as the primary criterion for national belonging.<sup>60</sup> The plebiscite campaign following the Treaty of Versailles, targeted at gaining the votes of the average man or woman, was characterised by recurring and intensifying violence precisely because clearly delineating Poles from Germans along a linguistic axis appeared impossible. 'The violence itself', the historian Tim Wilson recently noted, '*became* the boundary. It kept things simple. That is what is was intended to do.'<sup>61</sup> The Association for Upper Silesians (Bund der Oberschlesier/Związek Górnolązaków), on the other hand, advocated that Silesians were a multilingual nation and published its documents in both Polish and German, while a larger number of local inhabitants are said to have shared the feeling that their opportunities for social advancement were limited because they did not finish their secondary school education and were therefore not considered literate in any of these languages.<sup>62</sup>

The division of state sovereignty over Upper Silesia between Germany and Poland was established after a civil war in which extreme violence was used in order to bring about clear lines of linguistic division.<sup>63</sup> Although the civil war had shown that 'language' was just as imagined as 'nation' because the lines of linguistic division could be drawn wherever one wanted,<sup>64</sup> people in Upper Silesia continued to live with the consequences of this illusion once the state border line was drawn, and these consequences became especially pertinent in language learning policies for primary school children.

In the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, the shift towards Belgian state sovereignty following the Treaty of Versailles also brought about an important change in attitudes towards language. It is difficult to think of an appropriate term to refer to the strip of land that came under Belgian state sovereignty after the First World War. In this book they are referred to as the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, although they were never clearly defined politico-geographical units and were united within one administrative entity for the first time upon joining the Belgian Kingdom (Eupen-Malmedy), and only for five years. Their legal

inclusion as a separate entity within the Belgian Kingdom appeared after a long process which started centuries earlier, in which the zonal area between Prussia and the Southern Netherlands, characterised by language diversity, gradually evolved into a place where the equation of language and state on both sides of the Belgian-German state border line became more prominent. That outcome was not merely the result of policies carried out on both sides of the line, but also of continuous interactions between political representatives and social actors on the ground.<sup>65</sup>

Although the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy had all been incorporated into the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation since the Middle Ages, their history later diverged significantly. The lands around the city of Eupen belonged to the County and later Duchy of Limburg, the lands around the city of Sankt Vith were included in Luxembourgish feudatories, and Malmedy and Stavelot formed a joint independent terrain under monastic rule isolated in a forest called the High Fens (Hautes Fagnes or Hohes Venn).<sup>66</sup> At the time, inhabitants of the regions spoke different vernaculars. Whereas people in Eupen spoke in a German dialect close to Dutch, people in Sankt Vith used a German tongue bearing more similarities to Luxembourgish, while local inhabitants living in the vicinity of Malmedy and Stavelot spoke either that variation of Luxembourgish or a tongue referred to as Walloon, or both.<sup>67</sup> As was the case in Upper Silesia, vernaculars and standardised languages were used for different purposes. In the Eupen region, for example, whereas the language of state administration was Dutch (which here needs to be understood as Brabantian and be differentiated from Flemish, a dialect that will receive significant attention below), the language used in church and school was High German.<sup>68</sup>

After the invasion of the Grand Army under the supervision of Napoleon Bonaparte in 1792, the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy-Stavelot, as part of the Rhineland, remained under French hegemony until his defeat.<sup>69</sup> In 1795, the Southern Netherlands, at the time under Habsburg rule, was also annexed by France. For the first time, local inhabitants, both within the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy-Stavelot and the Southern Netherlands, were confronted with authorities introducing a policy targeted at diminishing the use of vernaculars and proliferating a standardised language, in this case French, a language symbolising freedom and equality.<sup>70</sup>

As a result of the Vienna Congress in 1815, after the defeat of Napoleon, the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy were included within Prussia, with Eupen and Malmedy both as separate administrative units – the latter region being dissolved from Stavelot along the diocese border between Liège and Cologne that had run through the double Abbey since the Middle Ages, and thus creating a Walloon-speaking linguistic mi-

nority of about 12,000 speakers within Prussia – and Sankt Vith as a part of the administrative unit of Malmedy.<sup>71</sup> Having become part of Prussia, the regions for the first time experienced the establishment of High German as the official language of administration and education. Prussian Walloons, in addition, witnessed a gradual decline in opportunities to use their vernacular in the public sphere, up to the moment when, in 1889, the language was no longer taught as a foreign language in local schools.<sup>72</sup> Nine years later, a *Club Wallon* (Walloon Club) was established in Malmedy, which campaigned against excessive Germanisation and for more cultural autonomy, while at the same time swearing loyalty to the German Emperor Wilhelm II. Most of these Walloon activists merely requested an annulment of the policies launched during the *Kulturkampf*, all the while continuing to see their future within Germany. Members of the Walloon Club endorsed the idea of *la petite patrie dans la grande*; the proposition of two members to opt for an annexation by Belgium never gained wider support.<sup>73</sup> Regional loyalties did not stand in opposition to expressions of state loyalty, but instead coexisted with them. The classical processes of German state building throughout the nineteenth century, such as the bureaucratisation of the state apparatus, the democratisation of education and the foundation of a social welfare system, contributed to the people in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy coming to accept the German Empire as their state authority within a century.<sup>74</sup> The idea of switching to Belgian state sovereignty was barely even mooted, until that actually came to pass following the Treaty of Versailles.

The loyalty of Walloons in particular to the Prussian state and later the German Empire may be explained by the significant difference with which they were treated compared to those speaking the Silesian dialect. As the language of the great philosophers of the Enlightenment, French enjoyed considerable popularity to start with.<sup>75</sup> When the position of French in the social life of the linguistic minority was restricted by a series of laws, German writers pleaded for greater tolerance and for teaching in Walloon to be re-established.<sup>76</sup> Whereas Wallonian speakers were associated with French culture, and thus worthy of esteem, Polish and Silesian speakers were more likely to be considered a threat. The number of inhabitants speaking Polish or one of its related tongues greatly outweighed French and Walloon speakers in the German Empire. At the end of the eighteenth century, Prussia had also come to include Greater Poland and West Prussia and, as a consequence, witnessed 40 per cent of its population speaking Polish or vernaculars related to the Polish language.<sup>77</sup>

When the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy joined Prussia in 1815, the Southern and Northern Netherlands were integrated into the United Kingdom of the Netherlands and gained pieces of land on the

western side of the Prussian border (including the towns of Welkenraedt, Boholz/Bého and Arel/Arlon), inhabited by people using a German vernacular.<sup>78</sup> The firm decision of King Willem I to establish the Dutch language in administration and schools and his rejection of pleas to re-introduce vernaculars affected inhabitants using the Flemish vernacular or the German vernacular spoken in these newly acquired villages at the kingdom's south-eastern border.<sup>79</sup>

The decline in language diversity within Prussia and later the German Empire at its western border was paralleled by further developments on the other side of the Belgian-German border line. Belgium emerged as an independent state on the map of Europe in 1830 after a civil revolution, and the Great Powers approved Belgium's independence on the condition that it would operate as a neutral state, grant its citizens religious rights, and write 'the freedom of use for the languages used in Belgium' (*langues utilisées en Belgique*) into its constitution.<sup>80</sup> It may seem somewhat paradoxical that speakers of a German vernacular in the Belgian towns bordering the German Empire (namely, Welkenraedt, Boholz/Bého and Arel/Arlon) saw their freedom to use their language decline over time. The social reality at the time, however, was that of a Frenchified elite, a Flemish vernacular not considered to be elaborate enough to facilitate fruitful political use, and a German vernacular spoken by too few rural inhabitants to have any political weight.<sup>81</sup> Immediately after the establishment of Belgian independence, decrees issued at a national level were translated into the German language, but this practice was halted after less than a decade. Education in German also shrank. Whereas the Belgian Kingdom of the nineteenth century legally required non-compulsory primary education to be taught in French, Dutch or German,<sup>82</sup> on the verge of the First World War, education in German was taught only as a second language.<sup>83</sup> School inspector Joseph Lousberg, with whose alphabet book this monograph opened, was one of the teachers providing that education. Prior to the First World War, he taught in a primary school in Gemmenich, a village in the vicinity of Welkenraedt.<sup>84</sup>

In this book, it will be shown how the rise of the Flemish Movement contributed to a change in the Belgian political agenda over language in the interwar years, a change also considerably affecting language learning conditions within the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy. In order to understand discussions within Belgium's eastern borderlands about language learning, it is therefore essential to first examine different attitudes towards language within the Belgian Kingdom throughout the late nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century.

In the first decades of Belgian independence, leading Belgian elites presented the Belgian population as being of Germanic descent while speak-

ing French in order to legitimise their country.<sup>85</sup> In the 1860s, under the influence of Romanticism, a new interpretation of Belgianness saw the light and would remain most influential until the 1920s.<sup>86</sup> The most zealous exponent of this new way of thinking, the historian Henri Pirenne, considered Belgian civilisation a synthesis of two cultures, a microcosm of Europe so to speak, and therefore urged all citizens to become bilingual. His propositions, however, were rooted in the social life of the nineteenth century and therefore addressed towards the educated Belgian bourgeoisie mostly having French as their mother tongue and wishing to expand their language base to Flemish, not German.<sup>87</sup> Evidently, the rural villages at Belgium's eastern border, where a German vernacular was spoken, were too few in number to be included in his cosmopolitan vision.

On the whole, the common man was not enchanted by Belgianness.<sup>88</sup> Historians differ in their opinions as to why the alternative Flemish nationalism developed so slowly. Lode Wils argued that the Flemish Movement arose much later than other national movements in Europe owing to early industrialisation and the fact that the fight for the emancipation of the peasants and the abolition of the ancient regime had already been concluded by the time Belgium became independent in 1830. Precisely because French rule had denationalised liberalism, the Flemish Movement was not advocated by liberal thinkers and could no longer mould social and cultural agitation into a programme that appealed to the masses.<sup>89</sup> Louis Vos added that the Flemish Movement was eventually pushed forward by modernisation. The fact that most state administration was conducted in French started to trouble more people when the bureaucratisation of the state increased and facilitated Frenchification. The Flemish Movement saw in universal suffrage the opportunity to increase its political power and engaged in preparing the vernacular spoken in the northern half of the country for political use.<sup>90</sup> Maarten Van Ginderachter, however, postulated that the pillarisation of social and cultural life along ideological profiles (mainly Catholic, socialist or liberal) might also have played a part in de-escalating linguistic tensions.<sup>91</sup>

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Flemish Movement found support among the blue-collar workers and peasants of the Catholic People's Movement. Immediately before the outbreak of the First World War, it came to see itself as a fully-fledged nation having the right to autonomy.<sup>92</sup> This is also the moment when the decision was made to make the language of its cause Dutch instead of Flemish. That vernacular had interchangeably been referred to as *Vlaams* (Flemish), *Nederlands* (Dutch) or *Nederduits* (Lower German).<sup>93</sup> It became more common to speak about Flemish or Dutch after the revolution of 1848, when Belgian politicians, out of fear of French expansion, developed better cultural relationships

with the Netherlands, and after 1871, when a German Empire with expansionist ambitions was established.<sup>94</sup> Dutch was chosen because of the negligible scope of the Walloon movement at the end of the nineteenth century, which indicated the futility of striving for recognition of a regional language in Belgium. The struggle of the Flemish Movement led to Dutch being approved as an official administrative language of the Belgian Kingdom in 1898.<sup>95</sup> However, it would take until after the First World War before the Flemish Movement found sway with socialist politicians, leading to specific members of all strata of the political spectrum supporting the proliferation of its language and culture.

## Thinking in Terms of Children

Throughout the Europe of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, efforts were made to establish age borders and have cohorts of children experience an increasing part of their childhood in specially designed child spaces. The European continent witnessed fervent clashes between state-building processes, based on the bourgeois notion of a national elite, and the emancipation of the nation's masses through, inter alia, a prohibition on child labour, the struggle against child mortality, and the introduction of compulsory education.<sup>96</sup> When the improved technology brought about by industrialisation made child labour redundant, and eventually prohibited, children's time could be devoted to new forms of socialisation.<sup>97</sup> What followed was a shift in the concept of childhood to the modern sense. Thanks to compulsory primary education, in the modern school, children could now be moulded to become virtuous future citizens for the state or empire.<sup>98</sup> Another new and separate child space became pedagogical leisure time, where the young could develop strong bodies and personalities that would foster a bright future for their societies.<sup>99</sup> Organised children's holidays, moreover, provided a new means of intervening in the private upbringing of children in the name of eugenic and modernist beliefs in the progress of humankind.<sup>100</sup>

Whereas in both interwar Poland and Belgium, compulsory education for primary school children was only implemented after the First World War, Prussia had already singularised the *Volksschule* (primary school) as an institution of the state at the end of the eighteenth century and introduced compulsory education in the year 1819.<sup>101</sup> The lens of analysis within this book is narrowed down to the child space of the modern school because when the Polish and Belgian nation-states gained state sovereignty over, respectively, Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, they came into possession of pieces of land where compul-

sory education had a long tradition. More significantly, control over education within their newly gained borderlands was considered essential for the functioning of the modern Polish and Belgian nation-states. This control offered the prospect of a common national socialisation project for all of the country's youngest citizens, including those living in the newly acquired borderlands.<sup>102</sup>

In modern schools, pupils were to be formed through 'practices concerned with the cultural making of the citizen'.<sup>103</sup> In the early nineteenth century, representatives of the feudal and authoritarian Prussian regime had already issued policies aimed at increasing school attendance and establishing the learning of a standardised version of the German language. Upon German unification in 1871, universal suffrage and a constitution were initiated in order to make the German Empire appear modern and democratic, but in reality it inherited Prussia's feudal and military traditions and authoritarian way of ruling.<sup>104</sup> Launching the *Kulturkampf* within his first years in power, Otto von Bismarck aspired to unite the population of the German Empire around Protestantism and the German language. His measures affected children growing up in peripheral areas of the German Empire more than children living in more centrally located regions, since Roman Catholics accounted for a majority of the population on both the eastern and western fringes of the German Empire.<sup>105</sup>

In order to limit the influence of the Catholic Church, an 1872 law uncoupled the relationship between the church and education and placed all private and public schools under state control. To foster religious tolerance, interconfessional schooling was introduced and priests were allowed to offer only classes in religion.<sup>106</sup> An 1876 law, in addition, affirmed the German language as an essential aspect of national unity and required all children to learn a standardised spelling and pronunciation in school, so as to create future citizens capable of leaving behind their regional and linguistic peculiarities. Until German unification, most children had received teaching in their vernaculars, whether these were local variants of German or otherwise.<sup>107</sup>

Gradually, German became the main language of instruction in primary schools in the bilingual peripheries of the German Empire.<sup>108</sup> By 1880, teaching in languages other than German was already in decline. A decade later, Polish and French were no longer taught as a foreign language in primary schools and bilingual alphabet books fell into disuse.<sup>109</sup> In addition, pupils in the peripheries of the German Empire were no longer instructed by local teachers and priests, who left the profession in great numbers, but by newly trained teachers sent from more central locations in the German Empire.<sup>110</sup> These restrictions meant that teaching in German dialects or other languages could only take place during religious in-

struction in the early years of elementary education, when children found themselves under the supervision of local clergymen. Given the absence of a private school system, language activists focused their efforts on religious instruction.<sup>111</sup> Their efforts remained largely in vain, since with time most children would be taught religion in German.<sup>112</sup> In Upper Silesia, this development was accelerated by a rule prescribing that in areas with a minimum of 25 per cent of inhabitants with German as their mother tongue, religion classes needed to be offered solely in German, whereas in Malmedy a petition parents signed for the preservation of Walloon in teaching was disregarded.<sup>113</sup> Local priests did not always support the linguistic claims of parents since they prioritised the subservience of national and linguistic loyalties to the interests of the church.<sup>114</sup>

Despite the similarities in the educational measures targeted at pupils living in peripheral areas and speaking a tongue other than German, there are important differences to note. These differences all worked to the benefit of children living in the western part of the German Empire. To start with, the 1872 law on interconfessional schooling was implemented differently at the western and eastern edges of the German Empire. The voices of Protestant clergymen in the Rhine Province, who argued that the proliferation of their faith would suffer if Protestant children were to find themselves amidst a majority of Catholic children in school, were taken seriously.<sup>115</sup> While the idea of interconfessional schooling was abolished in the west of the German Empire, in its eastern provinces, more precisely in the mixed-confessional regions of Greater Poland and West Prussia, Protestants were made school principals of what had been Catholic schools so as to facilitate the Germanisation of Polish speakers.<sup>116</sup> In Upper Silesia, however, where a majority of the population belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, measures were softer in order to maintain good relations between the Catholic Church and state officials.<sup>117</sup>

Second, the German Empire was one of the first political entities in the world to create and designate the primary school as a space of its own. It invested massively in the erection of primary school buildings so as to disconnect schools from the parsonages where teaching had been practised before. However, whereas a sufficient number of primary school buildings had been erected in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy before the First World War, the number of school buildings erected in the eastern peripheral areas of the empire was relatively lower and German-speaking children were privileged over those speaking other languages in terms of gaining access to education in these buildings.<sup>118</sup>

The final difference lay in reform pedagogy, although its influence in the peripheral territories of the German Empire should not be overstated. Reform pedagogy proliferated differently across the German Em-

pire, and was characterised more by adaptability and divergence than by standardised implementations of clearly defined pedagogical methods.<sup>119</sup> Teaching, which had been traditionally encyclopaedic in content and authoritarian in performance, was later enriched by Friedrich Herbart's theory of heteronomous ethics. Herbart (1774–1841), following Immanuel Kant, proclaimed that moral values existed only in activities carried out on the basis of individual feelings of duty. He emphasised the shaping of children's minds and believed that character-building and the development of an individual consciousness were to be obtained through discipline, diligence and obedience.<sup>120</sup>

In the 1870s, psychologists discovered that the psyche of children functioned differently than that of adults. Reform pedagogues, as they came to call themselves, used this scientific insight to engage with formalist teaching methods. They suggested that the singularity of children required that teachers attain in-depth knowledge about the changing capacities of children throughout their school careers.<sup>121</sup> Instead of assuming the submission of children to an authoritarian school system, this focus on the child became a means to bring about a nation based on the democratic principle of equality.<sup>122</sup> Attention was paid to the flexibility of children's minds. Children needed to discover themselves in order to be able to do good for their society.<sup>123</sup>

Some pedagogues promised to use the newest scientific insights in order to make education function as a tool to strengthen and promote German culture, an example being education through art (the *Kunsterziehungsbewegung* of Alfred Lichtwark).<sup>124</sup> Pedagogues who placed the interests and needs of the child centre stage (also called pedocentrists), on the other hand, were more interested in the spontaneous evolution of a child. They measured intensively under which physical, medical and other conditions children could learn best, with the aim being to establish norms on how children were to be assisted in discovering their individuality.<sup>125</sup> A vast array of new approaches saw the light, ranging from education through working (Georg Kerschensteiner's *Arbeitsschule*) to bringing children closer to their so-called roots (through the *Landerziehungsheimbewegung* founded by Hermann Lietz).<sup>126</sup> In contrast to pedocentrists, scientists in paedology (or child studies) approached the growth of a child in its entire environment, looking beyond the school, in order to study children's behaviour and development.<sup>127</sup> While not aspiring to change society directly, both pedocentrists and paedologists strove to conceive a more appropriate form of child socialisation.<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless, despite these attempts, the basic assumption underpinning their work at the turn of the century remained the idealised image of a compliant child developed under Romanticism.<sup>129</sup>

Although no centres of reform pedagogy were established in the peripheries of the German Empire, by the mid-1870s most schools in the Rhineland, at least for a short period of time, possessed new didactic materials, such as interconfessional textbooks, before these were exchanged for textbooks especially designed either for Catholic or Protestant children.<sup>130</sup> In the east of the German Empire, by contrast, the pending question remained whether Polish-speaking children should receive any education at all, as the scarce school funds were first employed to accommodate the needs of German-speaking children.<sup>131</sup>

On the whole, the primary school attendance of children in the German Empire was compulsory and controlled, and buildings were specifically designed for schooling (although their number was not sufficient in the eastern part). Nevertheless, ideas of modern childhood penetrated differently in the peripheries than in more centrally located places. Pupils in the peripheries could no longer receive their education in a language other than German, most did not benefit from the insights of reform pedagogy, and the role of Catholic priests in their education was reduced to a minimum. These characteristics sharply differ from those of children growing up in the neighbouring political entities of the German Empire of relevance for this book: the Russian Empire, the Habsburg Monarchy and the Belgian Kingdom.

Within the Russian Empire, education was never made compulsory, a state of affairs that would last until 1919 when a law was introduced mandating children to attend primary school.<sup>132</sup> In the Kingdom of Poland, a ban on the teaching of Polish in primary schools was introduced in 1880, which would last until 1904 when, under the influence of the war with Japan and, later, the Russian Revolution, Tsar Nicholas II allowed once more for the teaching of local languages.<sup>133</sup> In contrast to the German Empire, moreover, the Russian Empire relied on the Orthodox Church to organise primary education, which had no particular interest in spreading the Russian language.<sup>134</sup> As a result, in 1910 62 per cent of the inhabitants of the Russian Empire were officially illiterate, compared to 5 per cent in the German Empire.<sup>135</sup> However, clandestine teaching in Polish is said to have reached 33 per cent of Polish speakers in the Kingdom of Poland in the final years of the nineteenth century.<sup>136</sup> At around the turn of the century, Polish pedagogues, teachers, doctors and psychologists from the Kingdom of Poland started to travel to the German Empire, France and Belgium, but the insights they acquired did not percolate through to primary education.<sup>137</sup>

In the Habsburg Empire, compulsory education had already been introduced in 1774, but this law was not enforced as effectively as it was in the German Empire.<sup>138</sup> After the revolutionary year of 1848, primary

schools in Galicia could offer their teaching in Polish, and, since the liberal constitution had facilitated the emergence of a political activism centralised around language demands, they gradually became places where national ideas were cultivated.<sup>139</sup> Herbartianism was decreed the official pedagogical method in the Habsburg Empire in the middle of the nineteenth century and enjoyed the support of the Polish-speaking gentry.<sup>140</sup> In addition, child specialists from Galicia made themselves familiar with reform pedagogy. For example, as early as the 1870s, the pedagogues Zygmunt Samolewicz (1842–1898) and Karol Benoni (1841–1904) travelled to the German Empire.<sup>141</sup>

Although the first Belgian primary school law of 1842 had already prescribed that every municipality must open at least one primary school, compulsory education was only decreed in 1914; given the outbreak of the First World War, this law was only implemented throughout the kingdom in 1919.<sup>142</sup> The non-compulsory primary education on offer in the nineteenth century needed to be provided in the language preferred by the guardian of a child: Dutch, French or German.<sup>143</sup> Despite the fact that Flemish was the mother tongue for a majority of the inhabitants of Belgium, the country had one and a half times as many primary schools offering teaching in French as it did in Dutch or German at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>144</sup> This evolution can partly be explained by the fact the Belgian state made the Catholic Church responsible for a considerable number of the issues that the German state authorities handled. The church had no interest in investing sufficiently in the training of Dutch or German language teachers, and nor did it require that religious education take place in buildings separated from schools.<sup>145</sup>

In 1879, the Liberal Party, a year after taking over from the Catholic Party in Belgium, started to implement measures similar to the ones issued in the German Empire. It turned existing Catholic municipal schools into public secular primary schools, prohibited local state authorities from subsidising religious schools, and prescribed that religious teaching must take place outside official school buildings. Liberal representatives also advocated the introduction of compulsory education.<sup>146</sup> As was the case in the German Empire, protests against these measures came from the dominant religious order. As a result, one of the sharpest Belgian political verbal disputes of the nineteenth century, commonly referred to as the School Wars (*luttes scolaires, schooloorlogen*), broke out. This led to the Catholic Episcopate feverishly establishing Catholic primary schools throughout the country, and the Liberal Party losing the elections of 1884 and finding itself in political opposition for the next twenty years.<sup>147</sup> Whereas liberal politicians had believed in a centralised organisation of education, their Catholic counterparts favoured communal autonomy.<sup>148</sup> By 1910, Catholic

schools were significantly more numerous in Flanders than in Wallonia, and covered the educational needs of 80 per cent of the children in Belgium.<sup>149</sup> Similarly, illiteracy rates were higher in Flanders than in Wallonia. While illiteracy amounted to an estimated 10 per cent for the whole country in 1910, the relative number of inhabitants incapable of reading and writing in Flanders was among the highest in Europe.<sup>150</sup>

Before the First World War, pedagogy in Belgium remained in the shadow of the numerous pedagogical research initiatives and their implementation in Prussia and later the German Empire, since only ideas that did not question the authority of the teacher could be introduced.<sup>151</sup> With Herbartianism on offer in public secular schools, and in an adopted form in private Catholic schools – inspired by Otto Willmann (1839–1920), who adjusted Herbart’s ideas to the lifeworlds of Catholics – the teaching method was widespread in Belgium. In addition, insights into pedocentrism and paedology inspired certain Belgian pedagogues.<sup>152</sup> The Free University in Brussels became a hub for world-class scientific paedology. In 1911, the first international conference on paedology took place in the Belgian capital.<sup>153</sup> The research of child psychologist Ovide Decroly, who studied in Belgium and the German Empire and concentrated on the conditions schools were to provide in order to make children act spontaneously, was especially successful in finding an international audience.<sup>154</sup> Although his experiments did not influence schooling in Belgium at large, his ideas played an important role in Belgian education politics in the interwar period.

## Borderland Schooling

The Treaty of Versailles thrust imagined ideas of a peaceful Europe onto borderlands, language was foregrounded as the primary foundation of national belonging, and compulsory primary education was implemented in Poland and Belgium.<sup>155</sup> The argument developed in this book is that this thinking in terms of borderlands, language and children resulted in the elevation of borderland schools and the pupils they educated as a basic foundation of the interwar European political set-up. Language learning was used in order to prepare borderland pupils to grow into citizens able to bring about the peaceful Europe that representatives at international peace conferences had had in mind when changing the state sovereignty of the children’s home grounds.

Close examination of language learning policies and practices enables us to meticulously decipher how (parts of) provinces within the German Empire were dissolved, made part of new nation-states, and over time

turned into socially lived spaces. In other words, in this book, the lens of language learning in borderland primary school education is used with the aim of unravelling and comparing how people who had inhabited peripheral areas within the German Empire lived with their new borders after the switch in state sovereignty. This process is not a teleological one of linear integration within the Polish and Belgian nation-states, but a relational one highlighting the restive interactions between borderland pupils and their caregivers (parents, teachers, pedagogues and priests), relevant institutions and historical actors within Poland or Belgium, as well as within Germany.

This book provides plenty of evidence of the often specifically targeted language learning policies launched within single nation-states in order to stabilise the state borders and reorient both the curricula of borderland schools and the feelings of belonging of borderland pupils. It will unravel how and why school curricula and the practices of borderland pupils were shaped, appropriated, changed, refuted or remained undefined. The main argument is that the schools and pupils in the two borderlands of interwar continental Europe compared in this book had enough in common to develop a profile. To that purpose, a contextual reconstruction of interwar language learning in the borderlands is offered with the help of a framework of comparison. The framework leans on the tremendous work scholars have executed over the last twenty years in order to reconsider Western modernity's fascination with the straight line, which favoured binary oppositions over multidimensional perspectives.<sup>156</sup> The framework of comparison worked out in chapter two consists of three interpretational axes and is based on an active understanding of space, a differentiated view on power and loyalties, and a comprehension of microhistory within a multilayered context.

As is the case with every other scholarly work produced by historians, the scope of this book very much depends on the accessibility of literature and sources. Inherent to comparative borderlands studies are bibliographical challenges.<sup>157</sup> For a long time, borderlands remained predominantly the domain of research for local historians, whose work found a readership in Germany, but rarely beyond.<sup>158</sup> At the same time, as questions about borderland inhabitants' past belonging were being glossed over in the Polish People's Republic, Belgian historiography was also notable for showing a general lack of interest in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy.<sup>159</sup> When European borderlands in the twenty-first century were included in studies about the history of Europe, the focus was primarily placed on ethnic cleansing and the repression of those adults who were considered to have been overly loyal to the former regime.<sup>160</sup> Whereas the history of twentieth-century Upper Silesia has over the last decade at-

tracted a great deal of attention from both local and international scholars publishing their studies in Polish, German, English or Czech, the scholarship on the past of the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy has yet to reach a wider audience.<sup>161</sup>

Moreover, whereas Silesia's past has become a laboratory for comparative research, this book is the first comparative monograph about the history of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy.<sup>162</sup> An additional bibliographical challenge is the different focus of local historical studies. In the case of interwar language learning, for example, researchers working on Polish Upper Silesia follow the fault lines of the division of school spacing at the time and offer an analysis of either the German-speaking or the Polish-speaking school systems.<sup>163</sup> For the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, on the other hand, the most common publications are commemoration books published by committees of individual schools.<sup>164</sup>

Researching borderlands also entails an archival challenge. Julien Fuchs pointed to the different scope of Alsatian archives, which he compared to the state archives in Paris and described as 'diffuse, dispersed and heteroclitic', but which nevertheless offered an unexpectedly 'rich body that has been hardly explored'.<sup>165</sup> It is the purpose of this study to discover the potential of local and regional sources in borderlands by analysing their content within the relevant national, bilateral, transnational and supranational contexts. To that purpose, materials were consulted in fifteen different archives in Poland, Belgium and Germany. The local and regional source base is more voluminous in the case of Polish Upper Silesia than in the case of the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy for several reasons. Not only was Polish Upper Silesia larger in size, it also operated as a distinct political entity within the Polish state for the entire interwar period and generated administrative paperwork about the border region and its districts. In addition, sources in Polish Upper Silesia had a good chance of making it through the Second World War, whereas the French-speaking school of Eupen, for example, was set on fire during the German invasion in 1940, and Sankt Vith and Malmedy were bombed during Hitler's last offensive in the winter of 1944–1945. Of great significance for the research on the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy turned out to be the city archives of Eupen, as well as local press articles from the time.

In contrast to Julien Fuchs' experience in France, interwar sources produced at a national level, both in Poland and Belgium, turned out to be disappointingly meagre. Whereas it is common knowledge that the sources produced within interwar Polish ministries are scarce because Warsaw lay in ruins at the end of the Second World War, it came as a surprise that the archives of Belgian governmental cabinets, as well as the

Belgian Ministry of Education, were practically non-existent.<sup>166</sup> In much better condition were German archives reporting on the institutions and historical actors involved in transnational contacts with borderland inhabitants, both across its eastern and western borders, such as the German School Association (*Deutscher Schulverein*) in the case of Polish Upper Silesia, and the archival fund of Franz Thedieck, the Special Consultant of the German Reich's Home Office, for the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy throughout the 1930s. Diplomatic archives in Brussels, Warsaw and Berlin also yielded a better insight into language learning in both case study borderlands. It was possible to include the supranational level into this study owing to a comparison of the empirical findings in local, regional and national archives with the published sources of the Mixed Commission established to supervise the implementation of the Geneva Convention (1922–1937) in Polish Upper Silesia.<sup>167</sup>

Given these bibliographical and archival realities, the initial focus of the research on borderland children was shifted to one child space: the modern primary school. The modern school was preferred to other child spaces of modernity, such as youth organisations or children's treatment camps, owing to the fact that compulsory primary education was implemented in both Poland and Belgium in the aftermath of the First World War, thus facilitating a systematic comparison. Not only did that implementation put the modern primary school at the centre of the political agenda, but the question of how children were to learn languages in their schools was also a topic of public debate during the interwar period. The scope of a study focusing on other child spaces of modernity would have been less comprehensive. Not only was the network of youth organisations in Polish Upper Silesia weak, but the local archival sources also offered hardly any materials beyond membership lists.<sup>168</sup> In the case of the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, national and transnational interest in local youth organisations only started with the importation of the Belgian scout movement in 1934 and the emergence of new youth organisations receiving inspiration or support from organisations in Nazi Germany.<sup>169</sup> The decision to exclude from this study the history of German treatment camps for borderland children from Poland and Belgium was taken upon discovery that archival documentation on the Polish-German case in the Political Archive of the German Federal Foreign Office offered correspondence only until 1934.<sup>170</sup> Whereas these documents had been archived outside Berlin at the time the city was bombed, documents created in the second half of the 1930s were still held in Berlin and did not survive the Second World War. Given the fact that children's transports from the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy began only in 1925 (unlike in Polish Upper Silesia, where they began in 1923), the comparison could

have offered an interesting story, but would not have covered how the borderlands dissolved from Germany and grew into socially lived spaces throughout the interwar years.

Archival realities also resulted in this book becoming much more a contribution to research on what adults said about children than on what children said about themselves. At the centre of current developments within childhood studies is the fact that children are not only 'human beings' but also 'human doings'.<sup>171</sup> This observation has long been neglected since children were not thought to be rational, which is still at the heart of many historians' definition of a social actor.<sup>172</sup> While historians of childhood remain aware of the methodological challenges in finding out how children viewed their treatment by adults, how they articulated this experience in their own practices, and how they recall it in sources, they point at the potential of including different voices in our understanding of the past.<sup>173</sup> Indeed, children not only experienced situations differently from adults, they often also faced other horizons of opportunities.<sup>174</sup>

The ego documents of borderlands children traced back in the archives do, however, have a different scope than the ego documents historians in childhood studies usually consult. Whereas collections of child sources were often gathered at a national level by nation-state representatives and international or welfare organisations, in the case study borderlands where state sovereignty switched back and forth several times throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century, such collections were never gathered.<sup>175</sup> David Oswell acknowledged that 'children's capacities to speak, act and become' are 'disclosed in particular social, natural and technological contexts'.<sup>176</sup> Borderlands formed specific places where children's involvement with their everyday lives often took on a different dimension. Scholars have already pointed to the fact that in borderlands stably conceived orders of knowledge are often lacking, as is a normative consensus on the kinds of actions that are considered legitimate.<sup>177</sup> As a consequence, everyday practices in borderlands remain marked by discontinuities, uncertainties and ambivalences; in the case of this study, this has resulted in a scarcity of borderland child ego sources.<sup>178</sup>

This scarcity led to a focus on one child space of modernity, rather than a delineation of age cohorts and a display of their experiences in different spaces for a specific relevant time period.<sup>179</sup> It also limited the acquisition of a deep insight into borderland girlhood. Just as childhood policies reflected different ideals for boys and girls, so too are the ways such policies were experienced and articulated gender-specific. For a long time, girls had few opportunities to express themselves publicly, few wrote down their experiences, and even fewer of these writings have survived the rigours of time. Those spoken of most commonly belonged to the elite or

were problematised.<sup>180</sup> Throughout this book, I will point out when borderland girlhood was reported and reported itself as specific.

## A Comparison of Borderlands

A vast majority of the scholarship on borderlands in Europe consists of single case studies, and the historians writing these analyses have a tendency to state that the borderlands they study followed a unique path through the past, a phenomenon in German referred to as a *Sonderweg*.<sup>181</sup> The most evident observation made while researching the practices of inhabitants from different borderlands has been that they were as manifold as the nationalisms and regionalisms operating throughout the European continent.<sup>182</sup> In systematically comparing the two case study borderlands, this book aims to provide a deeper understanding and explanation of the development of historical events.<sup>183</sup> John H. Elliott indeed once said: ‘above all a comparative approach forces us to reconsider our assumptions about the uniqueness of our own historical explanation’.<sup>184</sup>

The systematic comparison of borderland pupils in two local case study borderlands in this book uses a newly developed framework of comparison going beyond simple binary oppositions such as structures versus agents, and allows for the investigation of the interrelationship between both categories, as well as of microhistorical developments within their regional, national, bilateral, transnational and supranational contexts. This framework helps us to critically reconsider arguments hitherto employed in historiography, and to come to see that borderland schools held enough characteristics in common to distil a profile.<sup>185</sup>

Within comparative history, two approaches are employed. The first is mainly occupied with finding differences between the cases under comparison with the purpose of arriving at a more precise comprehension of the peculiarities of one case, and the way in which these are distinct from the other. The second approach foregrounds the search for commonalities in order to arrive at an understanding of the universality of historical phenomena.<sup>186</sup> The research presented in this book connects both approaches. Although the distillation of a profile of borderland schools is placed at the centre of this book’s narrative, the study uses the potential of the comparative method in order to make historical particularities within single case studies more visible, as well as to show what other historical paths in a border region could have been possible.<sup>187</sup> The careful balancing act between both approaches was not carried out prior to the empirical research, but during the analysis of the archival materials systematically gathered for Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmédy.

In times when the cross-border interactions between historical agents and transfers of ideas are elevated to the centre of historical analyses, comparative history is blamed for its preoccupation with macro-historical structures.<sup>188</sup> This symmetrical comparative study is, however, also a transnational history. Although there is a tension between the comparative and transnational perspective, as comparativists separate phenomena whereas their colleagues stress transfers, a small group of mainly German historians have pointed to the innovation that a combined complementary approach can bring to the progress of knowledge.<sup>189</sup> Borderland pupils in Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy all had a state border with Germany, and Germans did not cease to show their interest in the people they considered to have been left behind after the reshuffling of state sovereignties. This interest manifested itself in multiple ways, ranging from the sending of schoolbooks or money, the spreading of reform pedagogical ideas, the welcoming of schoolchildren from across the border in Germany, the outmigration of German priests across Germany's western border, to cross-border family visits.<sup>190</sup>

There were many reasons behind the decision to make a symmetrical comparison of borderland pupils' past in Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy throughout the interwar period. Mainly, I wanted to assess the way in which supranational involvement was established and how it influenced the life of borderland inhabitants. I therefore felt the need to include one case study from Central Europe and one case study from Western Europe. Of the five peace treaties signed in France in 1919, only the Treaty of Versailles also covered territorial changes in Western Europe. After the First World War, Germany lost areas of land to France (Alsace-Lorraine), Belgium (Eupen-Malmedy), Denmark (Northern Schleswig), Lithuania (the Memel region), Poland (parts of Posen, West-Prussia, East Prussia and East Upper Silesia) and Czechoslovakia (the Hlučín region).

Second, Belgium turned out to be an interesting case because it was founded in 1830 as one of the most progressive countries in the world. With its constitution guaranteeing the freedom of religion and the practice of languages, the Belgian Kingdom offered its inhabitants an alternative protective system to the supranational framework of control functioning under the auspices of the League of Nations. This was especially the case after 1933, when Germany left the League of Nations and Poland no longer fully respected its conditions. We will see in this book that the Belgian democratic regime appeared better capable of encompassing the diversity of its inhabitants than that supranational system.

Third, I opted for a borderland included in interwar Poland over one that joined Czechoslovakia or Lithuania because compulsory education

and universal suffrage were introduced in Poland and Belgium at the same time. Whereas mass education and mass voting had already been established in Prussia in the nineteenth century, these measures were only implemented in Poland and Belgium after the end of the First World War.<sup>191</sup>

My fourth decision followed from the characteristics of the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy. Since these were practically entirely Catholic regions, I selected a border region in Poland with a predominantly Catholic profile as well.<sup>192</sup> For this reason, the border region of Polish Upper Silesia became an obvious choice, and not the regions inhabited predominantly or to a considerable extent by Protestants: East Prussia, West Prussia and the Posen region.<sup>193</sup>

The fifth and final selective criterion was the characteristics of the land. Since the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy are covered with woods and agricultural lands, I decided to narrow my analysis of Polish Upper Silesia down to its most rural area, the Lubliniec district, with its relatively comparable size (whereas the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy covered 1,052,92 km<sup>2</sup>, the Lubliniec district covered 700km<sup>2</sup>) and number of inhabitants (approximately 60,000 in 1920 and 64,306 in 1940 in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy versus 45,232 in the Lubliniec district in 1931 and 50,518 in 1938).<sup>194</sup> These overall features distinguished the Lubliniec district from other districts in Polish Upper Silesia, where the cities were more densely populated, more industrialised, more religiously diverse, and the inhabitants were, relatively speaking, more educated.<sup>195</sup>

Despite the similar features of the Lubliniec district in Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, there are important differences to highlight. Industrialisation affected these regions distinctively to begin with. Industrialisation of the Eifel region had begun at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but always remained in the shadow of the prime industrial area of the Rhineland, and after 1870 did not participate in the increasing wealth Western Europe enjoyed because of its specialisation in a deteriorating branch of industry: textiles.<sup>196</sup> As a result, the region suffered continuous outmigration.<sup>197</sup> By contrast, in Upper Silesia, industrialisation started later, but the region became an industrial powerhouse on a global scale in the second half of the nineteenth century, producing almost a quarter of the German Empire's coal at the outbreak of the First World War. The circulation of its labour force was caused by the fact that the average income was lower than in other industrialised places within the German Empire, owing to which specialised workers moved out, and workers from poorer areas, such as the Posen region, moved in.<sup>198</sup>

After Upper Silesia was divided in 1922, Polish Upper Silesia lost some of its competitiveness and became poorer than neighbouring German

Upper Silesia.<sup>199</sup> By contrast, the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy became relatively more affluent than the other parts of the former Aachen district to which they had belonged before the First World War. The global crisis reduced but did not obliterate that difference.<sup>200</sup> Interestingly, these different economic situations did not lead to significantly different migration flows during the interwar years. In both regions, a significant number of local inhabitants (especially former civil servants) moved to Germany immediately after the switch of sovereignty, whereas later outmigration slowed down.<sup>201</sup>

The second difference is in demography. Poland experienced a significantly bigger baby boom than Germany, in contrast to Belgium, where birth rates decreased.<sup>202</sup> Whereas the increasing number of children put pressure on school structures in Poland, the phenomenon took a slightly different form in Polish Upper Silesia, where, as we will see in chapter four, the school building shortage was tackled more effectively than anywhere else in interwar Poland, without actually being solved.<sup>203</sup> In Belgium, by contrast, providing school buildings for a decreasing number of children in an age of mass education was not a major problem most of the time, although, as chapter four will illustrate, it did play a role in the multilingual city of Brussels.<sup>204</sup>

## Outline of the Book

In order to situate how certain child policies developed during the First World War continued to shape the systems of power applicable to Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy once these borderlands had switched state sovereignty, chapter one describes in detail the primary education, language learning and experiences of children during the war. Although in the states, nations and empires relevant for the two case studies there are many differences in the ways in which child policies continued or changed under the conditions of war, and many differences in the ways in which children experienced that war inside and outside their classrooms, the First World War constituted a turning point for all of them. In the German Empire, including at its eastern and western fringes, the war caused a wider acceptance of reform pedagogy. However, whereas in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, children witnessed the war from close up as soldiers marched west and east over the prewar Belgian-German state border line, in Upper Silesia, the war remained merely an event taking place somewhere else, until a civil war broke out with the three armed uprisings of 1919, 1920 and 1921. In Belgium, on the other hand, the war resulted in a programme of civic educa-

tion for the masses, for the first time in the history of the country. It also, however, put to the test the freedom of guardians to choose the language of their children's school instruction. In the newly established Kingdom of Poland, it was the shaping of a Polish child, along with discussions about the language(s) he or she was to speak, that was foregrounded in the new era of compulsory education.

With the aim of analysing the dissolution of the system of power that had characterised the German Empire and its reconfiguration in different systems of power after the switch in state sovereignty following the war, a fully-fledged framework of comparison is provided in chapter two.<sup>205</sup> The framework indicates routes for comparing and bridging the available knowledge in historiography, as well as the author's new research findings for the history of primary schools and their pupils in Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy in the interwar years. Originally a concept developed in order to approach more accurately the new spatiality of politics brought about by the processes of globalisation in the post-Cold War era, the concept of the borderscape also presented itself as a suitable lens through which to approach bordering processes in Europe's past. Although interdisciplinary border scholars did not neglect historical dimensions, they left them underdeveloped.<sup>206</sup> For this study, it was considered necessary to include the concept of the borderscape in a framework of comparison combining three axes of analysis – border and human territoriality, power/multiple loyalties, and microhistory within a multilayered context – in order to shed light on the historical contingency of language learning in the two case study borderlands and support the development of a profile of borderland schools.

Since language had become the defining denominator of national belonging at the time, the book then unravels the changing systems of power through the perspective of language learning in primary schools. When 'the Paris Peace Conference sought to apply the principle [of self-determination] in Central and Eastern Europe', John Kulczycki wrote, 'language stood for nationality'.<sup>207</sup> International players stopped applying this equation when setting borders in 1923 because they understood that language was just as imagined a concept as the nation; the lines of linguistic division could be drawn wherever one wanted.<sup>208</sup> In Upper Silesia, however, people lived with the consequences of this illusion throughout the entire interwar period. Meanwhile, in Belgium, as will be shown, disputes between nationalists about the use of languages spoken within the country also coloured the political agenda.

When the Polish and Belgian nation-states received sovereignty over, respectively, Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, education was considered to be inextricably linked with

language. For this reason, mass education and teaching in the mother tongue of primary schoolchildren were implemented simultaneously in both Poland and Belgium. Establishing and maintaining control over education was crucial for the functioning of the modern nation-state, since it offered the prospect of a common national socialisation for its youngest citizens. A mass education system could socialise children using a single curriculum and teach them a common standardised language.<sup>209</sup>

The systems of power carved out in the Polish and Belgian borderlands throughout the interwar period are reconstructed in three subsequent chapters. In chapter three, it is shown how during the first time period (1919–1925) language learning in primary schools played a crucial role in transforming what had been spots on a map of Europe on the negotiation table in Paris into lived social spaces. By means of a processual understanding of borders and a relational approach towards the human-made creation and functioning of borders, chapter three goes beyond the drawing of the state border line in order to unravel how the development and implementation of rules governing language learning in borderland primary schools functioned as an essential means of making the border. In Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, the measures put forward to appease the tensions of multilingualism were surprisingly similar. The unitary school system offering teaching in German was replaced by two sorts of primary schools offering teaching in two different languages. In this way, public space could be differentiated, and children separated according to their supposed vernacular. Given the existence of a dispute settlement network for Polish Upper Silesia set up under the supranational control of the League of Nations, various state institutions pleaded their case in public, with their grievances being preserved in great detail. The administrative entity of Eupen-Malmedy, however, took the shape of a curious blend of colonial rule enriched with some of the principles of freedom that characterised the Belgian Kingdom, where inhabitants were subject to a latent form of censorship, and there was no transnational control over the way in which their pupils were treated.

In chapter four it is shown how during the second time period (1926–1932) spaces changed from areas where the demonstration of power took the form of domination or prevention, through school policies for borderland pupils, to socially lived and networked spaces, through an interplay between state institutions, on the one hand, and parents, teachers, children and clergymen, on the other. This change was driven by the desire of borderland inhabitants to acquire as much autonomy as possible. As a result, Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy became the settings for battles over schools, teaching branches, textbooks, language exams, school curricula, ideas on education and styles

of teaching, leading to a circulation of social divisions within networks that spread out beyond these physical borderlands. These battles exposed the contradictions and inconsistencies in existing systems of power not only in the borderlands, but also in Poland, Germany, Belgium and the League of Nations. In the event, these contradictions and inconsistencies proved impossible to overcome. At the start of the 1930s, the quest that had involved and obsessed so many people – to give meaning to the state border line by means of borderland primary school education – resulted in a collapse of meaning for borderland inhabitants. Rather than seeing this as a specific development for Polish Upper Silesia – as has been done in existing historiography – the chapter shows how a similar fate befell the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy. Furthermore, it is argued that what happened, following the notion of human territoriality understood in the sense of the social geographer Claudes Raffestin, was precisely what could have been expected given the specific resources of the relevant systems of power at the time.

The final chapter covers the period between 1932 and the outbreak of the Second World War, comparing how the various ideas on universal childhood articulated at different levels of decision-making on the European continent interplayed in the policies towards borderland pupils, and their experiences of these policies, in Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy. By this time, Polish and Belgian statesmen had come to recognise that a universal childhood required more than the issuing of laws on compulsory education. This was also a time when the case study borderlands had ceased to play a crucial role in international politics themselves, becoming pawns in a geopolitical game about the future reshuffling of the European continent. Whereas Belgian politicians worked out a highly differentiated system of legal prevention of conflicts over language learning in primary education that went far beyond the protection the League of Nations had been able to offer, Polish politicians and scientists developed an obsession with reform pedagogy that was to improve the conditions of learning for borderland children, with Polish Upper Silesia becoming a laboratory of innovative reform pedagogical experiments and studies. Meanwhile, in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, the Roman Catholic Church was highly effective in (although not entirely capable of) blocking the use of reform pedagogy. Both pedagogical innovation and its complete rejection were indeed possible paths in the interwar years, and they could even co-exist within one country. Later, similarities in the transnational pedagogical materials sent from Germany for the education of borderland pupils in both case study borderlands are uncovered and compared. The chapter ends with an illustration and explanation of the way in which the system of power

applicable to Polish Upper Silesia changed more profoundly than the one pertaining to the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy during the acceleration of authoritarianism at the brink of the Second World War.

Finally, the conclusion submits that going to school in Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy was, and continued to be, a significantly different experience than going to school elsewhere in, respectively, Poland and Belgium throughout the entire interwar period. Despite the differences in the continuously changing systems of power in Polish Upper Silesia and the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, interwar borderland pupils had enough in common for us to be able to develop a profile consisting of four characteristics: borderland schools were more dependent on international and transnational changes; borderland schools encountered specifically designed (language learning) policies; (language learning) policy measures were more negotiable within the borderlands; and pupils in borderland schools experienced at first hand the excesses within changing systems of power.

## Notes

1. Lousberg, *Fibel oder Lesebüchlein*.
2. Staatsarchiv Eupen (SE), 657/55/147 (Hauptschulinspektor über Fibel von Herrn Inspektor Lousberg, 1930 or 1931).
3. Lejeune, Toussaint and Pauquet, 'Grenzland seit Menschengedenken', 118; Wintgens, 'Inspektor', 35–37; Schmitz-Reiners, 'Deutsche Schule Antwerpen'.
4. Lousberg, *Fibel oder Lesebüchlein*, 14.
5. Wintgens, 'Inspektor', 35.
6. SE, 657/55/147 (Hauptschulinspektor über Fibel von Herrn Inspektor Lousberg, 1929).
7. SE, 657/55/147 (Urteil eines hervorragenden rheinischen Methodikers über die Fibel des belgischen Schulinspektors Lousberg, 1929).
8. Ibid.
9. See Georg Schmidt-Rohr, 'Religion und Muttersprache', *Deutsche Schulzeitung* 1933–1934, 17. *Deutsche Schulzeitung* was published by the Association of German Teachers in Poland.
10. Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte*, 903.
11. Sanborn, *Imperial Apocalypse*, 236; Vladimir Lenin wrote 'The Revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination' in late 1915 and 'The Socialist Revolution and the Rights of Nations to Self-Determination' in April 1916; see Chernev, 'Brest', 2011, 370–71.
12. Leonhard, *Frieden*, 96–104.
13. Wheeler-Bennett, *Forgotten Peace*, 268.
14. Gerwarth, *Vanquished*, 12.
15. The Treaty of Versailles was one of five international post-First World War Treaties that prepared the shape of interwar Europe's state borders. The Treaty of Versailles regu-

lated the borders with Germany, the Treaty of St Germain with Austria, the Treaty of Neuilly with Bulgaria, the Treaty of Trianon with Hungary, and the Treaty of Sèvres with the Ottoman Empire (or the Big Three, when Italy temporarily pulled out of the negotiations to the Treaty of Versailles).

16. Clemenceau, *Grandeur*, 166 and 170.
17. Martel, 'A Comment', 623.
18. Cattaruzza and Langewiesche, 'Introduction', 4.
19. Sonnino as quoted in Spector, *Rumania*, 243.
20. Macmillan, *Paris 1919*, 493. Despite their aspirations, Vietnamese, Iranian, Syrian and Armenian nationalists and others were refused representation during the peace talks. Dealing with disputed territories beyond Europe, the decision makers reverted to old imperialist habits: they assigned pieces of land.
21. Mishkova and Trencsényi, 'Introduction', 9; Macmillan, *Paris 1919*, 221; Harley, *New Nature*.
22. Langewiesche, *Nation*, 16.
23. Anderson, 'Geopolitics', 127.
24. Kamusella, 'Language', 237.
25. Mishkova and Trencsényi, 'Introduction', 9; Macmillan, *Paris 1919*, 221; Harley, *New Nature*.
26. Leonhard, *Frieden*, 718ff.
27. Sanborn, *Imperial Apocalypse*, 237.
28. Gerwarth, *Vanquished*, 4–5.
29. Wandycz, *France*, 131.
30. Chlebowczyk, *Nad Olzą*.
31. See Conze, *Illusion*; Leonhard, *Frieden*.
32. As quoted in Reynaud, *Mémoires*, 457.
33. Berg, *Woodrow Wilson*, 182.
34. *Ibid.*, 188ff.
35. Macmillan, *Paris 1919*, 465.
36. *Ibid.*, 482.
37. Kolb, *Weimarer*, 184 and 189.
38. Mazower, 'Minorities', 50.
39. *Ibid.*, 51; Fink, *Defending*, 264.
40. For a discussion on the Polish Minority Treaty, see Fink, *Defending*, 237–64.
41. Wilson associated self-determination with democratic self-governance. Only when inhabitants of a region were considered capable of governing themselves could they be granted independence. This reduced the assignment of national self-determination to former imperial territories on the European continent (Leonhard, *Frieden*, 708–18). Despite their aspirations, nationalists from other continents, such as the Vietnamese, Iranians, Syrians and Armenians, were refused representation (Mishra, *Ruins*, 187–93).
42. Marks, *Innocent*, 153.
43. Macmillan, *Paris 1919*, 278.
44. Doepgen, *Abtretung*, 5; Mazower, 'Minorities', 56.
45. Article 34 of the Versailles Treaty, as cited in Brüll and Kontny, *Eupen-Malmedy im europäischen Vergleich*, 50.
46. Von Hirschhausen and Leonhard, 'Europäische Nationalismen', 15.
47. Gerwarth, *Vanquished*, 14.
48. Polak-Springer, *Recovered*, 15.
49. Bonfiglio, 'Inventing the Native Speaker', 54.
50. Hobsbawm, *Nations*, 22–23 and 97.

51. Kamusella, *Politics*, 239.
52. Kulczycki, *Belonging*, 10.
53. Dieckhoff, *Invention of a Nation*, 101.
54. Müller and Torp, 'Conceptualising', 611–12.
55. Di Fiore, 'Production of Borders', 48.
56. Žáček, 'Górny Śląsk'; Čapský, 'Górny Śląsk w okresie późnego średniowiecza'.
57. Kamusella, *Creole*, 144–51; Gellner, *Nations*, 11. There is an ongoing debate on whether Silesian is a separate language. The solution offered in the Silesian Museum in Katowice in 2016 was to consider Silesian as a spoken language, but not a standardised written language. Visitors were offered written explanations in Polish, German and English, with oral explanations also available in Silesian.
58. Bjork et al., 'Introduction', 1.
59. Struve, 'Erfahrung', 141.
60. Bjork, 'Monoglot Norms', 122. See also Bjork et al., 'Introduction', 1; Kaczmarek, 'Zwischen Regionalismus', 164–86; Michalczyk, *Heimat*, 17.
61. Wilson, *Frontiers*, 214.
62. Schmidt-Rösler, 'Autonomie', 11; Jerczyński, *Historia*; Alexander, 'Oberschlesien', 465–89.
63. Wilson, *Frontiers*, 69.
64. Kamusella, 'Isomorphism', 57–92. On imagined communities see Anderson, *Imagined*.
65. Di Fiore, 'Production of Borders', 36.
66. Pabst, 'Eupen-Malmedy', 221–23.
67. Pabst, 'Politische Geschichte', 11.
68. Möller, 'Im Zeitalter der Nationalsprachen', 232.
69. Van Banning, *Gebiedsovergang*, 27ff.
70. Möller, 'Im Zeitalter der Nationalsprachen', 234; Willemyns and Vandenbussche, 'De standaardisering', 637.
71. Pabst, 'Politische Geschichte', 11.
72. Giesdorf, Lindig and Brüll, 'Die beständige Suche nach Heimaten', 132–33.
73. *Ibid.*, 133. See also Legros, *La Wallonie*.
74. Scharte and Liemann, 'Auf dem Weg zu Nation und Nationalismus', 43; Scharte, 'Die Verwaltung des Alltags', 89.
75. Herrmann, 'Schulen', 253.
76. Balace, 'Belgien', 95. In Alsace, such support was more substantial than in the small region of Malmedy. Alsace was reported to be a mainly French-speaking region upon its annexation in 1875. While policymakers initially attempted to erase French from the primary school curriculum, under pressure from Francophile inhabitants within the German Empire they later developed a liberal language policy for Alsatian schools. In Lorraine, by contrast, where only one-third of the population was reported to speak French, children were to speak standardised German (Rimmele, *Sprachenpolitik*, 17 and 161–62).
77. Kamusella, *Politics*, 375.
78. Möller, 'Im Zeitalter der Nationalsprachen', 236–37.
79. *Ibid.*, 238.
80. *Belgique. Constitution du 7 février 1831*, Article 23; Pabst, 'Eupen-Malmedy', 346.
81. Willemyns and Vandenbussche, 'De standaardisering', 638.
82. Mallinson, *Power*, 33 and 60.
83. Bischoff, *Die deutsche Sprache in Belgien*, 11; Möller, 'Im Zeitalter der Nationalsprachen', 234.
84. I could not find quantitative data on the number of teachers offering courses in German-speaking villages close to the German border. We do know that in 1906 only

- 11 out of the 28 policemen employed in Arel/Arlon knew German (Bischoff, *Die deutsche Sprache in Belgien*, 40).
85. Beyen, 'Belgium', 242, 247 and 352; Vos, 'Van België', 91.
  86. Beyen, 'Belgium', 348.
  87. Lejeune, *Die Deutsch-Belgischen Kulturbeziehungen*, 23–25.
  88. Beyen, 'Belgium', 348.
  89. Wils, *Vlaanderen*, 226 and 456.
  90. Vos, 'Van België', 93.
  91. Van Ginderachter, 'Nationale onverschilligheid', 212; Van Ginderachter, *The Everyday Nationalism*, x.
  92. Wils, *Vlaanderen*, 97; Vos, 'Van België', 91.
  93. Elias, *Vlaamse gedachte*, 217 and 318.
  94. *Ibid.*, 166 and 319.
  95. Mallinson, *Power*, 33.
  96. Fass, *History of Childhood*; Hindman, 'Child Labor', 45–48; Fyfe, 'Historical Role of Education', 49–52.
  97. Prussia was the first political entity in the world to prohibit industrial labour for children under the age of nine (and to approve working conditions for older children) (Kastner, *Kinderarbeit im Rheinland*). Similar measures were later taken in the Habsburg Monarchy (1859), the Russian Empire (1882), Belgium (1889), and within the newly independent Polish state (1919) (Gorshkov, *Factory Children*, 93; Beneš, 'Labour'; Vermandere, *We zijn goed aangekomen!*, 22; Bouverne-De Bie, 'De pedagogisering', 1–4; *Dziennik Ustaw*, 1921, Item 44, Position 267.
  98. Tröhler, Popkewitz and Labaree, 'Introduction', 13–14.
  99. Depaape, *De pedagogisering achterna*, 146.
  100. Marissal, *Protéger le jeune enfant*, 33.
  101. Lamberti, *State*, 13.
  102. Gellner, *Nations*, 27.
  103. Tröhler, Popkewitz and Labaree, 'Introduction', 5.
  104. Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte*, 879, 888 and 903.
  105. For example, in one district of Upper Silesia, the Lublinitz district, 94.3 per cent of the 43,428 people living there at the time were Roman Catholics. In the regions of Eupen, Malmedy and Montjoie (which was split after the First World War, when the city of Sankt Vith and its vicinities changed to Belgian sovereignty), the percentage of Roman Catholics among the 75,038 inhabitants lay between 95.5 and 99.1 per cent (Königliches Statistisches Bureau in Berlin, 1883, LXXXIII, LXXXV. On the number of inhabitants, *ibid.* 258–59).
  106. Lamberti, *State*, 212; Lejeune, 'Abtretung', 236; Mächler, 'Volksschulpolitik', 234.
  107. Kamusella, *Politics*, 403.
  108. In the 1880 census, inhabitants from the German Empire were not asked to indicate their mother tongue, but data gathered in 1911 showed that of the 2,015 primary school children in the Lublinitz district of Upper Silesia living in cities, 504 were reported as speaking German at home, 946 Polish, and 565 both languages. In addition, of the 9,525 children living in the countryside, 323 were reported as speaking German at home, 8,822 Polish, and 334 both languages. In the districts of Eupen and Monjoie, all children were reported as speaking German at home. Of the 1,089 children living in the city of Malmedy, 482 were reported as speaking German, 581 Walloon, and 26 both languages. In the countryside of the Malmedy district, Prussian administrators counted 3,755 German speakers, 880 Walloon speakers, and 114 bilingual children (Königliches Statistisches Bureau in Berlin, 1912, 387).

109. Kamusella, *Politics*, 403; Pabst, 'Eupen-Malmedy', 272–73; Molenda, 'Children and Youth', 161–84.
110. Korth, *Preußische Schulpolitik*, 16ff.; Pabst, 'Eupen-Malmedy', 271.
111. Bjork, *Neither German*, 24; Pabst, 'Eupen-Malmedy', 272–73.
112. Korzeniowska, 'Historia', 69; Pabst, 'Eupen-Malmedy', 272–73.
113. Bjork, *Neither German*, 62; van Banning, *Gebiedsovergang*, 32–33.
114. Gierretz, 'Die Entwicklung des Volksschulunterrichtes', 23. In Upper Silesia, for example, the Roman Catholic Bishop Kopp asked the Prussian Minister of Education in 1890 to establish an additional hour of religious instruction, claiming that there was an insufficient knowledge of the German language among local children, while endeavouring to increase the amount of religious teaching (Bjork, *Neither German*, 66–67).
115. Herrmann, 'Schulen', 182.
116. Lamberti, *State*, 213; Liemann, 'Soziale Inklusion durch Krieg?', 303.
117. Rimmele, *Sprachenpolitik*, 85ff.
118. Hennen and Knauf, *Templerkloster*, 30; Rimmele, *Sprachenpolitik*, 104–5.
119. Herrmann, 'Schulen', 210.
120. Herrmann, 'Pädagogisches Denken', 156.
121. Sandin, 'Education', 20.
122. Tröhler, Popkewitz and Labaree, 'Introduction', 19.
123. *Ibid.*, 'Preface', XII.
124. Berg and Herrmann, 'Einleitung', 23.
125. Sobczak, *Nowe wychowanie*, 9.
126. Benner and Kemper, *Reformpädagogik*, 136, 165, 238 and 268.
127. Depaepe, 'De pedagogiek', 336.
128. Kabzińska, 'Dziecko jako przedmiot', 23.
129. Berg, 'Familie', 120; Depaepe, 'De pedagogiek', 335.
130. Herrmann, 'Pädagogisches Denken', 150; Blumenthal, 'Unterrichtsmethoden', 185, 189 and 191.
131. Rimmele, *Sprachenpolitik*, 104–5.
132. Woodin, McCulloch and Cowan, *School-Leaving Age*, 21–22.
133. By 1880, the Kingdom of Poland, re-created in 1815 at the Congress of Vienna, had lost the autonomy it previously enjoyed within the Russian Empire, but was still referred to under this historical name.
134. Kamusella, *Politics*, 388 and 393.
135. Charriaux, *La Belgique moderne*, 127.
136. Miąso, 'Educational Policy', 166.
137. Jan Władysław Dawid (1859–1914) sent out the first pedagogical survey and showed that, along with innate talent and instinct, it was the school environment in which children grew up that determined the development of their minds (Kabzińska, 'Dziecko jako przedmiot', 36). His collaborator Aniela Szcówna (1869–1921) wrote the first textbook on paedology in Polish and founded the Association for Research on Children (Towarzystwo Badań nad Dziećmi) in 1907 (Szcówna, *Pedologia*). Józefa Joteyko (1866–1928), who grew up in Warsaw, studied experimental psychology at the University of Brussels, and became the director of the International Faculty of Paedology there. She would move to the new Polish independent state in 1919 (Dzierzbicka, 'System O'; Konarski, 'Joteykówna Józefa Franciszka', 297–300; Sobczak, *Nowe wychowanie*, 67–68). Under her leadership, the Polish psychologist Maria Lipska-Librachowa (1878–1955) and the pedagogue Maria Grzegorzewska (1888–1967) obtained PhD degrees at that faculty, after which they also opted for a life in the new Polish Republic (Michalski, *Marii Lipskiej-Librachowej*, 23; Sobecki, *Janusz Korczak*, 9; Wnęk, *Dziecko w polskiej literaturze naukowej*, 9).

138. Scott, 'Reform', 145–87. In 1910, illiteracy was reported to still amount to 41 per cent of the population (Glimos-Nadgórska, *Polskie szkolnictwo*, 76).
139. Dutkowa, *Polityka szkolna w Galicji*, 165; Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*, 9 and 12–13; Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls*, 67. The number of Galician primary schools offering teaching in Polish rose from 2,467 in 1868 to 5,950 in 1913 (Juško, *Rada Szkolna Krajowa*, 244). Secondary school education in Polish was installed after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867. In the following years, even the universities of Krakow and Lwów started to offer instruction in Polish (Kamusella, *Politics*, 390–94).
140. Majorek, 'Herbartyzm', 25. However, because the standard work of Johann Friedrich Herbart – *Allgemeine Pädagogik* (General Pedagogy) – was only translated into Polish in 1912, teachers mainly learned about him through decrees and encyclopaedias, which led to prejudicial interpretations (Dybiec, *Polska w orbicie wielkich idei*, 156). Within Catholic circles, for example, his ideas about moral upbringing were considered incompatible with religious belief (Stepkowski, 'Herbart i jego myśl w Polsce', 107–11).
141. Dutkowa, *Polityka szkolna w Galicji*, 152.
142. Mallinson, *Power*, 33 and 60.
143. *Ibid.*, 46.
144. Schmidt, 'Sprachnationale Konflikte', 195.
145. On school buildings, see Mallinson, *Power*, 33 and 60. On teacher training see Bischoff, *Die deutsche Sprache in Belgien*, 18–19; Fittbogen, *Schulrecht*, 25.
146. Tyssens, *Om de schone ziel*, 61–75; Gubin and Lefèvre, 'Obligation scolaire'.
147. Tyssens, *Om de schone ziel*, 55 and 83.
148. Mallinson, *Power*, 102.
149. de Schaepdrijver, *De groote oorlog*, 20.
150. Statistics are inaccurate and range from 20 to 40 per cent (Charriaut, *La Belgique moderne*, 125; Schmidt, 'Sprachnationale Konflikte', 199).
151. Depaepae, *Order in Progress*, 244.
152. Depaepae, 'De pedagogiek', 331; Willmann, *Pädagogische Vorträge*; Majorek, 'Herbartyzm', 20. For example, the direct method for teaching foreign languages that had been developed in the German Empire was introduced. Teachers were supposed to offer pupils explanations of unknown words in the foreign language but in reality often continued to translate (Gobert, *Dans un pays bilingue*, 6 and 32).
153. Sobczak, *Nowe wychowanie*, 26.
154. Decroly, *Institut d'enseignement spécial*; Descoedres et al., *Erziehungsspiele*.
155. Schumann, 'Introduction', 2.
156. Ingold, *Lines*, 152–53.
157. Marin, 'Reforming the Better', 158.
158. See Lejeune, *Die Deutsch-Belgischen Kulturbeziehungen*; Bahlcke, Gawrecki and Kaczmarek, *Historia Górnego Śląska*.
159. Brüll, 'Historiographie', 160. For an exception, see Aerts, *Repressie*.
160. Ther, *Dark Side*; Douglas, *Orderly and Humane*; Lejeune, *Die Säuberung*.
161. On Upper Silesia, see Gawrecki, *Politické a národnostní poměry*; Bjork et al., *Creating Nationality*; Karch, *Nation*; Michalczyk, *Heimat*; Rosenbaum, *Górny Śląsk i Górnoszlązacy*. On the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, see Kartheuser, *Les années 30 à Eupen-Malmedy*; Lejeune, *Grenzerfahrungen*, vol. 4; O'Connell, *Annexation*; Wenselaers, *De laatste Belgen*. For an exception, see Tiedau, 'Die Rechtslage'.
162. For Upper Silesia, see Kaczmarek, Kucharski and Cybula, *Alzacja/Lotaryngia*; Michalczyk, *Heimat*; Wilson, *Frontiers*. For a comparison of Eupen and the Czech city of Znamo in the interwar years, see Kontny, 'Herrschaftssicherung'.

163. Eser, 'Volk, Staat, Gott!'; Fałęcki, *Niemieckie szkolnictwo mniejszościowe*; Glimos-Nadgórska, *Polskie szkolnictwo*; Novikov, *Shades*.
164. An example is Meyers, *Impulse*; exceptions are the overview article of Lejeune, 'Abtretung' and Lejeune, 'Von Tafel'.
165. Fuchs, *Toujours prêts*, 4.
166. This observation had already been made by Belgian historical pedagogical scientists in the 1990s (Depaep, de Vroede and Simon, '1936 Curriculum Reform', 371).
167. Gemischte Kommission für Oberschlesien, *Amtliche Sammlung*, vol. 1, 2, and 3.
168. This observation holds for the district of Lubliniec. See Archiwum Państwowe w Katowicach (APK), 1363 Starostwo Lubliniecki 1922–39, Dopytyw. 172 a korespondencja, informacje, zgłoszenia o rozpoczęciu działalności organizacji i stowarzyszenia na terenie powiatu lublinieckiego.
169. For literature, see Schenk, *Les mouvements*, vol. 1; Pfadfinder Obere Weser, *Allzeit bereit*. For archival sources, see Schillings, *Entre Allemagne et Belgique*; RULAND – Private Archive of Herbert Ruland, Eynatten, Bredhol, B., 'Tagebuch', Eupen 1938.
170. Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes Berlin (PAAAB), R 31044, Ferienaufenthalte Deutschland-Polen 1929–34. For the region of Eupen, see Schenk, 'Les mouvements', vol. 1.
171. Oswell, *Agency of Children*, 3.
172. Maynes, 'Age', 114–24; Qvortrup, Corsaro and Honig, *Childhood Studies*.
173. Michlic, *Jewish Children*, 16.
174. Venken and Röger, 'Growing up', 204.
175. Examples of books analysing ego sources are Blessing, *Antifascist Classroom*; Iwanicka and Dubas, *Wojna w oczach dziecka*.
176. Oswell, *Agency of Children*, 3.
177. Wille and Hesse, 'Spaces', 35. A similar observation can be found in Venken, *Borderland Studies*.
178. Venken, 'Borderland Child Heterotopias'.
179. For an example, see Wierling, *Geboren im Jahr Eins*.
180. Forman-Brunell and Paris, 'Introduction', 6.
181. See Doepgen, *Abtretung*, 5. For Upper Silesia, see Bjork et al., 'Introduction', 1–7.
182. Beyen and van Ginderachter, 'General Introduction', 11.
183. Kocka and Haupt, 'Introduction', 2.
184. Elliott, *National and Comparative History*, 23.
185. Kocka and Haupt, 'Introduction', 7.
186. Schriewer, 'Problemdimensionen', 30.
187. Kaschuba, 'Gesellschaftsvergleich', 345; Kocka and Haupt, 'Introduction', 4.
188. Kocka and Haupt, 'Introduction', 10; Mjøset, 'Versuch über die Grundlagen', 220.
189. Kocka and Haupt, 'Introduction', 21.
190. All these aspects will be discussed within this monograph, with the exception of cross-border family visits. For the latter, see Bundesarchiv Koblenz (BAK), NL, 174, 23 P, 5b, 1–2 (Brief an den Führer [von] Deutschland, Eupen, 18 October 1938), and *Loben-Guttentager Kreisblatt*, 'Jugendjahre in Oberschlesien', vol. 21, 1978, 8, 2; vol. 21, 1978, 9, 2; vol. 21, 1978, 10, 2; vol. 21, 1978, 11, 2; vol. 21, 1978, 13, 1; vol. 21, 1978, 14, 1. Here vol. 21, 1978, 10, 2.
191. Maria Theresa introduced mandatory primary education in the Habsburg Empire as early as 1774. In Denmark, compulsory basic schooling was provided in 1814 (Jespersen, *History of Denmark*, 101), whereas in France, the Third Republic initiated such schooling following the defeat of 1871 (Hörner, 'Frankreich', 83). Children in Prussia

- and the Habsburg Empire were already subject to compulsory schooling in the nineteenth century, whereas authorities in Tsarist Russia did not regulate schooling at all. Russia and Belgium are most commonly known as the last countries on the European continent to implement compulsory education, but Lithuania needed until 1928 to regulate mass education by law (Harrison, *Lithuania*, 94).
192. On the absence of Jews in Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, see Brüll, 'Eupen-Malmedy' (2017), 268.
  193. Kulczycki, *Belonging*, 15ff.
  194. Mały Rocznik Statystyczny, 1937, 15; Mały Rocznik Statystyczny, 1938, 15; Timmermann, *Zur nationalen Integration*, 300; Schärer, *Deutsche Annexionspolitik*, vol. 38, 86.
  195. Wanatowicz, 'Aktywność', 131–75.
  196. Lee, 'Economic Development', 347–48. See also Fickers, Lejeune and Ruland, 'Industrialisierung', 2016.
  197. van Banning, *Gebiedsovergang*, 87.
  198. Düspohl, 'Arbeitsmigration', 190–203.
  199. Wanatowicz, 'Województwo śląskie'; Masnyk, 'Prowincja górnośląska'.
  200. Quadflieg, 'Elitenkontinuität', 115ff.
  201. van Banning, *Gebiedsovergang*, 89; Czapliński, 'Dzieje Śląska', 395; Lejeune, Rauw and Josten, 'Die große Suche'.
  202. In Germany, between the years 1921 and 1925, 2.2 children were born per 100 inhabitants. In the period 1932–1938, their number declined to 1.8 (Jeziński and Leszczyńska, 'Okres', 182). In Poland, 3.2 births per 100 inhabitants were reported in 1920, a number which increased throughout the 1920s and, despite the economic crisis, remained above 3 until 1931. Later, it gradually declined to 2.4 births per 100 inhabitants in 1938. The birth rates in Poland's western provinces followed the Polish trend (Jeziński and Leszczyńska, 'Okres', 180). In the Lubliniec district of Polish Upper Silesia, the population growth from 44,306 at the end of 1930 to 50,518 at the end of 1938 was more the result of increasing birth rates than of migration ('Stan ludności powiatu lublinieckiego w grudniu 1930 r.', *Tygodnik Powiatowy na powiat lubliniecki*, 1931, 3, 22–23; 'Stan ludności powiatu lublinieckiego w IV. kwartale 1938', *Tygodnik powiatowy na powiat lubliniecki*, 1938, 28, unpaginated). The birth rate in Belgium decreased from 2.04 births per 100 inhabitants between 1901 and 1905 to 1.32 births between 1931 and 1935 (Meslé, 'Mortalité infantile', 252).
  203. In 1922, for example, the public primary school in Lubliniec had 965 pupils. In the 1934–1935 school year, the number of children in the school had increased to 1473 (Bulik and Centerowska, *Szkic monograficzny*, 8–9).
  204. In the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy, birth rates showed a similar trend to the overall Belgian pattern, but declined more slowly. The birth rate in the regions of Eupen, Sankt Vith and Malmedy amounted to 2.76 births per 100 inhabitants in 1921. It declined to 1.66 births between 1931 and 1935 (Statistique par commune).
  205. Mezzadra and Neilson, *Border as Method*, 195.
  206. See Brambilla, 'Critical Potential', 27.
  207. Kulczycki, *Belonging*, 10.
  208. Kamusella, 'Isomorphism', 57–92.
  209. Gellner, *Nations*, 27.