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# The *bluestocking* in the Polish press (1830s-1890s): Othering women through code-switching, borrowing and loan translations<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

This paper studies Polish<sup>2</sup> periodicals published in the nineteenth century with the aim of identifying representations of intellectual women. The following questions are addressed: 1) How were intellectual women evaluated? 2) What linguistic means were used and to what extent were code-switches, borrowings and loan translations sites of othering? 3) Which genres in the newspaper conglomerate featured such representations most frequently? The paper combines the frameworks of evaluation, sociopragmatics of code-switching, and discursive othering. This exploratory case-study focuses on the lexeme *bluestocking* 'educated, intellectual woman' and its French (*bas bleu*) and German counterparts (*Blaustrumpf*), and the Polish loan translations (*niebieska/błękitna pończocha/pończoszka*). The analysis shows that the terms entailed ambiguous evaluations, while the negative ones tended to be enhanced by foreignness effects of the loans from French, German, and English.

Keywords: intellectual women, nineteenth-century Polish press, othering, evaluation, code-switching, unadapted borrowings.

## 1. Introduction

Social divisions and inequalities materialise in news discourse. In the late modern period, the separation of the male-female spheres was seen as one of the most prominent, though also contested, social and cultural divisions

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the reviewers for their helpful remarks. The remaining errors are entirely mine.

<sup>2</sup> The terms Poland and Polish may be taken to designate political entities as well as the language, e.g. the Kingdom of Poland which was part of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth between 1569-1795.

(Shevelov 1989; Bannet 2008). Research underlines that, while constructing normative and idealised femininities, the contemporary publishing markets and periodical press downplayed and obscured actual involvement of women in professional spheres, e.g. of book production (Grundy 2009: 146). Whereas women who engaged in print trade in different capacities have been subject to analysis (see Shapiro 2023 for an overview), learned and intellectual women thematised and represented in the press still have not received the attention they deserve. This paper studies Polish magazines and periodicals published in the nineteenth century with the aim of identifying representations of intellectual women. The following questions are addressed: 1) How were intellectual women evaluated in this linguistic and cultural circle? 2) What linguistic means were used to build the literary female personae and to what extent were code-switches, borrowings and loan translations sites of othering? 3) Which genres in the newspaper and magazine conglomerate featured such representations most frequently? The paper combines the frameworks of evaluation, sociopragmatics of written code-switching, and discursive othering.

This exploratory case-study focuses on the foreign lexeme, *bluestocking* ‘educated, intellectual woman’, its French (*bas bleu*) and German counterparts (*Blaustrumpf*), as well as the Polish loan translations (*niebieska/błękitna pończocha/pończoszka*). The analysis is divided into a qualitative presentation of the data (Section 4) followed by a quantitative study (Section 5). The lexeme drew my attention in the material on women’s issues in different types of nineteenth-century periodicals in Polish, including dailies and weeklies, specialised women’s magazines and literary journals. At this preliminary stage, I have also identified further terms that are semantically equivalent to the notion of a learned woman and that bear a lexical connection to the Bluestocking society. Data samples were then extracted through automated searches for these keywords in the databases of digitised newspapers (*Biblioteka Jagiellońska* and *CRISPA*). The paper shows that the terms entailed ambiguous evaluations, while the negative ones tended to be enhanced by foreignness effects of the unadapted or partially adapted loans from French, German, and English. Finally, the study indicates some directions for further research into the representations of women in late modern news discourse.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 introduces the sources of data against the background of the periodical market in Poland in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. Section 3 provides background for the approach that combines discursive evaluation and representations of women with the notion of othering and the sociopragmatics of written code-

switching. Section 4 briefly outlines the cultural and social background of the term *bluestocking* and illustrates its transfer and reception in the Polish press through a preliminary qualitative analysis. This section not only indicates the positive and negative poles of the evaluation entailed in the keywords, but it also explains the rationale behind the selection of the keywords. Section 5 covers illustrations of othering that accompany the use of the unadapted or partially adapted borrowing *bluestocking* and the related keywords in the Polish news discourse. Section 6 offers a summary and some conclusions.

## 2. Periodical press in partitioned Poland: A brief sketch

The development of periodical press in Polish, in general, was somewhat belated compared to that in Britain and the rest of western Europe and Italy. A number of factors may be indicated to account for this. First of all, in the eighteenth century, the period of consolidation of the press market in Britain (Brownlees 2023), numerous military conflicts and internal destabilisation led to the political dissolution of the Kingdom of Poland. The first partition, i.e. territorial annexation of Polish lands, occurred in 1772. Two further partitions followed in 1793 and 1795, with the state disappearing into the Empires of Russia, Prussia and Austro-Hungary. Secondly, the urbanisation rate and economic indicators may be taken into account. For instance, in the 1830s, the so-called Russian Poland was still a rural economy, with the urbanisation rate under 10% and GDP per capita at c. 33% of that of Britain (Bukowski et al. 2019). Thirdly, literacy rates were much lower than in western Europe. Although this may be exaggerated and does not account for urban vs. rural or gender distinctions, it has been estimated that only c. 2-3% of the population were able to read the press in the 1790s (Łojek 1963: 26).

All in all, this environment did not create favourable conditions for the development of the press market or diversification and popularisation of newspapers and periodicals. For example, *Monitor Warszawski*, a government gazette launched in 1824 was published in 800 copies (Warsaw had c. 115,000 inhabitants then), but with only 200 subscriptions (Słomkowska 1968). Three decades earlier *The Times* was disseminated in 3,000 copies (Finkelstein 2023: 51; London's population exceeded one million). At the point of the most intense growth of periodical press during the November Uprising against the Russian government in 1830-31, as many as 49 titles were published in Warsaw (Łojek 1965: 14); 7 of these were dailies with 7,000 circulation

in total. The crushed uprising resulted in the freezing of the publishing market and repressions. In addition, there were considerable differences between the Russian, Austro-Hungarian and Prussian territories in terms of legal regulations and censorship. Moreover, material issues, such as the advancement of printing and paper production technologies, affected the press markets differently. Moreover, partitioned Poland was multilingual and multicultural, which was also reflected in periodical publications (Kolasa 2015; e.g. Barełkowski 2021 on the German language press). Finally, in terms of the social reach of periodical press, given literacy restrictions mentioned above and the relatively high cost of newspapers, it is not likely that the readership was socially or economically representative of the contemporary society in partitioned Poland.

Moving on to specialised press for women, in Britain, women's participation in periodical cultures in general goes back to the early eighteenth century (Shevelow 1989). It was then that periodical press, in particular popular magazines such as e.g. the *Tatler*, put on a "mantle of a progressive orientation towards women" (Shevelow 1989: 4). This meant a reformist programme of opening educational and literary opportunities to an idealised female figure, the domestic woman, in order to make her an object of interest, as well as a reader and a writer. Whereas, as Shevelow continues, periodicals of this type became a written site of constructing norms for femininity at the time in Britain, parallel developments in Poland did not start until the 1770s with the publication of *Monitor* (1765-1785), one of the many European copycats of the English *Spectator* (1711-12). As I have noted elsewhere, it took even longer before specialised female titles appeared in the Polish lands (Włodarczyk 2025). Only as late as the nineteenth century did literacy advance considerably, as a result of which issues of female education were raised by periodical press and tendencies for emancipation were voiced (Głos – Matuszko 2021: 122). Research has thus indicated the 1860s, when, with the rise of a reformist movement, i.e. positivism (Stegmann 2000: 33-34), specialised magazines for female audience appeared (see also Franke 1999).

The databases utilised for the purpose of this study comprise archives of periodical and other printed material from the collections of the University libraries in Cracow and Warsaw. The *Jagiellonian Digital Library* and *CRISPA* cover specialised, literary and other thematic publications, as well as news sources, such as dailies, weeklies, magazines from 1660s to present day. Both have been created and expanded thanks to the financial support of the EU and are outcomes of intense and commendable, but not entirely transparent

or consistent digitisation efforts. As both repositories enable searches and filtering results from periodical publications, they are at present the most comprehensive online resources of primary material on historical news discourse in partitioned Poland. Understandably, as university libraries' collections, the data cover urban periodical market to a larger extent than provincial papers. However, research into subscription patterns shows that newspapers published in major cities circulated in the provincial areas as well (Łojek 1965). As far as keyword searches are concerned, since internal classifications are not fine-grained and the metadata systematics is not free from overlaps, reliable searches are best to be conducted on the entirety of the periodical sections, or within individual titles/ individual time spans. Overall, for the late modern period, the digital libraries provide a broad background on historical press in partitioned Poland and as a primary resource, they may be described as representative of its variety and time depth.

### **3. Evaluation, representations and othering of women**

Brownlees (2025), who discusses male – female relations in letters to the editor in eighteenth-century British periodicals, concludes that representations of women are hardly ever neutral. Brownlees employs the framework of evaluation based on Thompson and Hunston (2000). Evaluation is thus viewed on discourse level beyond the lexicogrammatical features and may transpire in the form of graduation of intensity or force of an utterance (Brownlees 2025: 162; cf. Bednarek 2006: 29). This suggests that evaluation is not simply a sum of individual features, but a pragmatic phenomenon fostered by a text or an utterance as a whole. Indeed, the lexicogrammatical approach to evaluation entails certain limitations. For instance, more subtle forms of evaluation, implied rather than explicit assessments, remain unaccounted for. In this respect, approaches that take into account cognitive aspects of communication, such as the processing effort involved in message decoding, come in handy. In this paper, I would like to implement an approach that combines evaluation, the sociopragmatics of code-switching and discursive othering.

A previous paper (Włodarczyk 2025) analysed occupational and agentive terms for women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century periodicals in partitioned Poland and qualitatively explored typographic features in representations of women employing the framework proposed by

Tyrkkö and Legutko (2023). Typographic marking of feminatives (italicisation, bolding, excessive punctuation) reveal “*otherness* that is observable in the visual mode” (Tyrkkö – Legutko 2023: 144; original italics) and, by extension, also attitudes toward women and social evaluations of the terms and potential referents. Interestingly, as the authors note, such marking of non-standard text in *Punch* has a humorous motivation and introduces playfulness related to linguistic creativity. In this paper, it is not typography, but foreignness effects of unadapted or partially adapted borrowings/code-switched items and, to some extent, also of loan translations, that is viewed as a form of othering in the framework of the social and visual impact of code-switching (Sebba 2011; Machan 2011).<sup>3</sup> In other words, the use of such terms not only involves a markedness effect, with consequences for the processing effort, but becomes an ideal site for sensitising the audience to the social and cultural evaluations of their referents, with possible *otherness* effects.

These effects share some affinity with *othering*, a keyword in present-day media studies:

Othering is a strategy that reinforces the mainstream by differentiating individuals and groups and relegating them to the margins according to a range of socially constructed categories. Othering occurs via a wide range of practices from language differentiation to geographical assignation, native/nonnative status (despite legal citizenship), and photographic and filmic techniques that foreground and center some characters while backgrounding and obscuring others (Gray – Ouellette 2017: 133).

The notion of “Other” and the processes of othering have been voiced profoundly in Critical Discourse Analysis (van Dijk 1998, 2000; Reisigl – Wodak 2001). The self-other or we-they polarisation of attitudes in discourse are relatively common-sense notions with cognitive underpinnings (van Dijk 1998: 25). Expanding on this dichotomy, Reisigl – Wodak (2001) developed an approach within CDA which has been used to study discursive constructions of identities, based on the assumption of positive self and negative other presentation also in historical press (Bös 2024a).

Recently, the notion of othering has been employed in the analysis of online media (Vaahensalo 2021) to frame dominance vs. marginalisation in

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<sup>3</sup> Typographic marking very often accompanies the keywords analysed here. Thus, the broader framework employed by Tyrkkö – Legutko (2023), i.e. Jaffe’s (2000) orthographic aesthetics is potentially relevant here as well.

the ethnic and cultural domains. Undoubtedly, women have been seen as the controlled and inferior “other” relative to men historically (De Beauvoir 1997 [1949]). Interestingly, it has been shown that in anonymous online discussions, both maleness and whiteness are still the supported norms (Phillips 2019). Vaahensalo describes online othering discourse as social, intersectional, and discursively diverse (Vaahensalo 2021: 223-236). More precisely, the phenomenon of othering entails specific attributes: public visibility and polarising dichotomies. These and some more of its attributes, interestingly, are also observable in the ways that historical media represented women (see Sections 4 and 5 below). Thus, in contemporary media, othering discourse uses arguments about humanity in general, targets groups rather than individuals, entails intersections of a broad array of identities that are marginalised on different grounds, does not necessarily entail overt hostility or racist terminology but employs humour and even impartial terms. Finally, othering may serve the purpose of resistance and subversion (e.g. against cis people).

Othering thus involves discursive phenomena such as backgrounding, marginalisation, trivialisation and discrimination in representing individuals and groups. That such polarising discursive constructions have been universally present not only in the media, but in human communication in general cannot be denied. Whereas issues of dominance and marginalisation have been studied in historical press, depositions and letters within the framework of CDA in reference to women in different periods (Prentice – Hardie 2009; Bös 2024b; MacLeod – Fennel 2012; Wood 2009), the term othering has, to my knowledge, so far not been employed.

This study connects polarisation of group identities and individuals commonly identified through CDA to the use of code-switching, unadapted and partially adapted borrowings/code-switches and loan translations as lexical means which underline the foreignness of a target reference (the *otherness* as defined by Tyrkkö – Legutko 2023: 144). In written texts, visual cues may emphasise this effect prompting the audience to take notice of social and cultural values of the referents relative to the mainstream ones (e.g. patriarchy and male dominance). An important component of othering, as understood here, is that it does not essentially entail overt hostility or discriminating terminology, but it may employ humour and unbiased terms (as noted both by Tyrkkö – Legutko 2023 and Vaahensalo 2021). It is the ambivalence and, paradoxically, through the markedness of the non-native material, a note of playfulness in relation to linguistic creativity and novelty, that othering may add to the evaluations entailed

in the representations of non-mainstream groups beyond unambiguously negative attitudes.

Research into periodicals in Britain has shown that throughout the eighteenth century they drew a specific image of women that often undermined their intellectual capacities and restricted their needs to the domestic sphere (Shevelow 1989: 33-37; Batchelor – Powell 2018: 6, 10). Since learned women in particular failed to live up to the normative constructions of femininity, it may be assumed that this group, not just women in general, have been a target of discursive othering as defined above. More specifically, in this study, one of the effects of discursive othering is reinforcement of male dominance, as well as of the femininity models engendered by and in order to meet the needs of the social and cultural mainstream non-female mainstream. In Section 4 below I explain why representations of femininity constructed in relation to the Bluestockings, an intellectual circle dominated by women which came to be known internationally, provide a fascinating case for the frameworks outlined above.

#### **4. How the Bluestockings travelled to Poland: Definitions, lexical transfer and contemporary metacomments**

The Bluestocking Society has become emblematic for informal social and intellectual groups in the eighteenth century who have played an important role in contesting sex divisions in access to education and learning (Myers 1990; Eger 2013; Sairio 2009; Heller 2015; Pohl 2018). Vast literature on the Society exists that cannot be reviewed here in greater detail for reasons of space. Instead, the semantics of the term bluestocking in English and its echoes in the early usage in the Polish press are discussed below.

At present in historical and literary studies, the English term denotes learned women. The meaning was fostered in the original social circle in the 1750s and was used positively (Pohl 2018: 445 [fn. 8]; Sairio 2009: 95). Originally, woollen blue stockings (and other pieces of garment in blue) were associated with working-class men.<sup>4</sup> In the 1770s, the term started to be used in reference to women, and a derogatory sense developed (Myers

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<sup>4</sup> The earlier English meaning of the term *blue stocking* (OED, adj. meaning 1, a1683 related to the Bluestocking Parliament) is reflected in 1812 in a political report on the English parliament in the title of a play: *The Blue Stocking or the Memebre Parliamentary, Błękitne Pończochy, czyli Członek Parlamentu*. (1812, *Gazeta Korrespondenta Warszawskiego y Zagranicznego*, No. 23).

1990: 6, 9-10). As Myers (1990: 244) further claims, after 1775, the reference narrowed down to women, in particular those active in literary, intellectual, and public life. This meaning became dominant over time, because it was women and their new roles that were intensely commented on in the contemporary press.

One of the first explanations of the term for a Polish audience in the sense generated around the famous Society is found in the travel accounts by Krystyn Lach-Szyrma from the 1820s (Podhajecka 2013: 144, f. 6).<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, the term is used by the traveller in the Scottish context when he praises the knowledge of languages and education of Scottish women contrasting their active use of French with passive knowledge among the English ladies (Lach-Szyrma 1820-24, Vol. 3: 233):

- (1) Język francuzki znają prawie wszystkie, i więcej nim mówią niż Angielki lecz pospolicie przestają na rozumieniu go; Swoję literaturę znają doskonale: uczą się wiele wierszy, niektóre je piszą. Kobiety literatki nazywane są *blue stockings*<sup>6</sup> (niebieskie pończochy) [...].

[Nearly all of them know the French language and speak it more than the English ladies, who commonly restrict themselves to understanding it. They know their literature perfectly well: they learn many poems by heart, some write poetry. Literary women are named *blue stockings* (niebieskie pończochy) [...].

In the Polish press, the English origins of the term were acknowledged and a variety of “definitions” of bluestockings may be found in the form of metacommentary. For instance, in 1836 the word was described as “a mocking name for learned women”,<sup>7</sup> while in 1837 the referents were described as a sect.<sup>8</sup> An extended explanatory piece going back to Elizabeth Montague and Benjamin Stillingfleet (see Sairio 2009: 95) titled *Bas bleu – niebieska pończocha* published in 1885<sup>9</sup> corrects the mistaken view (which must have had some currency) that the term originated in France. Some explanatory accounts

<sup>5</sup> I was not able to trace the reference to the page provided by Podhajecka (2013: 144 [fn. 6]), which may be due to different pagination and volume division in different editions.

<sup>6</sup> All typographic emphasis is original, unless indicated otherwise.

<sup>7</sup> “niebieskie pończochy są szydłem nazwiskiem uczonych kobiet w Anglii” [blue stockings are a mocking name for learned women in England] (1836, *Korrespondent*, No. 148).

<sup>8</sup> “Niebieskie pończochy nazywano sektę jedną w Anglii” [A sect in England was called blue stockings] (1837, *Zbiórca Literacki i Polityczny* [V.3], No. 15, 9 June 1837).

<sup>9</sup> 1885, *Słowo*. Year 4, No. 77.

were not less detailed, but less accurate. For instance, it was claimed that Benjamin Stillingfleet was a poet and soul of the Club “of **men** and women” (emphasis MW). The term blue stocking, as was further explained, came from Stillingfleet’s worsted stockings (this was true), but was later extended to “female members” and “to this day, has meant pretentious savants”.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, female writers emphasised the original lack of derogation of the expression:

- (2) (\*) znaczenie wyrazu *bas bleu*, jakie mu później nadano, chwytając się byle pretekstu w celu ośmieszania uczonych kobiet nie było pierwotnie żadną ironiczną przenośnią. Jak również i *virago* nie oznaczało u Rzymian pogardliwej lecz bezzaszczytną nazwę.<sup>11</sup>

[The meaning of the word *bas bleu* that was later attached to it with a feeble excuse to ridicule learned women was initially not an ironic metaphor. Similarly, among the Romans, *virago* was not disparaging, but a neutral name.]

Having gained some insight from the contemporary meta-comments, I would like to move on to examples of usage which illustrate the potential of the term to include social commentary on women. I would like to start with an unusual example drawn from an editorial piece titled “In a saloon of the great world” (example 3 below). Its special value lies in the fact that the bluestocking persona is found in her original environment, in a Paris saloon. She is presented through the eyes of a social novice who sees her as a curious creature: “not a lady! A bluestocking”. The observer describes her as “merciless” as she forces guests to listen to her “treatise on female independence” bellowed with a “little voice”. While “conversing” with a circle of ridiculously dressed and unfashionably combed “swarm of heart print vests with and *kwafiur a la capout*”, she shouts and bites her lips. On spotting the novice trying to sneak away to the dancers in the next room, she complains loudly about the disappearance of conversation from the saloons and sarcastically praises him for refusing to play the role of a “Cariatide”. In return, she gets a sharp but polite retort:

<sup>10</sup> “a następnie określenie to zostało dla żeńskich członków klubu i do dnia dzisiejszego oznacza pretensjonalne sawantki” [next the term was limited to female members and to this day, has meant pretentious savants] (1887, *Gazeta Polska*, No. 189). The Polish term *sawantka* is a feminine denoting female referents only.

<sup>11</sup> *Tygodnik Mód i Powieści: z dodatkiem ilustrowanym ubrań i robót kobiecych* 1877, No. 49 (8 Dec). <https://jbc.bj.uj.edu.pl/dlibra/publication/490697/edition/465033>. Drawn from a review of Edward Reich’s book written by a woman.

- (3) [...] zwrócił się bez ogródki do pończochy i kłaniając się, rzekł: Pani! jestem zupełnie jej zdania, gust i dowcip rozstają się z naszymi salonami, na naszych wieczorach już nie rozmawiają tylko się pozują i dla tego też to widzimy w salonach *nieme* karjatydy, ale co smutniejsza, że tam widzimy także kariatydy, które mówią. To rzekłszy, skłonił się unizienie i odszedł. (1869, *Kraj*, No. 222, 25 November).

[(...) he turned bluntly to the *stocking*, bowed, and said: Lady! I totally agree with you, good taste and wit are scarce in our salons, in our evenings people no longer converse but strike a pose. Therefore, not only do we see *dumb* caryatides, but also, even more sadly, we also see caryatides who can speak. That said, he bowed respectfully and left her.]

In this multidimensional, but unambiguously negative representation of a bluestocking woman in her social environment, the Polish term *niebieska pończocha* ‘blue stocking’, as well as its shortened form: *pończocha* ‘stocking’ are used. In 1869, the Polish audience has already had the referential meaning of the Bluestocking Club member<sup>12</sup> at their disposal as some meta-commentary presented above shows. However, the metonymy by which a piece of clothing is used to represent a person is improved here, as it is used twice to refer to the company in which the “blue stocking” is located (“a swarm of heart-print vests”). Although salon sociality is taken with a pinch of salt here, the vivid, almost visual image of an insect-like collective is as unfitting as can be to the occasion. Not only does the lady embody lack of taste or wit, she is also overwhelming and unmannered. The latter vice contrasts with impeccable and ostensibly respectful conduct of the novice. The bluestocking persona is defeminised and downgraded socially (she is not a lady, she is ostentatious and boorish), she moralises others in a pitiful way, her pseudo-intellectual remark (on the motif of caryatide) is easy to turn against her. Most importantly, she is a pose of a person, there is nothing genuine about her. The young male and honest novice teaches her a lesson and in a great poised style.

This humorous piece of editorial news reflects sentiments similar to seriously-minded commentary on the inadequacy of women compared to men quoted below (example 4). The literary scene is the subject here in

<sup>12</sup> It is not a *bluestocking woman* that the Polish loan translation reflects, it is literally a *blue stocking*, a piece of garment, in particular when in the singular number. Some items comment on the persona wearing or not wearing the blue stockings, suggesting that the literal meaning of the attribute was still prominent and underlined the bodily as opposed to the intellectual and spiritual aspect of the original metaphor.

a sample translation of a preface to “Kleine Menschen” by Sarah Hutzler, which has just been published in Berlin. The preface was written by Dr. Max Nordau,<sup>13</sup> “a new adversary of women” from Paris. The sample titled *Kobiety-literatki* [Literary women] is preceded by a remark that the editors quote the author of the preface verbatim, neither contradicting nor accepting the views presented. In short, the preface states that women are responsible for the declining standards in literary production, for which a range of arguments specific to the art of writing are collected. However, all this is due to vices intrinsic in femininity as such:

- (4) Zwykła *robota kobieca* (Blaustrumpf-Arbeit) ma pewne wspólne wady, które widoczne źródło swe mają W właściwości przeciętnej natury kobiecej, jest nieprawdziwą niesamodzielną, bez czucia. (1886, *Kuryer Codzienny*, Year 22, No. 244.)

[The common *female work* (Blaustrumpf-Arbeit) has some vices in common originating visibly in the mediocrity of female nature, which is ingenuous, nonautonomous, and unfeeling.]

The term *Blaustrumpf-Arbeit*, used in Polish as a partially adapted borrowing, has several facets to it. First of all, the allusion to the bluestocking figure is undeniable there, given the context (England being mentioned as one of the first countries where the role of literary women was detrimental to literature). However, in German the term *Blaustrumpf* has a separate semantic history: it was originally an offensive term to describe a male traitor.<sup>14</sup> In the eighteenth century, the bluestocking meaning denoting the English salons was added. Nordau, who seems to have coined the term *Blaustrumpf-Arbeit*, appears to exploit the connection of women’s intellectual and literary contributions to the strongly derogatory meaning that the original German designation entails.

What the two examples, (3) and (4), have in common is that they create strongly unfavourable representations of women in the social and literary domains. Still, they illustrate two poles of the use of the term. In the first instance, the original salon character is depicted in detail; the reference is directly connected to the (superficially) intellectual though pretentious bluestocking. It evokes the original intellectual circle, but underlines that its

<sup>13</sup> Max Nordau (1849-1923), a medical doctor, author and social critic was in a relationship with Sarah Hutzler (1853-1893), a German-American writer, between 1881-82/3 (Zudrell 2003: 135, f 558).

<sup>14</sup> See <https://www.zdl.org/wb/wortgeschichten/Blaustrumpf>.

ideals are failing over a century later. In the second one, the original German term glosses the Polish translation, with no need for an explanation or recourse to the source reference to evoke the persona. The term thus denotes a more general meaning which does not require a close contextualisation to be transparent.

As further examples show, by the 1880s *Blaustrumpf* functioned as a grammatically adapted borrowing, alongside the English and French equivalents (*bas bleu*), and the Polish loan translations (*niebieska/błękitna pończocha*). These terms are related semantically as well as intertextually, as they all bear a link to the Bluestocking society. Moreover, the terms are relevant to the framework adopted here (see Section 3 above), as they evoke a foreignness effect that sensitises the audience to the expression of evaluation. Based on thorough readings of samples on themes of female education and professional opportunities, I have not identified any further terms connected to the lexeme *bluestocking* that were used to describe intellectual women. Hence these terms, as listed below, are subject to further analysis below (Section 5, Table 1).

## 5. Women through unadapted loanwords and loan translations: An analysis

### 5.1 Language contact terms and illustrations

Prior to quantitative analysis, a brief presentation of the terms and concepts in the realm of language contact is due. Some studies have attempted to draw lines of distinction between mixing, code-switching and have in particular distinguished between code-switching and borrowing (Myers-Scotton 1992). Recent research shows that some delimitations require a revision when faced with historical evidence where clear-cut distinctions between, e.g., code-switching and borrowing are even more difficult to draw (Schendl – Wright 2011). However, even researchers who acknowledge that “[t]he use of overt material from two languages unites CS and lexical borrowing” (Backus – Dorleijn 2009: 78) decide to keep the three categories, i.e. code-switching, lexical borrowings and loan translation, apart. In particular, the latter stands out, as it does not include foreign material, but its native equivalents. In this paper, I follow the distinctions drawn by Backus and Dorleijn (2009: 76-77):

**loanword/lexical borrowing:** “words from a lending language become entrenched as conventional words in the receiving lexicon”; e.g. Polish

is a language with overt case marking on the noun through inflectional endings, so here belong forms such as *bluestocking-ów*, *Blaustrumpf-ów* (Genitive Plural); *Blaustrumpf-u* (Genitive Singular)

**loan translation:** “any usage of morphemes in Language A that is the result of the literal translation of one or more elements in a semantically equivalent expression in Language B”; e.g. Pl. *niebieska pończocha* [blue stocking]

**code-switching:** “use of overt material (from single morphemes to entire sentences) from Language B in Language A discourse.”, e.g. in Pl. “do tego najnieprzyjemniejszego z potworów, *that most disagreeable of all monsters, a blue stocking*, kobiety-literatki.”, “Niedouczenie czyni kobiety nieukami lub ‘bas-bleus’”

Nevertheless, complex cases also occur, where, due to the (potential) zero-marking on the noun in some grammatical cases, an inflectional ending may not be realised overtly, so it is impossible to exclude marking for case. In addition, if adjective agreement is present “sławnej *bluestocking* angielskiej” (example 5 below), then indeed the governing noun is the source of case assignment. Such instances may be described as partially adapted borrowings, as the foreign lexeme is inserted into the morphosyntactic matrix of Polish in the noun phrase. In other cases, however, “kobiety ... *bas bleu*” (example 6), the item under scrutiny is an extension of the subject and syntactically follows the predicate with the Polish noun *kobiety*. In this case, *bas bleu* is either an unadapted loanword or a code-switched item, showing a close affinity between the two categories, in particular in the case of single non-native lexemes.

## 5.2 Evaluation and othering: Quantification and analysis

Having conducted keyword searches in two online historical press collections, I analyse the samples with respect to the evaluation of the persona represented through them. Although, ambiguity is intrinsic in many terms, I make an attempt to classify the evaluations as positive, neutral, and negative (Research question 1). Taking foreignness effects further, a question arises as to similar results attached to the use of loan translations. Although loan translations do not generate code-switching, they are new additions to the lexicon, and especially if they come in the form of multiword units, it is not unlikely that they require more processing effort than unadapted

and partially adapted borrowings. Moreover, a distinction is drawn between unadapted borrowings, partially adapted borrowings and loan translation (Research question 2). Following from this, the analysis traces the differences in the evaluations expressed via code-switches and borrowings as opposed to loan translations. In addition, I trace the news discourse formats<sup>15</sup> in which the keywords appear (Research question 3). Table 3 presents the distribution of search terms over time.

Keyword searches (listed in Table 1) in the electronic databases yielded 66 occurrences published between 1837 and 1897. In some cases, more than one type of keyword was used (Table 1, term category: mixed, with 5 occurrences). Sometimes, a keyword was repeated within a clause or sentence, which is not reflected in the counts.

Table 1. Raw occurrences of terms referring to the Bluestocking woman

Term	unadapted	(partially) adapted	loan translation	No. (raw)	%
niebieska/błękitna pończocha/pończoszka P.			+	21	32%
Blaustrumpf (Ger.)	+	+		3	4%
bas-bleu, bas-bleaux, bas bleus (Fr.)	+			32	48%
bluestocking; a bluestocking, Blue Stocking (Eng.)	+	+		5	8%
mixed	+	+	+	5	8%
total count				66	100%

The most frequent keyword was French *bas bleu* with 32 occurrences (48%), followed by the loan translation in Polish with 21 items (32%). The English term occurred 5 times (8%) and the German one 3 times (4%). Dailies published in Warsaw (except for *Czas* which appeared in Cracov) were the main source: 39 items (60%) come from 5 publications (*Czas* – 16, *Kurjer Warszawski* 11, *Gazeta Codzienna*, *Słowo* and *Gazeta Polska* 4 items each). Only one fourth of the samples (16 items; 24%) occurred before the 1860s. The three decades that follow cover roughly similar numbers of samples each (15 items for 1860s,

<sup>15</sup> Contemporary news discourse formats that occur in the data comprise: editorial material, reviews of books and plays, and novels in instalments (originally Polish as well as translations), reports of events, speeches, letters, and clearly indicated external sources, i.e. material adapted from a foreign publication.

12 for 1870s, and 17 for 1880s), together accounting for nearly 70% of the material. Only six cases (c. 10%) were published in the 1890s. As for the genres, the majority of occurrences were drawn from editorial material (30 cases; i.e., 45%), reviews of books and plays (17, i.e. 26%) and novels in instalments, both Polish and translated (12; i.e. 18%). The remaining occurrences come from two reports, a speech, a letter, and an external source (material adapted from a foreign newspaper).

As far as the referents are concerned, indeed the majority of cases refer to a person, but 6 cases involve artefacts such as a piece of garment (the stockings in blue, some with potentially metonymic readings), a book and a newspaper title. The most frequent persona is a literary woman (28 items; 42%) and a learned woman (12 items; 18%). Much less frequently further female types are evoked: spinsters/older women (4 items; 6%), wives and emancipated women (3 items; 4.5%), as well as a specific literary figure (e.g. Sapho), a high society lady, political women and, in one case, women in general. Four instances remain obscure in terms of their referents (6%). Bearing in mind the collective meaning of the Bluestocking reference, it is important to note that only 35 items (53%) were grammatically singular or indicated an individual referent. As far as the distribution over time is concerned (Table 2), the 1830s and the 1890s have the lowest numbers of occurrences (1 and 6 respectively). For the 1840s and 1850s, 7 and 8 occurrences were identified. The three decades 1860s-1880s account for over 50% of all occurrences (34 instances).

In terms of evaluation, five categories were applied in order to capture the scalar nature of some, especially neutral judgements (Table 3). This and other aspects of evaluation are illustrated and discussed below (Section 5.2). Only 17% of cases (11 items) may be seen as involving positive or mildly

Table 2. Search terms over time

Decade	No.	%
1830s	1	1%
1840s	7	11%
1850s	8	12%
1860s	15	23%
1870s	12	18%
1880s	17	26%
1890s	6	9%
Total	66	100%

Table 3. Evaluation categories and counts

Evaluation category	No.	%
negative	42	64%
neutral to negative	9	13%
neutral	4	6%
neutral to positive	4	6%
positive	7	11%
total count	66	100%

positive judgments, as opposed to 77% of negative or mildly negative ones (51 items). This shows that the transfer of the pejorative meaning that was prevalent in the early nineteenth century when the terms were first adopted in Polish news discourse.

As indicated above, the positive evaluation scored the lowest, with seven examples. It is important to underline that even a positive reading has always been relative to the default negative referential meaning that characterised the English usage in the nineteenth century (see Section 4 above) when the designation was transferred into Polish (see f7 and the relevant metacomment above):

- (5) Szczególną zwrócili uwagę listy z czasów jego młodości o nim pisane, H. More, sławnej *blue-stocking* angielskiej i artykuł Thackeray'a z go-dłem *Nil nisi bonum*. (1860, *Gazeta Codzienna*, No. 67)

[Particular attention was paid to the letters from his youth by H. More, a famous English *blue-stocking*, and an article by Thackeray with the emblem *Nil nisi bonum*.]

In this quote (example 5), drawn from an editorial piece devoted to the memory of an English writer on the occasion of his death, the adjective “famous” suggests a positive reference, while the pairing of the name of the English poet Hannah More (1745-1833) with a mention of William Thackeray adds to the affirmative picture of the *bluestocking* here. It should be added that the *blue-stocking* is clearly indicated here as female through grammatical gender agreement between the adjective *English* and the semantic gender of the noun *blue-stocking* (sławnej<sub>FEM</sub> *blue-stocking* angielskiej<sub>FEM</sub>).

- (6) są, wreszcie złośliwi mężczyźni, co podatek na kobiety piszące książki *bas bleus* proponują. (1861, *Magazyn Mód i Nowości Dotyczących Gospodarstwa Domowego*, Year 50, No. 283)

[there are also spiteful men who suggest a tax on women writing books (*bas bleus*).]

Example (6) above closes a longer editorial titled “Correspondence from Paris”. Women writers are juxtaposed here with “spiteful men”, who have bad intentions, and appear under threat. Although no overtly positive lexis is used, this fragile position, alongside the emphasis on female agency and literary activity in the use of the present participle (women writing books rather than e.g. women writers) render this reference positive.

- (7) Bratowa, *bas bleu*, była gospodynią jego domu, nie zawadzającą mu i umiejącą się do jego trybu życia i obyczaju zastosować. Literatura nie była mu obcą, a uczyoność bratowej nie dała mu jej zaniedbać. (1882, *Kurjer Warszawski*, Year 62, No. 225)

[His sister in law, *bas bleu*, was hostess of his house, did not bother him, and was able to adjust to his lifestyle and habit. He was no stranger to literature, while her lore did not allow him to neglect it.]

Example (7) places a learned woman in a clearly feminine social role, one significant to, but subordinate in a male-dominated world. However, in the intellectual realm, the *bas bleu* appears to be in charge and exerts a positive influence on the male protagonist (a novel by the famous contemporary writer Józef Ignacy Kraszewski 1812-1887).

In two further cases categorised as positive, a loan translation followed by the French code-switched and a reference to a specific public literary figure similar to the example with the English poet Hannah More is denoted. The two remaining positive evaluations in (8) and (9) contrast with strongly negative statements and serve the purpose of contradicting them. This suggests that the negative reading of the terms (unadapted or partially adapted borrowings) was the default one (only one of the positives includes the loan translation).

As far as the examples classified as neutral to positive (occurring four times), a similar strategy of contrast is observed. Interestingly, in three cases, the emotion of fear or potential threat is evoked and dismissed through a joke or an authoritative quote or reference:

- (8) Straszą was niekiedy nazwiskiem niebieskiej pończochy (*bas bleu*). Z tego powodu przytoczę przedziwny dowcip pewnej matrony, która powiedziała: 'Nie umiem dostrzedz niebieskiej pończochy, kiedy suknia jest długa.' (1864, *Czas*, Year 18, No. 20)

[They will sometimes threaten you with the name blue stocking (*bas bleu*). For this reason, I will quote the oddest joke of a certain matron, who said: 'I cannot see a blue stocking if a long dress covers it.']

- (9) Gorące i szumne pochwały oddawane przez p. de Tocqueville kobietom Amerykańskim – będą, jak sądzę dostatecznym uspokojeniem dla tych, którzy się lękają by rozwój wolności wiedzy i władzy nie wyroził tego groźnego potwora, znanego pod nazwą: sawantek (*bas bleu*). (1872, *Opiekun Domowy*, Year 8, Series 3, No. 13)

[Heated and loud praise of American women by Mr de Tocqueville, will, I think be sufficient reassurance to those who fear lest the development of free knowledge and power fosters this threatening monster, known under the name of savants (*bas bleu*).]

Only three samples involved neutral references. In the following example (10), the possessive pronoun used as a modifier indicates an indifferent or mildly supportive position on the fate of the group. Nevertheless, the context for the quote is a longer humouristic review of recent publications which voices mild criticism of the female periodical *Magazyn Mód* [Fashion Magazine] which “dziś bowiem służy on tylko do obwinięcia żurnali – bo nawet mód nie opisze zrozumiale” [today is only used as cover to other journals – as it even fails to provide clear fashion descriptions]. Thus the example is ambiguous: given the meaning of the word organ as both an institutional representation (in this case, a new periodical for the group) as well as of a bodily organ.<sup>16</sup>

The other examples involved the loan translation in the phrase “wear the blue-stockings”.

- (10) Powinny nasze *bas bleus* zjednoczyć się i stworzyć nowy organ dla swojej płci. (1857, *Czas. The Monthly Supplement*, Year 2, Vol. 7, No. 19)  
[Our *bas bleu* should unite and create a new organ for their sex.]

A larger set of examples (illustrated in 11 and 12), i.e. nine, were categorised between neutral to negative.

- (11) to nieszczęsne *bas bleu* kwestji kobiecej? (1869, *Kurjer Warszawski*, Year 49, No. 106)  
[The unfortunate *bas bleu* of the woman’s issue?]
- (12) są znowu uczone bardzo panie, albo z rodzaju *bas bleu*, albo też artystki (1868, *Gazeta Narodowa*, No. 257)  
[there are also very learned ladies, or of the *bas bleu* kind, or artists]

<sup>16</sup> I am grateful to a reviewer for this suggestion. If this metaphor is pursued, a misogynistic reading is also possible, suggesting that intellectual women should in fact “grow an organ on their bodies in order to become men” (Reviewer 1). However, the first clause recommends that *bas bleus* should unite as a group, which prompts the reading of organ as a political allusion (people spontaneously coming together and creating a representation for themselves in the form of a written manifesto or a regular publication). Moreover, the process of growing a sexual organ is in a sense precluded because “a new organ” is singular, while *bas bleus* are a collective.

Although negativity transpires through the examples (9) and (10), they involve understatements and no explicit pejoration and were thus differentiated from negative references.

The largest evaluation category, the occurrences categorised as negative and negative to neutral account for 77% of the analysed items. Therefore, this type cannot be presented as thoroughly as the few positive and neutral items. Only selected quotations are given in full and are fully referenced, while the majority are brought together under specific linguistic features that they have in common in order to achieve clarity of presentation.

The quotation below (13) illustrates a negative evaluation:

- (13) Niebieska pończoszka, ów *Blaustrumpf* dziewiętnastego wieku, to najhaniebniejszy wymysł nowszych czasów, to dziwactwo próżniaczego plemienia (1871, *Kraj*, No. 294)

[The little blue stocking, this *Blaustrumpf* of the nineteenth century is the most disgraceful figment of modern times, it is an oddity of the idle tribe"]

Not only is the statement full of spite, but it also involves a generalisation about humanity in the modern era, introduces a differentiation that marginalises the targeted group, as it acknowledges its public visibility. Thus, othering is achieved here through language features such as: the use of diminutive in the loan translation (“pończoszka” [little stocking]), the modification of the unadapted loan with “ów” (a formal animate pronoun “this”), the use of the superlative adjective, and the terms “figment” and “oddity” expressing the dehumanised and bizarre ideas involved in the personae denoted by the mixed use of the loan translation and the borrowing from German. Interestingly, the modification with the definite pronoun indicates that the grammatical gender of *Blaustrumpf* is masculine, as consonant-final stems are generally masculine in Polish. Morphological adaptation is reflected here through agreement with the modifier in the noun phrase rather than in an inflectional ending on the lexeme itself. In this way, an additional shade of disapproval is achieved: the semantically female persona is stripped of femininity.

Below in examples (14) to (17), I have listed a number of similar features, which I underlined in the original and in the English translation.

- (14) tego najnieprzyjemniejszego z potworów, *that most disagreeable of all monsters, a blue stocking*, kobiety-literatki. (1885, *Czas*, Year 38, No. 223)

[that most disagreeable of all monsters, *that most disagreeable of all monsters, a blue stocking*, a literary woman.]

- (15) niemałe falangi uczonych *blue stocking* Europy. (1880, *Gazeta Polska*, No. 172)

[quite considerable phalanx of scholars the *blue stockings* of Europe.]

- (16) a unikać nawet cienia śmieszności owych *bas-bleus*. (1887, *Gazeta Narodowa*, No. 87)

[and avoid even the slightest hint of ridicule of these *bas-bleus*.]

- (17) Niedouczenie czyni kobiety nieukami lub ‘*bas-bleus*’. (1896, *Dziennik Krakowski*, No. 28)

[Ignorance makes women ignorant or ‘*bas-bleus*’]

Besides strongly negative superlative adjectives, dehumanising lexis and distal pronominal modification (“most disagreeable”, “monster”, “that” (in 14), “ridicule” in (16); “ignorance” in (17)), the persona in question is presented sarcastically through a collective noun (“phalanx”) and a generalisation to the level of a European phenomenon (15). As such, the *bluestocking* is to be avoided (example 16).

Furthermore, negative adjectives denoting more than mature age or other appalling abstract or physical qualities were employed: “podstarzała niebieska pończocha” [an elderly blue stocking], “obrzydliwe niebieskie pończochy” [disgusting blue stockings], “*bas bleu* – rozczochrane zawsze włosy” [*bas bleu* – always disheveled hair]. Modification by amplifiers such as “truly”, “completely” and “plenty”: “kompletny bluestocking” [a complete<sub>MASC</sub> bluestocking], “była prawdziwie *bas bleu*” [she was truly *bas bleu*]; “mnóstwo blaustrumpfów” [plenty of blaustrumpfs<sub>MASC</sub>] is also common. Due to requirements on phrasal agreement in Polish, the code-switched/borrowed items ending in a consonant, i.e. the English and German terms, also involved defeminisation similar to that presented in example (13) above. The French item and the loan translation failed to produce this effect. However, the bluestocking persona was very much associated with wiping out or destroying its own gender qualities also when the loan translation was employed:

- (18) Nasze owszem niebieskie pończochy od dawna już główną dla siebie chlubę upatrywać zwykły w męzkości. (1856, *Gazeta Codzienna*, No. 243)

[Our indeed blue stockings have long seen their main pride in masculinity.]

Moreover, the use of collective nouns for typification (like in example 15) and indefinite pronouns or other modifiers for distancing purposes occurs commonly: “Zastęp ten niebieskich pończoch” [this troop of blue stockings]; “pewna para niebieskich pończoch z Warszawy” [a certain pair of blue stockings from Warsaw], “parę *bas bleus*, parę zapalczywych zwolenniczek, czy też przeciwnych emancypacji kobiet” [a number of *bas bleu*, a couple of zealous supporters or opponents of women’s emancipation]. Typification and groupings were underlined by the use of specific modifiers: “rodzaj tak zwanego *bas bleu*” [the kind of the so-called *bas bleu*], “klasa niebieskich pończoch” [the class of blue stockings], “typ *Blaustrumpf*” [the *Blaustrumpf*<sub>MASC</sub> type], “Jakaś młoda niebieska pończocha” [some young blue stocking]. Differentiation of individuals and groups was also achieved by means of enumeration or juxtaposition: “na mężatce, wdowie, paniencie i jakiejś *bas bleu*” [on the married woman, the widow, the maiden girl and some *bas bleu*], “nasze piękne dewotki i poważne *bas-bleu*” [our beautiful zealots and serious *bas-bleu*]. It is important to note pluralisation (examples 14 to 18).

### 5.3 Discussion of results

The analysis presented above has shown that the equivalents of the English term *bluestocking* were most frequently used to denote female writers and learned women (60% of the cases), with some typified personae such as spinsters, older women, wives and emancipators embodied much less frequently. Some samples involved a great complexity of representation and would require extensive qualitative analyses to give justice to the ambivalence of the social and cultural meanings entailed in them (see examples (3) and (5) above). However, not the ambiguity, but negativity appears to dominate the sample, with neutral and positive attitudes showing only as exceptions.

One of the objectives of the analysis was to see to what extent female representations can be viewed as sites of othering, as defined in Section 2. First of all, despite the overwhelmingly negative evaluation expressed through the keywords analysed above, some positive, neutral to positive, and neutral attitudes were also conveyed through them. The personae generated through the majority of examples have been subject to a variety of forms of othering, such as typification, overgeneralisation, marginalisation, dehumanisation, masculinisation, and the use of polarising dichotomies. Although the code-switched items and the loan translations played an important part here, othering effects frequently resulted from a conglomerate of features of lexicon and collocational effects, such as the

use of pluralisation, diminutives and modifiers (e.g. indefiniteness and distance). Defeminisation and masculinisation, however, was achieved mainly through the use of borrowings from German and French. Discursive othering, in some cases, also involved ambivalence underlined by foreignness effects of the analysed terms. Indeed, next to semantically negative lexicon (e.g. *monster*, *zealous*, *disgusting*, etc.), some instances may have had humorous motivations and exploited the playfulness of linguistically novel terms (e.g. diminutivisation in (13), some metaphors, e.g. “growing an organ” in (10), “pride in masculinity” (18)). Humour and sarcasm were also present in examples (8) and (9) where negative evaluations of intellectual women were dismissed and ridiculed.

In the second research question posed above, I was also concerned with the potentially different degrees of othering effects fostered by unadapted and partially adapted borrowings as opposed to the loan translation. As many examples have shown, it is unlikely that the loan translation *niebieska pończocha* was less effective in this respect, as of its 21 occurrences only three were classified as either positive or neutral to positive. On the other hand, the loanword was accompanied by code-switched items in French, German, and English in four cases. In these cases (three of them negative; one neutral to positive), this accumulation of othering effects could possibly indicate that the loanword itself may not have achieved the same effect. Still, it is not possible to exclude the option that the code-switched items simply gloss the loanword, most likely strengthening pejoration by additionally emphasising the alleged obscurity of the concept. However, overall, the loan translation did not occur frequently enough to allow generalisations.

The distribution of examples over time was uneven, with the three decades 1860s-1880s accounting for over 50%. One reason for this might be the social developments that gave a more prominent role to women's education and female audiences in the press that started in the 1860s (see Section 2 above). On the other hand, the low numbers of the terms in the 1890s are not easy to explain, but it may have been due to some gaps in the databases that only few occurrences were retrieved.

In terms of the third research question, which genres in the newspaper and magazine conglomerate featured such representations most frequently, the results have shown three major sources. Editorial material (30 cases; i.e., 45%) was the most important source, followed by reviews of books and plays (17; i.e., 26%), while novels in instalments also provided a considerable number of examples (12; i.e., 18%). The remaining c. 12% of the items include reports, a speech, a letter, and translations from a foreign

newspaper. If we view reviews and novels as similar in the sense that they concern themselves with literary creations and fictional worlds, c. 46% of the items were identified in this context, which is almost exactly the number found in the editorial material. Editorial material was very versatile, but it frequently collected local news and hard news, next to travel accounts, gossip and trivia. This distribution of sources shows that the bluestocking personae had some presence outside of the fictional and specialist literary worlds and featured in the material that targeted audiences interested in diverse material. It is difficult to make connections between the genres and evaluation types, as non-negative attitudes were few and far between. Still, understandably, positive and neutral examples typically come from pieces authored by women, for women and specialised publications for culturally-minded audiences, rather than from dailies.

## 6. Concluding remarks

In the nineteenth century, as the social and educational advancement of women progresses at different paces in Britain and in the Polish lands, they start to play a role in the publishing business, while female readership broadens. When studying representations of women in the Polish press, the focus on a possibly broad scope of publications is justifiable due to the nature of the electronic repositories available (Section 2 above). Thus, the material analysed here was largely drawn from daily newspapers or weekly and monthly magazines designed for heterogeneous audiences, which, however, mostly represented the educated strata of the society in partitioned Poland. As, to my knowledge, comprehensive analyses of the reception of the Bluestockings in the press published in this cultural circle are lacking (but see work on intellectual and literary women such as, e.g., Berkan-Jabłońska 2019 and the references), this exploratory study has made a step towards bridging this gap by focusing on specific referential terms.

The phenomena of othering discussed in the paper were specified as discourse and language strategies of representing women and female personae in an ostensibly harmless and light-hearted way, but also so as to voice essentially critical undertones and reveal ambivalent social attitudes. This ambivalence, as well as an occasional playful disguise or humorous motivations, are characteristic features of othering. It may be concluded that representations of women share some features with propaganda, though perhaps not necessarily in its top-down understanding. If propaganda

is defined as “the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist” (Jowett – O’Donnell 2015: 3), then, indeed, the lion’s share of the material analysed above attempted to foster specific perceptions of women in order to guide social responses to female activity in typically male spheres with a the aim of sustaining male hegemony, especially in the literary, intellectual, and other public domains. The representations discussed above could also be seen in connection to broader nationalistic ideologies, such as for example xenophobia<sup>17</sup> in the social and cultural realm of gender roles and family structures. However, at the same time, other voices, infrequently but firmly, contested the male-made and male-oriented social norms with wit, creativity, and eloquence, using similar discursive resources.

The paper has only addressed some issues relevant to foreignness effects entailed in representing women through code-switching, borrowing or loan translations. Although a connection has been made to visual pragmatics (Carroll et al. 2013), despite the presence of typographic marking, this issue has not been studied in greater detail here for reasons of space. Moreover, a range of questions related to the more specific connotations of German, French, English terms could be posed in order to pursue potential cultural differences. It is also likely that culturally marked lexicon was used more broadly to represent social and cultural groupings, or for typification of minorities. The frameworks proposed here to study representations of intellectual women may be applied to pursue further representations of the many “others” in larger datasets in historical news discourse and other material in the future.

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<sup>17</sup> I would like to thank Reviewer 1 for pointing this out.

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