

Becoming European: On representations of the EU and its values in the Polish and British press

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The new Reform Treaty, conceived in lieu of the European Constitution rejected by France and the Netherlands in 2005, was born in Lisbon on 19 October, 2007, after final concessions were made. Signed on 13 December, the Treaty of Lisbon is to come into force on 1 January, 2009, after its ratification by each of the EU's 27 member states. Although it is claimed that thanks to the Treaty of Lisbon "the EU will be more democratic and its core values will be better served" (http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/index_en.htm), critics often reproach the European Union for presenting its citizens with an obfuscated version of the failed draft constitution and the curbing of national sovereignty.

The paper is based on the comparative study of selected articles on the Lisbon Informal Summit and the signing of the Lisbon Treaty and will encompass the coverage in Polish and British quality newspapers in the period of 18-20 October and 12-14 December 2007. The corpus comes from newspapers of both right-wing, conservative (*Rzeczpospolita*, *The Daily Telegraph*) and left-wing, liberal orientation (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, *The Guardian*).

The goal of the paper is to pin down European values encapsulated in the construction of the EU/Europe in Polish and British newspapers. By methods of Critical Discourse Analysis (Reisigl and Wodak 2001 in particular), the author will focus on discursive strategies employed in the representations of Europe and their linguistic forms of realization, highlighting both similarities and differences between the British and Polish press. The paper will make an attempt to answer the following questions: 1) how is the Lisbon Informal Summit and signing of the Lisbon Treaty portrayed in a broader political context? 2) which actors are selected in the coverage and what are they strongly contesting? 3) who is the self, who is the other? 4) what future scenarios are awaiting Europe and what influence may they have on moulding European identity?