



***A European Identity on the Periphery:
A Comparative Study of the Representations
of Europe¹ in the Awkward Squad's Press***

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Abstract

The aim of the article is to investigate the construction of Europe as illustrated by the coverage of the Lisbon Summit (18-19 October 2007) and signing of the Lisbon Treaty (13 December 2007) in quality newspapers in Britain and Poland, the two countries on the EU's periphery, whose leaders (the British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and the Polish President Lech Kaczyński) seem to be notorious for displaying their semi-detached attitude towards Europe. The corpus for the analysis comes from quality newspapers of both right-wing, conservative (Rzeczpospolita, The Daily Telegraph) and left-wing, liberal orientation (Gazeta Wyborcza, The Guardian).

Drawing on the strengths of the discourse-historical tradition of CDA in particular (Reisigl and Wodak 2001), the article will focus on answering the following questions: 1) How is the Lisbon Summit represented in both Polish and British newspapers and how is it situated in the broader political and historical context of European integration? 2) Which actors are selected in the coverage, which roles are ascribed to them, and how are they evaluated? 3) What metaphors and topoi are applied for legitimising or delegitimising the European Union as a political space?

Keywords: European Union, Treaty of Lisbon, representations of Europe, discourse-historical CDA

1. Introduction: 'Treaty of Lisbon – the way forward'?²

On 19th October 2007 at an informal summit in Lisbon European Union leaders reached a deal on the new Reform Treaty, conceived in lieu of the European Constitution, jettisoned by French and Dutch voters in 2005. 'The new Treaty of Lisbon was born today. This is a European victory', declared Portugal's Prime Minister José Sócrates. Signed on 13th December 2007 by heads of government in Lisbon, the Treaty of Lisbon was to come into force on 1st January 2009 after its ratification by each of the EU's 27 member states. However, Ireland's 'no' vote to the Treaty (12 June 2008), the only EU member state that held a referendum,³ overshadowed European leaders' dream. The treaty was ratified by the other 26 EU members, including Poland (parliamentary ratification) and Britain, despite legal objections and the Conservatives' attempt to delay the ratification in Britain and the Polish

President's postponement of signing the ratification until Ireland accepts the treaty in another referendum.⁴

The goal of greater EU integration, whose staunch supporters are predominantly elites, is to provide the European Union with a forward looking identity⁵ and common priorities in a globalised world, against the background of other superpowers in the international arena. Although the Treaty of Lisbon was designed to streamline the work of the enlarged EU after the 2005 constitutional debacle, and to make the EU more democratic and its core values better served,⁶ critics have often reproached the European Union for presenting its citizens with an obfuscated version of the failed draft constitution and the curbing of national sovereignty (see e.g. *The Economist*, 'Give Europe a say', 25/10/07). The EU may define what it means to be 'European' with civic and liberal values, based on Habermesian constitutional patriotism (Beetham and Lord 1998: 41-43; Laffan 2004: 81-82), but identification with Europe is not easy due to its fuzzy boundaries and prioritising national interests and national models of political and social life over European ones.⁷ Both the UK and Poland obtained an 'opt-out' from the enforceability of the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights, which contains human rights provisions, and by the same token, they are claimed to have opted out of deeper integration.⁸

Taking account of the multiplicity of identities individuals can identify with and assuming that Europe and the nation are 'imagined communities' (Anderson [1983] 1991), people can feel a sense of belonging to both Europe and their national identity (Risse 2004: 248) as long as these mental constructs are real enough, to the extent that people believe in them and identify with them emotionally. The question arises then: how much space *do* or *could* rank-and-file EU citizens earmark for Europe in their collective identities? Local, national and European identities are dynamic, constantly constructed and re-negotiated by different elites and social groups. Identity components may mesh and blend into each other, like in a 'marble cake', but this also entails elusiveness of European identity or its diverging outcomes (ibid.: 252). In other words, different groups can fill in the category of Europe with different contents.⁹

The underlying assumption of this article is that the media's role in contributing to the development of the 'we-feeling' (Deutsch 1957) among ordinary people of Europe and thereby constructing and increasing the salience of a European identity is invaluable, if a European 'imagined community' is ever to reify.¹⁰ The mediation of the EU's voice and, what follows, communicating certain understandings of 'Europeanness' to the European public, takes place through multifarious means. Specifically, it may proceed along the lines of either a more top-down approach of elites¹¹ or a more bottom-up approach of EU citizens. Accordingly, the media can either foster or subvert the feeling of European belonging, for example, by filling the category of Europe with the content either desired or unwanted by EU elites, respectively. By analysing the processes of representing and 'making meaning of Europe' in journalistic discourse, and reconstructing them on the basis of the press coverage on the Lisbon Summit and signing of the Lisbon Treaty, the article relates to the ideational dimension of contemporary discourses of

Europe, according to which the political construction of the EU is legitimised through idea (identity, history, culture) (Wodak and Weiss 2005: 129-131).

2. Data and Methodology

2.1 Data

The article is based on the comparative study of the coverage on the Lisbon Informal Summit, the Lisbon Treaty and its signing in Polish and British quality newspapers, in the periods of 18-20 October (1st corpus) and 13-14 December 2007 (2nd corpus). The entire corpus is fairly small and encompasses 78 texts, 50 from the British papers and 28 from the Polish. The largest coverage (more than a third of the total) comes from the *Daily Telegraph*. The relative paucity of data obtained from the Polish press may be explained by the focus on domestic issues at that time, namely Polish early parliamentary elections which took place on 21st October 2007. The second corpus (the signing of the Treaty), much smaller than the previous one and with evenly distributed articles across the papers, was gathered in order to corroborate the general results obtained in the analysis of the first body of data. Textual in-depth analyses of all articles (print and online editions) pertaining to the subject of the study were carried out. To eliminate a political bias, data come from newspapers of both right-wing, conservative (*Rzeczpospolita (RP)* and *The Daily Telegraph (TEL)*, associated with Euroscepticism), and left-wing, liberal and rather pro-European, orientation (*Gazeta Wyborcza (GW)* and *The Guardian (GUA)*).¹²

2.2 Framework and research questions

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), a theory formerly identified as Critical Linguistics (CL) with its seminal works of Kress and Hodge ([1979] 1993) and Fowler et al (1979),¹³ and roots in French structuralism (Louis Althusser (1971), later Michel Foucault (1982)) and the critical social theory of the Frankfurt School (associated with Jürgen Habermas (1984, 1987) in particular), recognises language as a vehicle of power, able not only to reflect, but also to shape social reality (Fairclough [1989] 1999). To put it differently, *discourse*,¹⁴ i.e. language as a form of social practice, is socially constitutive, but at the same time socially constituted (Fairclough 1999: 22-24, Fairclough and Wodak 1997: 258). According to Wodak (2001a: 4), CDA is dedicated to 'analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language'. This approach to discourse can be called 'critical' in as much as 'connections between properties of texts and social processes and relations (ideologies, power relations)' are brought to light (Fairclough 1995: 97). Media discourse, vested with seemingly lucid relations of power, attitudes and judgements of privileged groups, which are inculcated on the audience, seems thus an excellent field of practice for critical linguists (Fowler 1991, Fowler et al. 1979). In addition, since discursive practices (e.g. talking, writing) frame and in various ways define individuals and group relations, identity has often been the object of study in critically-oriented discourse studies.

My research is embedded in the discourse-historical approach of CDA (Reisigl and Wodak 2001; Wodak 2001b; Wodak et al. 1999), which is one of the major tools for systematic analysis of collective identities and European-identity building.¹⁵ The concept of identity is understood here in anti-essentialist terms – as dynamic, of processual nature, constantly assembled and dismantled by different social groups, and constructed through language in different acts of meaning.¹⁶ At the core of the approach are five types of discursive strategies applied in the positive self- and negative other-presentation, as propounded by Reisigl and Wodak (2001: 44-85), which encompass: referential or nomination strategies (nomination), predicational strategies (predication), perspectivation or framing (by means of which speakers express their involvement in discourse and position their own point of view), intensifying strategies on the one hand and mitigation strategies on the other, as well as argumentation and topoi (through which e.g. positive and negative attributions are justified). Additionally, in my analysis of metaphors I draw on Chilton's political metaphors (2004, 2006), grounded in Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory (1980). As observed by Chilton (2004: 52, 2006: 64), spatial metaphors are the most prominent source of political metaphors: the FRONT-BACK schema is related to physical ordering of people (some groups are ahead of others) and in the UP-DOWN schema, 'up' maps onto good, strong and powerful (thus superior), whereas 'down' maps onto those who must acquiesce or subordinate.

Owing to space restrictions, the study is only a summary of the in-depth qualitative analysis of the two corpora, which is why examples provided are limited to a small number. Country case studies are carried out in order to highlight both similarities and differences between the individual newspapers with regard to discursive re-construction of the Lisbon Summit, social actors, metaphors and topoi and to delineate representations of the European political space characteristic of a given country. In particular, the country case studies aim to answer the following questions:

1. How is the Lisbon Summit and signing of the Lisbon Treaty constructed in each newspaper and how are the two events placed in the broader (political and historical) context of European integration?
2. Which actors are selected in the press coverage, which roles are ascribed to them and how are they evaluated? Who is the Self and who is the Other?
3. What metaphors and topoi contribute to either undermining or reinforcing the process of European identity building?
4. How is Europe represented as a political space? In this respect, which old texts resurface, which are submerged?

The results from the analysis of empirical data are further juxtaposed with Polish CBOS [Centre for Public Opinion Research] reports and British opinion polls on attitudes to the EU and the Lisbon Treaty. The article concludes with a discussion of European representations (cross-section analysis) and their significance for the future of a European identity.

3. General Findings

3.1 Britain's awkward squaddishness¹⁷

In surveying the British coverage, one is struck by the difference between the papers at the level of language, which is less involved and mitigated in *GUA* and more emotional and dynamic in *TEL* (e.g. many hyperbolic expressions and metaphors are used as well as strong deontic modality). As for the Summit and the Lisbon Treaty, the topos of usefulness prevails in *GUA*, yet the paper's standpoint is rather reserved. *TEL*, which is notorious for its Euroscepticism, communicates a largely negative evaluation of the Treaty. Themes of the British discursive space, where both domestic and European issues mingle, could be delimited to four main topics:

- 1) Mulling over the content of the Lisbon Treaty – whether it is the same as the Draft Constitution or not. (The British press labels the Treaty 'controversial' and 'pesky'.)
- 2) Insistence on the referendum.¹⁸
- 3) Gordon Brown's defiance: his insistence on securing Britain's 'red lines'¹⁹ and his refusal to hold a referendum on the EU Treaty.
- 4) Britain's role in the EU.

In both newspapers the Lisbon Summit is presented as an important step towards greater integration, an event which concludes the long history of EU institutional crisis, exacerbated by the rejection of the Draft Constitution by Dutch and French voters in 2005 (Excerpt 1). The past six years are often referred to as 'institutional navel-gazing' (*GUA* 18/10/07) and although it is acknowledged that nothing is certain concerning EU summits, both papers agree that the Lisbon Summit will not be difficult, as most details were hammered out in June. In short, as *GUA* (20/10/07) reveals, there was 'a palpable sense of relief in Lisbon that Europe was putting years of bruising battles behind it (...)'.

Excerpt 1 (topos of success, topos of usefulness or advantage)

After several hours of talks, EU leaders emerged bleary-eyed but elated that a way forward had been found on the most serious crisis in the bloc's 50-year history. (...) (*GUA*, 19/10/07)

However, more importantly perhaps, it is emphasised that people of Europe were disregarded and denied a say, an act which undermines the EU's legitimacy and damages democracy in Europe. The results of opinion polls, commissioned by *TEL* and *Financial Times* are quoted (topos of numbers, topos of democracy and legitimacy surface)²⁰ (*TEL* 20/10/07). The main picture of the EU that appears is that of Euro-elites versus ordinary people of Europe (Excerpt 2).

Excerpt 2 (topos of Euro-elites)

As the leaders of the European Union gather under the dome of the Atlantic Pavilion in Lisbon to thrash out the last details of that pesky treaty, the one thing you can be sure of is that the ordinary people of Europe will be beyond the security cordon, outside the dome. Should we not let the people speak? (*GUA*, 18/10/07)

It is essential to note at this point that what characterises the British discursive space on Europe (and differentiates it from the Polish discursive space) is strong Us-Them polarisation between the multitude of social actors; most notably, between Gordon Brown and David Cameron; EU leaders – who are decision-makers ('Gordon Brown with his fellow heads of governments' (*TEL* 18/10/07) – constructed as 'them' and ascribed negative characteristics) and EU citizens who are denied a say on the Lisbon Treaty; EU officials ('a bunch of Euro-judges', who are about to become 'the new overlords' (*TEL*, 20/10/07)) and ordinary people (whose jam-making, for instance, may be hampered by new burdensome EU regulations (*TEL*, 18/10/07)); finally, Anti-Europeans and Europeans.²¹

The social actor who stole the limelight in both newspapers is Prime Minister Gordon Brown. He is labelled 'defiant' and his role is negatively evaluated throughout the entire corpus (national topics and political attitudes come into view). It is argued that the Prime Minister agreed to 'rubber-stamp the biggest transfer of powers to Brussels since the 1992 Maastricht Treaty' (*TEL*, 20/10/07) and committed Britain 'irrevocably to greater European integration under the EU's controversial reform treaty' (*GUA* 19/10/07). Interestingly enough, when it comes to EU member states, small EU countries do not appear in the British corpus at all, even as an aggregate social actor. Strictly, France and the Netherlands are blamed for sparking a crisis in Europe, by wrecking the ill-fated constitution; Poland and Italy are expected to spoil the Summit and resort to 'last-minute wrangling' (*GUA*, 19/10/07); yet, in fact, it is Britain that is 'the chief of the awkward squad' (Excerpt 3). In *GUA* (18/10/07), Britain is also seen as 'the cursed scepticism merging into downright hostility' against the rest of Europe – 'the formerly oppressed EU majority'. Overall, Britain's role is controversial and ambiguous, and far from positive. However, *TEL* claims that British resentment towards greater integration may act as a catalyst for further reform of the EU and, in the end, may turn out to be beneficial not only for Britain, but also for the whole EU (*TEL*, 19/10/07). The topos of the awkward squad and strong Us and Them polarisation, instantiated by the use of pronouns: 'our', 'us' vs. 'their', 'them', is shown in Excerpt 3.

Excerpt 3 (topos of the awkward squad)

The EU's recent history has been bedevilled by persistent conflict between the majority view of Continental politicians in favour of further integration, fulfilling the dream of the Rome Treaty's "ever closer union among the peoples of Europe", and the "awkward squad" who have no desire for political union. Chief of the awkward squad is, of course, Britain.

Removing us from our entrapment in the process of ever closer union is of course of huge benefit to us as a nation. But it is also of great benefit to those who aspire to build a federal Europe. By removing our awkward squaddishness from their processes, we would allow them to proceed at their own speed towards that goal. We should wish them luck, if that is their chosen destiny as nations. (*TEL*, 19/10/07)

Finally, the signing of the Lisbon Treaty (2nd corpus), 'a historic compromise deal' (*GUA*, 13/12/07), is constructed as an event of high symbolic value and a European success. Both newspapers enthuse about the unique arrangements in Lisbon and recall Vasco da Gama's successful voyage to India in 1497 that

marked the moment when the old Europe of competing imperial nation states began to seize control of the global economy (*GUA*,13/12/07; *TEL*, 14/12/07). Again Gordon Brown is caught in the public eye for his belated signing of the treaty, interpreted by the British liberal press as a sign of ‘Britain’s semi-detachment from the rest of Europe’ (*GUA*, 13/12/07). He is also blamed for turning the event into ‘a national embarrassment’ (*GUA*, 13/12/07): his ‘display of adolescent rudeness’ (*TEL*, 14/12/07) towards other EU leaders only reinforces Britain’s reputation as ‘the EU’s’ biggest troublemaker’ (*GUA*, 13/12/07). *GUA* conveys a stronger vision of Europe than in the previous case, and cites the results of another opinion poll, carried out by Bertelsmann Stiftung, according to which 86% of British people want the EU to play a more prominent international role (*GUA*, 13/12/07). The topos of comparing an ideal with reality as well as the topos of usefulness (Excerpt 4) are evoked in the *GUA* commentary: ‘This treaty is a mess, but it will free Europe to do more important things’,²² where the treaty is compared to the US constitution.²³

Excerpt 4 (topos of comparing an ideal with reality, topos of usefulness or advantage)

We set out to give ourselves a constitutional banquet and ended up with a dog’s dinner. (...)

But a noble constitutional document, comparable to that of the United States, it is not. It more nearly resembles the instruction manual for a forklift truck.

In itself, it will do nothing to convince Europe’s citizens, or the rest of the world, of what the European Union is good for. But it will help to do things that may convince them. (...) In fact, the EU will define what it is by what it does. (*GUA*, 13/12/07)

Essentially, in the British press, two representations of Europe stand out: Europe as an elites’ power struggle and a process of greater integration, which, unfortunately, hasn’t gone ‘Britain’s way’ (*TEL*, 20/10/07). The heart of the problem is, on the one hand, the EU’s anti-democratic inclinations (lack of ‘public deliberative democracy’ (*GUA*, 18/10/07)), and the clash of values – Britain’s free trade against French protectionism – on the other. The topos of danger and threat and the topos of democracy and legitimacy resurface in the representation of Europe as a ‘juggernaut’ that must be halted (*TEL*, 18/10/07) because it deprives Britain of its sovereign powers and ‘threatens [the] Thatcher revolution’ (Headline, *TEL*, 20/10/07). Furthermore, since Europe is accused of avoiding the democratic judgment of the people it rules, it is compared to the state of the eastern European communists, ‘when party members gave up believing in their doctrine and just settled for comfortable jobs. They shored up their power and ignored their unpopularity’ (*TEL*, 20/10/07).²⁴ In sum, the British papers question Britain’s role in the process of further European integration; however, while *TEL* (20/10/07) argues for a ‘looser, more modern relationship’ with the EU, so that the other EU countries could ‘proceed with their desired European political integration without Britain obstructing the process’, according to *GUA*, it is time for Britain to play a constructive rather than obstructive role in the EU.

3.2 Poland’s national mission

In the Polish press the overall tone is rather positive and more balanced, if compared to the British press. Contrary to the British conservative *TEL*, the

Polish conservative *RP* does not communicate a strong vision of Europe – it uses more mitigated expressions and is less involved. Poland has also a different horizon of relevance when it comes to the topics: apart from domestic issues and the so-called Ioannina Compromise,²⁵ Poland's 'emergency brake', *GW* criticises bargaining with France, in which France allegedly agreed to support the Ioannina in exchange for more Polish troops in Tschad (*GW*, 19/10/07). In terms of discursive themes, what is distinctive about the Polish press is the discussion of European values, limits to multiculturalism, Christian legacy and Poland's role in this regard.

The Summit and its outcome, the new Reform Treaty, are depicted as Europe's success: Poland 'acquiesced' and a quick compromise was reached (*RP*, 20/10/07). Although both papers report on divergent interests and use salient metaphors of war and gambling ('new dealing' ['nowe rozdanie'] (*GW*, 19-20/10/07); 'Brown goes to war with France' ['Brown idzie na wojnę z Francją'] (*RP*, 19/10/07); 'Lisbon ready for a big confrontation of EU leaders' ['Lizbona przygotowana na wielkie starcie unijnych przywódców'] (*RP*, 18/10/07); Polish president went to the Summit determined to fight for the Ioannina ['zdeterminowany by walczyć'] (*GW*, 20/10/07)), what is highlighted in the end is that common good won over petty national interests, and the compromise was interpreted as everybody's success ('In Lisbon everyone was happy about success' ['W Lizbonie z sukcesu cieszyli się wszyscy'] (*RP*, 20/10/07)).

Poland's role in the Summit is evaluated fairly positively as Poland finally does away with the image of 'the black sheep of Europe' (*RP*, 20/10/07). This stigma is now attached to other countries, namely Italy, which 'can't stand' France's upper hand in the new 'dealing' concerning the number of votes in the European Parliament (*GW*, 19/10/07) and Britain, due to its people's insistence on the referendum (*RP*, 20/10/07). The credit for the 'win' went to Portugal, which held the Council Presidency at that time and hosted the Summit. Moreover, EU leaders are praised for their resolve (Jose Socrates and Angela Merkel in particular) and it is remarked that now the agreement has been reached, more responsibility, determination and courage will be expected from them, so that the challenges of the future awaiting the EU can be tackled (*RP*, 19-20/10/07). EU lawyers' ingenuity and ability to find a way out of crisis (*ibid.*) are also applauded. Additionally, the Polish conservative paper differentiates between powerful EU member states, 'the club of the six' which Poland is joining, and weak EU states, backgrounded in the discourse (*RP*, 18/10/07). It is worthwhile to note that the reports about Britain, the Conservatives' campaign for the referendum and Gordon Brown's 'troublemaking' in the context of Lisbon Treaty negotiations, are published in the Polish press as well (*RP*, 19/10/07).

The topos of history and the topos of a national uniqueness surface in *RP*, where it is argued that Polish history can teach both Poland and Europe a lesson about the sense of community (*RP*, 20/10/07). The ideals of the First Republic of Poland (the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 16th and 17th – century Europe) are recalled, the time when Poland tried the impossible: to reconcile the centre with the periphery. It is asserted that as long as the political and social problem of the European Union (the community of 'the chosen', with an ever-increasing margin of 'the rejected') comes down to the

division between ‘the ambitious’ and ‘the helpless’, the EU, just like the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, will be threatened by demise or partitioning. *RP* contends that this problem, the centre-periphery problem, makes the EU turn easily into an empire (Excerpt 1).

Excerpt 1 (topos of history, topos of the centre and the periphery)

Yes, a partition. Aggression from the outside. The European Union is a union, just like the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. When it stays open and preserves its ‘force of attraction’ to its ideal model, then it is safe. When it shuts itself away, and its model turns out to be based only on its amassed riches (not values), which will certainly be insufficient for everyone – then it becomes a besieged fortress, which bunches of the disillusioned and rejected ‘helpless’ will definitely be unprepared to defend. (*RP*, 20/10/07) [A.S.]

[Tak, rozbiorem. Agresją z zewnątrz. Unia Europejska jest bowiem unią, właśnie jak dawna Rzeczpospolita. Kiedy pozostaje otwarta i zachowuje siłę przyciągania do swego modelu idealnego, wtedy jest bezpieczna. Kiedy się zamyka, a jej model okazuje się oparty wyłącznie na zgromadzonych bogactwach (nie wartościach), których wyraźnie nie starczy dla wszystkich – wtedy staje się obleżoną twierdzą, której na pewno nie będą gotowe bronić gromady rozczarowanych, odrzuconych „bezradnych”.]

European values are further revisited in *RP* in an interview with an Italian politician and philosopher, Marcello Pera. The main claim is that Europe is ‘uprooting’ Christian legacy, as the leftist ideology, backed by intellectual elites, has entirely dominated the public sphere in Europe and the boundaries are being pushed further and further. Consequently, ‘secularisation’, the predominant ideology of contemporary Europe, leaves the gap that may be filled by Islam (Excerpt 2).

Excerpt 2 (topos of European values and Christian legacy, topos of danger and threat)

(...) now that Europe has become a front line in a struggle of cultures, the object of aggression of all sorts of fanatics, when it can’t cope with gigantic waves of immigration from Muslim countries, religion is again becoming an important characteristic of Europeans’ identity. (...)

Neither fanaticism nor terrorism is needed for Europe to slowly fall into the grip of Islam. (...)

It is Christianity that gave Europe and the rest of the world equality, human dignity and respect for life. (...) I’ve been defending them [Christian values A.S.] particularly strongly over the recent years because I can notice that all the rules, which seemed to be obvious to us, sucked in with our mothers’ milk, are becoming a target of massive attack and are facing a very serious threat; a threat to all our civilization. Unfortunately, Europe clearly doesn’t want to be a civilization any longer. (*RP*, 20/10/07) [A.S.]

[(...) w momencie gdy Europa stała się frontem rywalizacji kultur, obiektem agresji wszelkiej maści fanatyków, gdy nie radzi sobie z gigantycznymi falami migracji z krajów muzułmańskich, religia znów staje się ważnym wyróżnikiem tożsamości Europejczyków.

(...) Nie potrzeba ani fanatyzmu, ani terroryzmu, by Europa powoli wpadała w objęcia islamu.

(...) To chrześcijaństwo dało Europie i całemu światu równość, godność człowieka, szacunek dla życia (...). Bronię ich szczególnie mocno w ostatnich

latach: zauważam bowiem, że wszystkie te zasady, które wydawały nam się oczywiste, wyssane z mlekiem matki, stają się obiektem zmasowanego ataku i stoją przed bardzo poważnym zagrożeniem. To zagrożenie dla całej naszej cywilizacji. Niestety, Europa najwyraźniej nie chce już być cywilizacją.]

Finally, the signing of the Treaty is portrayed as a ‘European celebration’, as it concludes ‘the time of sadness’ ([‘czas smuty’] (*RP*, 13/12/07); (*GW*, 14/12/07)). Both papers agree that the Treaty is a test both for Poland and Europe (*RP*, 13/12/07) because it is high time Europe stopped taking care of itself, looked around and faced real challenges, including globalisation [‘Europa musi teraz rozejrzeć się wkoło i stawić czoła prawdziwym wyzwaniom, w tym globalizacji’] (*GW*, 14/12/07). More specifically, it is stressed that after EU leaders ‘toiled to work out a compromise during the Brussels Summit last June’ [‘wymęczyli kompromis’], Europe ‘must grow up to competition with big blocks: the USA, China, India and Brazil’ (*GW*, 13/12/07). The liberal paper poses the question: ‘Quo vadis Europe’, in the light of Europe’s dilemmas and goals in 21st century (e.g. the EU’s demographic problem) and its future enlargement (*GW*, 14/12/07). But it does not omit to address the conflict between the Polish President Lech Kaczyński and the Prime Minister Donald Tusk over Poland’s foreign policy, either (e.g. ‘two planes from Poland’ arrived in Lisbon (*GW*, 13-14/12/07)). As the focus shifts from the Ioannina Compromise to the Charter of Fundamental Rights in both papers (*RP*, 13/12/07; *GW*, 13/12/07), central discursive themes from the previous corpus (European values) are further developed.

On the whole, much as the Polish papers elaborate on the typical gamesmanship of the EU, where national interests clash with European interests, it is the image of Europe including and reconciling differences that is foregrounded. Europe is also represented in the context of the centre and the periphery, with Poland’s place ‘in-between’ (both on the periphery of the EU, but in the geographical core of Europe), ‘trying the impossible’ (*RP*, 20/10/07): as one of decision-makers (after joining ‘the strongest six’), but still looking after its own and other ‘weaker’ countries’ periphery. In this respect, Poland may, for example, influence the EU’s decision to ‘leave the door ajar for Ukraine’ and may struggle for greater energy security and independence from Russia (*RP*, 20/10/07).²⁶

4. Discussion and Conclusions

There is an underlying dualism in representations of Europe in Poland and Britain, characterised by a tension between Europe as an ideal and reality.²⁷ Firstly, Europe is discursively constructed as a power struggle. On the one hand, the art of conflict resolution and common good over national interests are highlighted, on the other, bargaining, horse-trading, haggling and squabbling; on the one hand, the dream of ever greater integration, consistently defended by the EU’s Franco-German core, on the other, the reality of the awkward squad – the member states that procrastinate and impede progress, for which they are frequently reprimanded. It is predicted that this may result in a multi-speed Europe of more privileged, ‘better’ EU member states, which do more things together (actors characterised by unity, solidarity and consensus – the metaphor of the core, the majority), and those

on the periphery, whose actions aim at obstruction and destruction. Secondly, Europe is represented as an emerging political and economic force, a ‘Europe of results’, aspiring to catch up with global powers such as India, China and Brazil and play a key role on the global arena. That is the long-cherished ambition of EU leaders. Yet, if compared with the reality, in the eyes of its citizens, the EU may easily turn into a dictatorship, clearly intent on imposing burdensome regulations.

To conclude, Europe is a process of ever closer integration, where different identities, regional, national and supranational, mesh and blend. The content and composition of a European identity are constantly being contested, and its boundaries are still unknown as the doors of the European house are not shut yet, especially for Ukraine and Turkey. The metaphoric representations of the EU as ‘juggernaut’ and ‘dictatorship’ have a subversive character and are likely to reinforce the negative images of the EU in the minds of the European public. Conversely, both the topos and metaphor of the awkward squad seem to have the potential to buttress European identity construction in that they can make EU member states reflect upon their individual roles in the EU and prioritise common good over petty national interests. After all, although Poland and Britain are often professed to be ‘the awkward squad’ and, what is more, the two states often come to terms with the label, if we are to believe the opinion polls, both Poles and Britons’ attitudes towards the EU appear to prove it false: 89% of Poles approve of their membership in the EU and 87% of the UK’s citizens give their support to the EU’s key priorities (Eurobarometer 2008; CBOS 2007). Although 48% of the British prefer a looser relationship with the EU, only 16% of the questioned want to withdraw altogether (Global Vision/ICM European Union Survey online). However, what seems to be of greater concern is that despite Poland’s 55% support for the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, only a small percentage of those who participated in the poll take interest in the ratification process and the Treaty itself, while the majority have no firm opinion on the possible corollaries of the Treaty’s adoption (CBOS 2008). A European identity is still in an embryonic state, on the periphery of EU citizens. If the European family is to speak with one voice in the future – the communicative gap between ordinary people and EU elites (among them national representatives) must be bridged. One of the means thanks to which this goal may be achieved is undoubtedly the greater role of national media in European identity promotion.

¹ In line with the increasing geographical and semantic equation of Europe and the EU in the light of deeper integration, I use ‘Europe’ in a restrictive sense to refer to ‘Europe consisting of the European Union’ (Wodak 2004).

² The heading for this chapter “Treaty of Lisbon – the way forward” comes from the EU’s website: http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/index_en.htm

³ Under Irish law, amendments to EU treaties require amendments to the Irish constitution, and constitutional amendments must be approved by referendum.

⁴ The Irish approved the Treaty in the second referendum held on 2nd October 2009. On 1st December 2009 the Lisbon Treaty entered into force.

⁵ The EU is often said to be suffering from ‘legitimacy deficit’ and, what follows, European identity deficit (Garcia 1993; Wallace 1993; Beetham and Lord 1998).

⁶ http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/index_en.htm

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- 7 According to Stråth (2002: 391), identities and national interests ‘are constructed in the intersection between self-images and images of the Other.’ In Britain, ‘Europe is referred to as the Continent’, i.e. as belonging to the Others’.
 - 8 The UK and Poland feared that the Charter, if legally binding, would give rise to new legal obligations that could undermine their national sovereignty: in the case of Britain, British labour law and other laws related to social rights could be altered and in the case of Poland – Polish law in family and moral issues.
 - 9 See Breakwell (2004).
 - 10 For the role and significance of the media in European identity construction see e.g. Oberhuber et al. (2005); Siapera (2004); Wodak and Wright (2006); Retzlaff and Gänzle (2008); Bärenreuter (2005).
 - 11 See e.g. Siapera (2004) on the Brussels Press Corps and Wodak and Wright (2005) and Magistro (2007) on the EU websites.
 - 12 In the case of the Polish papers, the division into ‘right-wing’ and ‘left-wing’ may be regarded as oversimplification. *Gazeta Wyborcza* presents a rather central-liberal standpoint, whereas *Rzeczpospolita* describes itself as conservative in social and moral issues, but liberal in economic matters.
 - 13 According to Wodak (2001a: 1), the terms *Critical Linguistics* and *Critical Discourse Analysis* can be used interchangeably. For an overview of different methodological strands in CDA see e.g. Wodak (2001a).
 - 14 The concept of *discourse* can be approached from a variety of angles, as the term is used not only by linguists, but also by social theorists (Fairclough 1995: 131). For more details see e.g. McHoul (2001).
 - 15 See e.g. Wodak et al. (1999); Krzyżanowski (2005, 2008); Oberhuber 2005.
 - 16 Yet, Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 1) argue that the prevailing constructivist stance on identity, which promotes fluid and multiple identities, ‘leaves us without a rationale for talking about *identities* at all and ill-equipped to examine the *hard* dynamics and essentialist claims of contemporary identity politics’.
 - 17 The phrase ‘awkward squad’ is used to denote any grouping of individuals who associate together to resist or obstruct change and are possibly stubborn in doing so (Wikipedia online). As pointed out by Risse (2004: 265-266), in Britain, ‘Englishness’ has been constructed by elites as rather distinct from ‘Europeanness’.
 - 18 The Labour Party’s government, led by Tony Blair, promised to hold a referendum on the EU’s constitution; since the Treaty, according to experts, is ‘essentially the same as the defunct European constitution’ (*GUA*, 19/10/07), a referendum on its adoption is a must.
 - 19 The term refers to Britain’s opt-outs on justice and home affairs, foreign affairs and exemption from the Charter (*GUA* 19/10/07); it is tantamount to ‘British interests.’
 - 20 According to a YouGov poll for *TEL* 69% of Britons want a referendum, and according to Financial Times/Harris poll, 70% of the questioned in the UK, France, Germany, Italy and Spain. The results were also reported in the Polish press.
 - 21 Who is a true European and who is an Anti-European hinges upon readers’ ideological affiliation with either *TEL* or *GUA*. According to *GUA*, Anti-Europeans exaggerate the threats to British independence posed by the reform treaty. *GUA* lumps together ‘the Conservatives, the Murdoch press, and Euroseptics’ (14/12/07); or ‘the Murdoch media, the Telegraph, Mail and their opinion polls’ (18/10/07). On the other hand, *TEL* (19/10/07) stresses: ‘our campaign is in no way anti-European. On the contrary, we have always believed in the European values that this constitution traduces: political pluralism, personal freedom and parliamentary democracy’.
 - 22 Excerpts from the commentary by T.G. Ash were also translated into Polish and published both in *Rzeczpospolita* (13/12/07) and *Gazeta Wyborcza* (15-16/12/07).

- ²³ Interestingly, the topos of analogy and comparison of the EU constitutional debate to the US Philadelphia Convention appeared in *The Telegraph* in 2003. See Oberhuber et al. (2005: 256).
- ²⁴ Also in 2003 in *TEL* (14/12/03), the topos of Euro-elites surfaced, where elites were compared to ‘the apparatchiks of the Eastern bloc. For details see Oberhuber et al. (ibid.).
- ²⁵ In short, the ‘Ioannina mechanism’ allows small member states (representing 19.75 percent of the EU’s total population) to delay European Council decisions (Żygulski 2007). For the background see also: http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/ioannina_compromise_en.htm
- ²⁶ Topos of a national uniqueness is less and less salient in the Polish press (compare Krzyżanowski (2008)), though it comes back in the conservative *RP*, in the interviews with experts.
- ²⁷ For the basic tensions and antinomies in the construction of European identities see Wodak and Weiss (2005: 129-130).

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