



JAN ZIELONKA 1955 -

Jan Zielonka was born in Czarnowasy, Poland on February 23, 1955. He studied Law at the University of Wroclaw in Poland and earned his doctorate degree in Political Science at the University of Warsaw. As an academic, he has held positions at the University of Leiden, the Netherlands, the European University Institute, in Florence, Italy, Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies in the Human and Social Sciences, and Oxford University. He has published many pieces in the field of comparative politics, namely in the area of Soviet and Eastern European studies, the history of political philosophy, international relations, human rights and security. His current position, taken up in January 2004, is Professor of European Politics, University of Oxford and Ralf Dahrendorf Fellow, St Antony's College, Oxford. Zielonka's most recent publications have focused on the changing nature of the European Union, mainly the eastward European enlargement in 2004 and its ramifications for Europe as a whole.

Zielonka's early work reflects a particular interest in upheaval in Eastern Europe during the 1990s, including significant research on his motherland, Poland. As a fellow at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences, he continued comparative studies on Poland, which concentrated on three major issues: the evolution of the political system in Poland, non-violent social resistance and international consequences of the crisis in Poland. From his research, Zielonka published the 1989 volume *Political Ideas in Contemporary Poland*,

Shortly after the fall of the Berlin wall, Zielonka turned his focus to the tumultuous change in the region of Eastern Europe. His first book, entitled *Restructuring Eastern Europe: Towards a New European Order*, included twelve comparative analyses by western European specialists on issues including nationalism, human rights, and economic, political, and legal reform. The book sought to shed light on the future of Europe, though the quick inestimable pace of change in the region has dated some of the arguments since the book's publication.

Shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Zielonka considered the issue of human rights in the framework of East-West diplomacy that characterized the latter decades of the Cold War and

the subsequent major changes occurring in Eastern Europe. Though persecution under the Soviet regime contributed considerably to the human rights violations in Eastern Europe, this issue seems to be shifting, as oppose to disappearing, during the push for democracy and national independence. Furthermore, Zielonka establishes a connection between security issues, mainly between the state and its citizens, and this struggle for democracy, now supported by a network of ethnic movements, trade unions and various political associations. He also argues that the basis of Marxist doctrine in Eastern Europe during the Cold War has led to a crisis of ideology following the fall of the Wall, putting the area in a state of flux. The subject of human rights has also emerged in the attempt to build a unified Europe, where the issue divides traditional Western European values and those of the westward-looking Central and Eastern European countries.

In 1998, Zielonka edited *Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy*, which discusses the difficulties in managing the European Union while facing rapid change in Europe. Although the Union has sought to help manage conflicts, it has at the same time avoided becoming a military force. While it claims to pursue expansion of its territory, it has resisted entry for applicant countries. It also takes steps to compete with the United States, while at the same time engaging in increasing links across the Atlantic.

Zielonka also explored Europe's impotency in his work *Explaining Europaralysis: Why Europe Is Unable to Act in International Politics*. This book also addresses problems created by European Union policies, particularly the failure of its diplomacy in contrast to its economic successes. Zielonka favors a more cohesive foreign policy and responsibility for security matters with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Unlike others who may assert that NATO will be completely replaced by the European common foreign and security policy, Zielonka finds that the two can co-exist as oppose to clash. He further asserts that the European Union should be a "forum for expressing grassroots initiatives" and that international affairs should be treated as "social work," much in the German sense of civilian power Europe, rather than political strategy. Stanley Hoffman in *Foreign Affairs* commented that this view aligns more with smaller European Union states, but not with larger ones, noting that Zielonka does not consider the important strategic matters in world affairs.

Zielonka first presented his paradigm for Europe as a neo-medieval empire in the November 2000 work *The Future Shape of Europe*. At the turn of the millennium, the future of Europe created much debate, leading up to the enlargement in spite of many unresolved internal issues, such as the democratic deficit as well as issues about foreign and security policy. Also, Zielonka recognized Europe's position facing a changing global economy, which would ultimately force the EU to reform itself in order to compete.

Zielonka has conducted his most recent research with a particular interest in the May 2004 enlargement, which expanded the Union by ten countries with the admission of Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. His works seek to trace their challenges both immediately following the Cold War and leading up t to their accession to the Union, as well as their position immediately thereafter. As the largest of the Union's expansions thus far, he notes a certain special quality of this

enlargement, given the amount of money spent by member states in bringing these countries up to code with the *acquis communautaire*. Another unique feature of the 2004 enlargement was political, economic and strategic interests of Western Europe in the East, co-opting it into the Western European sphere. In part, the enlargement to the East represents the final co-option of these countries from the influence of Russia and their incorporation to a world characterized by democracy and free markets. In trying to promote stability in these countries, the West was also protecting them against potential Russian aggression. In spite of efforts to establish stability necessary to join the Union, these new member states have still struggled with border and ethnic minority issues.

The more abstract theoretical and political implications of the European Union's enlargement, explored by Zielonka mainly in *Europe Unbound* include significant issues such as the limits of Europe, the question of potentially open European borders as well as the effects of ever-evolving territorial politics. Zielonka examines the nature of borders in new Europe in terms of their geo-political repercussions as well as the ambiguous responsibility of policing new borders. Additionally, he traces migrations in long-standing European member states and those acceding to the Union, which experience a unique set of problems, from ethnic minority questions to transnational crime.

Zielonka's most recent work, the polemical book *Europe as Empire*, focused on the 2004 eastward enlargement of the EU, noting the change in the course of the European Union. He sets forth that the Union has outgrown all of its state-model paradigms and so-called Westphalian "fortress Europe" should be replaced by medieval empire-style "maze Europe".

Before the 2004 enlargement, Zielonka was active in the discussion of the issues of diversity and adaptation in the European Union. As he affirmed, the eastward enlargement of the European Union would bring a new level of diversity, not only in terms of economy and politics, but also identity and interests. In spite of the European Union's attempt to assimilate structures to those of the other European Union members, Zielonka states the inevitability of persistent diversity even after these countries' accession to the Union in spite of its theoretical forces of cohesion and convergence, incarnated in the *acquis communautaire*. However, Zielonka cites the end of the Cold War, more so than the enlargement process, as sparking the reconsideration of the European Union project. Perhaps one of the most compelling arguments made by Zielonka in the introduction to *The Enlarged European Union: Diversity and Adaptation* is the democracy deficit in the EU itself that may undermine the developing democracies of Eastern Europe. As citizens in these new EU countries seek to have their voice heard, the EU may prove to be a disappointment given the many layers of representation that do not take the people's voice into account.

Zielonka also assesses the EU's foreign policy from a highly critical position regarding its ability to act on the international scene. In considering the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), he characterizes Europe's foreign policy as "euro-paralysis" in its failure to carry out what was set forth in the Treaty on European Union (TEU), commonly known as the Maastricht Treaty. Though he does not provide an in-depth analysis of the TEU itself, he does provide 5 reasons for the failure of the CFSP: power politics between the major European

countries due to a split in their national interests; the confusion following the end of the Cold War along with the ensuing internal and external challenges these countries have experienced and the slipshod process of European integration as well as European institutions' overall powerlessness.

Furthermore, Zielonka asserts that the EU's foreign policy is full of paradoxes, especially in terms of its status as a superpower, its attitude toward the East and its relationship with the United States. In the introduction to *Paradoxes in European Foreign Policy*, he sets forth five paradoxes facing the European Union: its normative appeal versus its weakness to act due to its balancing act between ambiguity and straight-forwardness; its ability to face challenges of modernity versus its weakness in facing pre-modern politics in areas such as the Middle East or the Balkans; as well as the disharmony of deepening and widening the Union when dealing with both its internal and external goals. However, these "paradoxes" might prove fitting, he argues, for a complex international system that poses "paradoxical" or at least bipolar problems in and of itself.

Furthermore, he exposes the issue of the Union's policy objectives as not clearly aligned with or split from the interests of its member states. He cites the Treaty of Amsterdam as a failure due to its lack of clarification as to the role of the European Union regarding its security and foreign policy, while noting that such a policy was implicit even since the creation of the common trade policy in the 1957 Treaty of Rome. The attempts at political unification since the 1970s have moved ever closer to creating common policies, he argues, though this push did not come to any fruition until the 1992 Maastricht Treaty. Repeatedly, Zielonka questions the Union's alliances and the finiteness of its borders.

Overall, Zielonka identifies the lack of "workable" institutions and the democracy deficit as the principle obstacles from Europe acting as a collective international political body. In considering the titles of Zielonka's major works - *Europe as Empire*, *The Nature of the Enlarged European Union*, *Europe Unbound: Enlarging and Reshaping the Boundaries of the European Union*, *Democratic Consolidation in Eastern Europe*, *Explaining Euro-paralysis*, *Why Europe is Unable to Act in International Politics*- one has the sense that Zielonka is not fundamentally a euroskeptic, but perhaps a more intellectual incarnation of an enlightened optimist. That is, he seeks an explanation for Europe, in its ever-evolving and shifting identity, in order to set forth a future course for Europe based not on what Eurocrats expect it to be, but rather what it is and what it is becoming.

Hannah Kaplan

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