

go w najważniejsze wydarzenia PRL od jej powstania do kampanii marcowej pozwalają ujrzeć w jego biografii wiele istotnych aspektów komunizmu. Biografia Zambrowskiego mogłaby być przyczynkiem takich zagadnień jak kolejne odsłony konfliktu toczącego środowisko komunistów, znaczenie aparatu administracyjnego dla budowy i funkcjonowania systemu komunistycznego czy dzieje „żydokomuny” – jako że problem związków Żydów z komunizmem, poddany racjonalnej egzegezie, a także antysemityzm w partii i w społeczeństwie, stanowią istotny wątek pracy. Przy okazji Szumiło zdemitologizował postać swojego bohatera – nie znalazła potwierdzenia teza, jakoby Zambrowski ubiegał się o stanowisko pierwszego sekretarza lub maczał palce w zamordowaniu Bohdana Piaseckiego.

Jeśli można mieć jakieś zastrzeżenia do pracy Szumiły – niedosyt budzi przede wszystkim brak refleksji nad ewolucją ideologiczną w PZPR, której los Zambrowskiego był jedynie ilustracją. Satisfakcja Rakowskiego, że stalinistę, który w 1956 przeobraził się w liberała, spotkała zasłużona kara, świadczy o tym, że powszechna awersja do Zambrowskiego w partii była czymś więcej niż tylko efektem propagandy jego przeciwników. Oczywiście, symbolizował stalinizm, jego reputacji zaszkodziło zaangażowanie w walkę z odchyleniem „prawicowo-nacjonalistycznym”, ale przecież nie on jeden miał rozliczne grzechy na sumieniu. Szumiło nie eksponuje pytania, jakich zjawisk świadectwem i symptomem było uczynienie prominentnego współtwórcy partyjnego aparatu kozłem ofiarnym i dlaczego „czarna legenda” Zambrowskiego spotkała się z takim rezonansem społecznym<sup>6</sup>. Sprzeciw budzi

też przywołanie jako podsumowanie życia Zambrowskiego opinii jego syna Antoniego, wdług którego ojciec „był zbrodniarzem”<sup>7</sup>. Stalinizm był niewątpliwie systemem zbrodniczym, a Zambrowski współtworzył system dyktatury proletariatu, jednak jego działalności nie można określić jako zbrodniczej, jeśli pojęcie to nie ma ulec dewaluacji. Postać Zambrowskiego jest niejednoznaczna, warta refleksji wykraczającej poza proste potępienie, ponieważ będzie to refleksja dotycząca nie tylko skomplikowanych losów tego komunisty, ale także komunizmu i Polski.

Mimo tych uwag, pracę Szumiły należy ocenić jako wybitną, poszerzającą wiedzę na temat tak samego Zambrowskiego, jak i partii. W wielu miejscach można wyciąć nazwisko Zambrowskiego, gdyż i tak wiadomo, że to o niego chodzi – z racji tematyki recenzji, ale też kontekstu poszczególnych zdań.

Filip Przytułski

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PIERRE-FRÉDÉRIC WEBER

Recenzja książki: **Henryk Łakomy (†), 2006, François Mitterrand. Biografia polityczna**, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej Kraków. Kraków. s. 222. ISBN 83-7271-396-0.

**F**rançois Mitterrand was not only the first socialist president of the Fifth French Republic, but also the one who was in charge of this office for the longest period: fourteen years – even longer than its founder General

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<sup>6</sup> Adam Michnik wspominał, że po wyjściu z więzienia wiele osób uważało, że to Roman Zambrowski zahamował październikowe reformy

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– zob. A. Michnik, J. Tischner, J. Żakowski, *Między Panem a Plebanem*, Kraków 1995, s. 164.

<sup>7</sup> M. Szumiło, dz. cyt., s. 484.

Charles de Gaulle (eleven years) and also longer than Jacques Chirac (twelve years). While the first went out of office ahead of time after an unsuccessful referendum in 1969, the latter introduced a change in the constitution shortening the so far seven-year presidential mandate by two years during his second term (2002–2007). However essential Mitterrand's presidential terms, one cannot reduce his political life to this culmination though; in fact, the statesman whose life has to be presented in Henryk Łakomy's "political biography", as the author called his book, is sort of a marathon runner in France's twentieth century history. His political career covers approximately sixty years – years of upheavels, rises, and falls – through the Third French Republic, the Second World War between Vichy Regime and *Résistance*, the Fourth and the Fifth French Republics.

Mitterrand's quite sinuous political path eventually bringing him into leading position among French socialists makes the biographical work even harder for historians, the more so as part of the existing archives about Mitterrand have not been declassified so far. Nevertheless, the archival landscape concerning this major actor of French politics is also far from being a no man's land. That point makes it all the more puzzling, when the reader realizes that the author did not mention – and probably did not use either – any archival source neither in the footnotes nor in the admittedly very short bibliography at the end of his study (three pages containing less than one hundred titles, monographs and articles alike).

The whole book reads like a long essay about France's twentieth century political history with particular stress on François Mitterrand, but it would be exaggerated to consider it actually as what it claims to be – a biography –

but for the chronological construction of the study. The first chapter presents Mitterrand's family and social background; the second and third chapters are devoted to his participation in the political life respectively during the Fourth and the Fifth French Republic (till 1981); the fourth part concerns Mitterrand's first presidential term, whereas the fifth one examines his second term with particular stress on the "cohabitation"-period – while the socialist president had to cooperate with a right-wing government (led by then PM Jacques Chirac). Actually this structure is only partly justified, given Mitterrand's huge amount of various interests during his long career, as well as the various political functions he had. For sure, Łakomy went beyond a mere chronology by adding a final chapter concerning president Mitterrand's role in France's foreign policy, but on the one hand it would have been surprising not to do so, as the president's constitutionally settled role in the system of the Fifth French Republic makes him the key-actor; and, on the other hand, this specific thematic addendum after a chronological presentation throughout the study makes us wonder whether it would not have been more appropriated to choose an overall topically structured outline.

Another critique concerns the very intention of the book: whereas it tries to show Mitterrand's political role and influence in French politics, especially after 1945, the reader cannot but think that there is more space in it for a general résumé of a bit more than half a century of French political history than actually for Mitterrand's input in it. Unfortunately, his opinions concerning several questions in the whole period before he became president, i.e. as he was in the camp of parliamentary opposition, are often summed up in a short quotation from one of his numerous publi-

cations, but rarely developed nor put in the context of other possible sources. Published sources written by Mitterrand himself are not, of course, lacking any interest for an historical reconstruction of his political thinking, but one knows the unequal quality and historiographical value of memoirs in general. Mitterrand, maybe more than any average statesman in French twentieth century history (beside de Gaulle), was always interested in the mark he would leave and the opinion the coming world would have on his deeds. This makes confrontation with alternative sources all the more important.

Łakomy's book was published in 2006, the year of the tenth anniversary of Mitterrand's death (8<sup>th</sup> January 1996). Although the research on Mitterrand, especially with regard to his foreign policy vision and options, has been developing quite fast for the past ten years, the reader will be surprised not to find any of the now leading studies concerning in particular Mitterrand's position on the so called "German issue" and the accelerating re-unification process of 1989–1990. One could have expected at least that the author would have mentioned as an alternative published source the political memoirs written by Mitterrand's closest adviser, Jacques Attali (*Verbatim I*, 1993; *Verbatim II*, 1995; *Verbatim III*, 1995, Fayard. Paris). Those in turn, given the repeated critique made against them by several historians since their very publication, could have been corrected thanks to the research completed for example by Tilo Schabert (published first in German in 2002, then in a French translation in 2005: *Mitterrand et la réunification allemande. Une histoire secrète 1981-1995*, 2005, Grasset. Paris), but even more by Frédéric Bozo (*Mitterrand, la fin de la guerre froide et la réunification allemande. De Yalta à Ma-*

*astricht*, 2005, Odile Jacob. Paris). Both authors had the opportunity to have access to so far classified material – beside the open documents available in Paris in the "Archives Nationales" (files series: 5/AG 4) – which enabled them to provide a more differentiated view on the French president's position, fears, hopes, and projects regarding the German re-unification. Just to take one well-known example: Mitterrand's official visit to East-Germany in December 1989 was not a signal of his opposition to re-unification. The visit had been planned a long time ahead. Neither was Mitterrand fundamentally hostile to the process of re-uniting both German states – what was at stake for him was rather the question of its rapidity and the perceived risk of a certain precipitation –, nor could his position be seen as identical to the one adopted by UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, as Łakomy however suggests it (see p. 166–167). As far as the political entanglements of German re-unification and European integration are concerned, they appear to be rather underexposed, which seems striking given Mitterrand's role in the adoption of the Maastricht treaty (1993) e.g.

The remarks concerning German and European affairs can be applied and extended to other foreign policy issues referred to in the study. The short presentation of Mitterrand's role in France's relations with African countries, especially with former colonies should have been enlightened by some publications the author could have disposed of during his research. Claude Wauthier (*Quatre présidents et l'Afrique: de Gaulle, Pompidou, Giscard d'Estaing, Mitterrand. Quarante ans de politique africaine*, 1995, Editions du Seuil. Paris) for example could have given quite an insightful comparative view on Mitterrand's African policy and the outstanding, albeit sometimes dubio-

us role played by the “African cabinet” (“cellule africaine”) in the Elysée Palace.

Throughout the book, the general impression of a certain superficiality prevails. When the reader gets some details, those are not always of highest importance. Some of them can even be quite anecdotic: why specify that 64-year-old Mitterrand was 172 cm high and weighed 80 kg when he became the president of France (p. 97)? Such a piece of information could have been given, of course, in a really precise and extensive biographical work about Mitterrand. In this rather thin essay, however, one would have preferred exact indications of another kind, related to some of the core aspects of the French politician's life and work.

Eventually, the main question concerns the benefit of such a historical-politological publication. Despite the justified critique, the point here is not to deny the narrative nor even explanatory qualities of the author's text. Years before, Łakomy had had the opportunity to show his skills and competence when presenting France's social policies since 1945 (*Problemy polityki społecznej Francji 1958–1986*, 1988. Kraków). No doubt his presentation of half a century of French post-war history through the person of François Mitterrand – as the book we have discussed here could be renamed more properly – has merits as an historical overview of several aspects of the coun-

try's political life and social evolution. Bearing this in mind, it certainly deserves to be compared to some similar works by Jan Baszkiewicz (1930-2011), one of the best Polish specialists in French history. Yet, it should rather be counted to the list of general monographs on France (like Baszkiewicz's *Historia Francji*, 1974, re-edited several times for the past forty years) than placed among in-depth research works on particular aspects of that history. As such, even though not always updated as far as its bibliographical references are concerned, it still can be considered as a valuable introduction for Polish students in modern European history as well as in International Relations, all the more so as the author tried to improve the readability thanks to twenty pictures (taken mainly from a French publication, *Chroniques de l'histoire. Mitterrand*, 1998, Editions Chronique. Paris) illustrating the most important stages in Mitterrand's political career. It is not sure whether this was indeed the very goal intended by the author, died in 2009. Nevertheless, we should recognize that even didactical value alone is already a merit not every book can claim to possess, which in turn may certainly be considered as a (belated) compliment to the professor Łakomy used to be.

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