

MARCH 1968 IN POLISH CINEMATOGRAPHY – *LITTLE ROSE* BY JAN KIDAWA-BŁOŃSKI

KATARZYNA BAŁDYGA

Faculty of Humanities,
Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw
katarzyna.baldyga@gmail.com

There have not been many film interpretations of the events of March 1968 until now. One of the films that reminded Poles of these tragic events during the last few years is *Różyczka* [*Little Rose*] by Jan Kidawa-Błoński. The emergence of this picture not only refreshed the memory of March 1968, but also, by means of visual references, it recalled archive materials from the period presented by the authors of this film. Before going on to analyze Kidawa-Błoński's work, I will look at two documentaries by Maria Zmarz-Koczanowicz concerning the same events in order to compare the methods of recalling history and updating experiences.

At the beginning, I am obliged to make a methodological clarification. Because this is not a historical synthesis concerning the events of March 1968, I will describe the understanding of history rather than factography. The fundamentals of this position were determined by Hayden White, who noticed the literariness of a historical work. He indicated the narration as a basic method of ordering and explaining reality. In his further analysis, he made a distinction between historiography and historiophoty, which he defined as the 'representation of history and our thought about it in visual images and filmic discourse' (White 1988: 1193). White's findings lead us to conclude that no presentation of history, whether put down in verbal discourse or recorded on tape, can claim the right to absolute objectivity. This train of thought is also visible when the authorities try to gain control of discourses and manipulate facts by using available media possibilities. This clarification is particularly useful in the interpretation of archive

materials from the period of the People's Republic of Poland. As we know, history was written by those who were in power at the given time¹.

In her preface to the anthology *Film i historia* [*Film and History*], Iwona Kurz (2008) stressed that the film may refer to historical events, but it also constitutes a historical event in itself – it may have an impact on the formation of collective perceptions. Therefore, it is worth analyzing how the history of March 1968 is interpreted and talked about in the 21st century and whether, apart from a story of the past, the authors of films tell us something else...

WARSZAWA GDAŃSKA STATION (2007)

Maria Zmarz-Koczanowicz's documentary *Dworzec Gdański* [*Warszawa Gdańska Station*] deals with the problem of forced emigrations after the events of March 1968. It presents an old tragedy of people who gathered in Ashkelon (Israel) in 2005. Basically, each of the presented stories could be described according to the following outline: peaceful life in Poland – a state of tension caused by sudden aggression against Jews – pressure from the authorities – decision – departure. This repeatability makes it difficult for the spectator to accept this 'order'. The construction of such a string enhances the feeling of absurdity and arbitrariness of decisions made by the authorities of the People's Republic of Poland. The authors of the film focused on accounts of forced emigrants of March 1968. The truth of their message was clashed with the fiction of communist propaganda. The documentary is organized by the poetics of the meeting. The interviews are illustrated with archive materials kept in private collections or acquired from the archives of government services. The hypocrisy of the authorities is very often revealed in this way. Real stories of individual people, presented usually in an emotional manner, were juxtaposed with the cruel and unfair simplifications and slanders of the ruling elite. An example of such juxtaposition is the clash of Gomułka's speech stating that 'this category of Jews will leave our country sooner or later' with the speech of the protagonist showing a written proof that he is longer a citizen of Poland. Similar juxtapositions emphasize the shallowness of the First Secretary's argumentation and make the spectator feel the tragedy of exiles

¹ To learn more about the historical view of films, see: Ferro 1988; Rosenstone 1988.

even more intensely. Thus, the main technique used in the film is contrast, emphasized also by the introduction of archive materials (photographs and films) related to the events in question (apart from witnesses' accounts).

The outbreak of anti-Semitic hysteria pushed the protagonists to leave the country, even though they lived peacefully and happily in Poland. The new situation forced them to redefine their identity. One of the protagonists described her feelings concerning her nationality: 'My world was Poland, my life was Poland, my friends were Poles, my fiancé was a Pole. For me, Poland was my nation, my place'. A few similar opinions were presented in the film. The protagonists presented their Polishness, indicating that being a Jew does not rule out calling themselves Poles. They found themselves in a difficult situation overnight and had to reorganize their world. They could not understand why there was no room for them in the country where they and their parents lived. They felt suddenly and painfully that they were Jews in Poland. Earlier this had been for them one of the areas being ignored (as insignificant) in the peaceful everyday reality.

The film *Warszawa Gdańska Station* tells the story of March 1968 events from the perspective of their consequences – the fact that many Poles of Jewish descent left the country. Presenting the consequences, the authors indicate the reason – an increase of national hysteria addressed against Jews. March 1968 was a generational experience. The incidents on the streets of many Polish cities united Poles regardless of origin and social belonging. In spite of this, the prevailing authorities tried to determine the 'order' according to their own measure, attributing the responsibility for the incidents to Jews. This was a case of deliberately roused resentment. One of the main characters of the documentary states: 'I felt that we were alone. Nobody stood up for us'. Someone else remarked that the rhetoric of propaganda had become accepted in society. These statements show that the incidents of March 1968 were critical events. The film shows the loneliness of protagonists, who were suddenly forced to depart and change their attitude to themselves and the environment.

The *Warszawa Gdańska Station* is a silent witness of the tragedy. It is the place around which the events focus. It is where the past meets the present. The film begins with information that the shots were taken in 2005 during Reunion'68 – the meeting of Jewish emigrants from Poland in Ashkelon (Israel). The modern perspective ultimately dominates over the historical

one. It allows us to look at the past. The railway station is a place associated with temporariness. It serves as the border between 'here' and 'there'. For the protagonists of the film, it is also the border between Poland and 'abroad' and between 'today' and 'yesterday'. History comes to life in the accounts of the presented persons. Thus, as a part of the film, the *Warszawa Gdańska Station* is a vehicle connecting the contemporary spectator with the tragedy of forced emigrants.

AN ORDINARY MARCH (2008)

Another film by Maria Zmarz-Koczanowicz which raises issues related to March 1968 is *Zwyczajny marzec [An Ordinary March]*. It is a documentary made in 2008, thereby referring to the round anniversary of the events. The context of the anniversary is particularly important here, because it serves as a frame: the film begins and ends with photographs of the streets of Warsaw made exactly in March 2008, when archive materials were displayed on wall screens. This technique is used for outlining two perspectives: the historical one and the contemporary one. Similar methods were applied in *Warszawa Gdańska Station*.

The main character of the film is Adam Michnik. He is the person who comments upon archive materials. The rule of contrast that organises *Warszawa Gdańska Station* is a method applied also here. The protagonist's comments reveal the insincere explanations of the authorities. Apart from that, contrast is also visible in the content of comments.

At first, an archive material presenting a New Year's Eve ball (1967/1968) and fragments of the staging of Kazimierz Dejmek's *Dziady [Forefathers' Eve]* were juxtaposed. Adam Michnik comments upon this: 'There is the Poland partying in Gomułka's house and the Poland that applauds Mickiewicz. And these two Polands could not get along. The clash was inevitable'. This statement became the guiding motif of the film organizing the material to be shown to the spectator. The character's thought was illustrated in a similar vein a few more times – e.g., in the juxtaposition of the 50th anniversary of Komsomol and a concert of the Rolling Stones. The world colored artificially with studied and forced gestures contrasts with the world of real emotions. Adam Michnik's comments are often tinted with irony and show a large distance towards presented materials from the archives of services. This makes the spectator feel even more strongly

the absurdity of the situation in which the victims of March 1968 suddenly found themselves.

Warszawa Gdańska Station shows anonymous characters whose names are not known to the public opinion. In *An Ordinary March*, the rules are different. The main character and the narrator is Adam Michnik – a well-known personality. Other persons appearing in the documentary are most often non-anonymous characters whose names have recurred in various discourses until now. *An Ordinary March* refers to the fight of the intelligentsia against the system, whereas *Warszawa Gdańska Station* points out the clash of the individual with the political and propaganda machine.

‘WHY DID NOT YOU WANT TO WRITE ABOUT THIS, SIRS?’ – *LITTLE ROSE* (2010)

This short quotation from Adam Mickiewicz’s *Forefathers’ Eve* became the motto of Jan Kidawa-Błoński’s film. The scene presenting the Warsaw Salon in Mickiewicz’s tragedy is well-known. Among guests of the salon, there were also writers. The conversations raised the problem of writing about the contemporary miseries of the nation. What does it have to do with *Little Rose*? It seems that this situation can be referred to tendencies in most recent Polish films, which increasingly often raise issues connected with Polish post-war history. The emergence of films such as the *Little Rose*, *Rewers* [*Reverse*] by Borys Lankosz (2009), *Czarny czwartek* [*Black Thursday*] by Antoni Krauze (2009), *Kret* [*The Mole*] by Rafał Lewandowski (2011) or *Róża* [*Rose*] by Wojciech Smarzowski (2011) may reflect the will to undertake reflections on events from the times of the People’s Republic of Poland. Coping with history is one of the fundamental issues in the construction of identity. As a relatively new medium, the film can open discussions that were pushed aside to the margin of social dialogue for a long time. Katarzyna Taras (2010) notes that *Little Rose* forms part of a string of Polish productions resuming dialogue with history (not History). History told by female characters allows the authors to resign from glorifying the pantheon of heroes. Portraying a woman makes it possible to tell an intimate and close story without unnecessary swank and big words. True heroism begins in the private everyday reality. The problem of entanglement in the security

service world and the operation of ruthless mechanisms of history becomes a tragedy of concrete individuals. 'History becomes flesh' (Taras 2010).

On March 8th 2010, in a short statement before the premiere of the film, Jan Kidawa-Błoński noted that the media coverage of the March events was decreasing, even though they were one of the stages of building independent Poland². It is difficult to argue with this opinion. March 1968 was a hot topic on its round 40th anniversary, but later the interest in this issue declined systematically.

'Why did not you want to write about this, Sirs?'. Kidawa-Błoński's film shows that there is much to say about. Thus, the motto induces us to engage in a discussion on painful history, and the film is a perfect medium that can shape public awareness.

There are many indications that *Little Rose* is an important film. It fits into the process of confronting the communist past of Poland. From time to time, vetting processes or the problems of collaboration with the system induce the public opinion to provide new answers to the question in which Poland we want to live. The influence of the past on the present concerns many people – not only those who are entangled in the security service world. The Polish cinema may have released itself from the stigma of historicism, wrongly understood messianism and expiatory tendencies, since its creators found the courage to show history as it is. The Polish cinema slowly makes up for outstanding lessons of history.

Kidawa-Błoński's film shows an excerpt from the history of the People's Republic of Poland by means of individual stories. Being in love with the Security Service agent Roman Rożek (Robert Więckiewicz), Kamila Sakowicz (Magdalena Boczarka) – the main character of the film – becomes a secret collaborator under the pseudonym 'Różyczka' ['Little Rose']. The decision on collaboration changes the woman's life, who remains in relationships with two men till the end – she is torn between passion, love and responsibility. Kamila is a dynamic character. The spectator observes her struggle between two separate worlds. On the one hand, her love of the Security Service agent bound her to the security service world; on the other hand, this circle pushed her towards the world of the intelligentsia.

² This statement can be found in additional materials attached to the DVD with the film.

Until the end, Kamila is an ‘unstuck’ character who seems to create her own space that does not fit into any of the aforementioned worlds at all. Maybe it is the different perception of reality and the filtration of the world through female sensitivity that determines this discomfort. Both the world of agents and the world of the intelligentsia are presented as male worlds in which women rather play the role of comrades, beautiful additions: they do not sit at party meetings or writers’ meetings at the presidential table. Thus, the main character plays an exceptional role in the presented fictional world. She functions as an active person engaged on both sides, which caused her life tragedy. The split resulted in awareness and maturity, which showed the need to support only one of the parties.

Initially, Kamila is presented as a hedonist making the most of life. She likes spending time with a man who attracts her and attends dance parties. By being entangled in the security service world, she is pushed into the world of the intelligentsia, which is partly strange to her. The task entrusted to the agent ‘Little Rose’ slowly ceases to be merely a mission. Kamila notices that she has found herself in a noose. The surveillance of a lecturer and writer is a blow to the structure of the family. At one moment, the girl notices a change within herself – she sees that her relationship with Adam (Andrzej Seweryn) is not only a task, but also a true relation.

The culmination of the events occurs at the moment when Adam Warczewski and Rożek meet. In the film, this was combined with a presentation of March 1968 manifestations at the University of Warsaw. Driving his car, Rożek observes the street turmoil caused by the participation of the militia in the pacification of demonstrating persons. At this point, the spectator watches archival photographs. Suddenly Rożek notices the professor and leads him into a corner. The plot continues simultaneously – the militia and ORMO troops beat demonstrators with truncheons, and the agent discloses Little Rose on the side. Warczewski’s worst presumptions prove real.

At this point, it is worth noticing photographs by Piotr Wojtowicz. The intensity of color changes along with the progress of the story being told. The photographer himself recollects: ‘I decided to collide various aesthetics: to start with almost trashy photographs, where the superabundance of colors raises doubts as to the sense of style, then depart from color and use monochromatism and, finally, approach the texture of archival

documentary photographs used in the film' (Taras 2011). This kind of color conception involves a few issues. Firstly, thanks to grading, it was possible to introduce archive materials acquired from the Institute of National Remembrance, the stores of the National Filmotheque and the archives of the Polish Television (Tokarczyk 2010). Archive materials are familiar to spectators, as they have been frequently shown in television broadcasts, reportages and documentaries. They were also included in the film on a par with staged photographs, which made the story even more credible. Seeing the difference between photographs, the spectator notices that 'even if the story is not historical truth, it is probable and credible (...) such a story could have happened on the margin of great historical events' (Taras 2011). Another issue is the presentation of various worlds from which the characters come; non-homogeneous photographs were used for this purpose, too. The colorful world of Kamila's imagination, the security service world and the entanglement of Rożek, as well as the balanced 'English' world of the professor are visible in the photographs. The distinctness of these worlds gradually diminishes as mutual relationships develop between the protagonists. The disclosure of the truth – the identity of Little Rose as a security service agent is connected with gradual monochromatization and the removal of an array of colors from this world.

Later, the silent family tragedy of the protagonists takes place in the professor's apartment. Kamila comes back home. She sees a pair of young people in the lift. The girl is wounded and cries. 'Little Rose' enters the dark apartment. She is busy with the daily bustle. The professor sits still in the dark. On the table, there are papers from Rożek. The woman begins to understand that her secret has come to light. She goes out, leaving her engagement ring. In this sequence, we can notice the characteristic psychological focus on detail. Not a single word goes out of Warczewski's mouth – his state of mind is suggested by details. The ragged world of the protagonists is visible in the shooting method. Rożek's papers, Warczewski's armchair, the engagement ring – these elements are located in one space, but when photographed separately, they show the scattering of the protagonists' worlds.

In this way, great history connects with small history. The national tragedy coincides with the private one. History enters the life of ordinary people. Like Biblical Eve, Kamila gives in to the temptation and then she

tempts herself. The aim of the game is not the pleasure of tasting forbidden fruit, but the unveiling of the truth, gradual acquaintance with life and the acquisition of maturity. Thus, the tragedy occurs on a few levels at the same time – the truth mixes with deceit and hypocrisy. The protagonists' fates are entangled in this struggle.

Although the issues concerning the events of March 1968 are dramatic, they only form a background for the events being narrated. The most important thing is the protagonists' tragedy. It is the protagonist and his story, not the historical narration, that becomes important for the recipient. Such is the nature of a feature film. In this case, however, tracing 'history within history' is a key issue with a cognitive benefit. Iwona Kurz (2010) wrote that 'recalling the loudest historical moments tends to obscure mechanisms and processes here [in *Little Rose* – K.B.], and the chronicle replaces their analysis and interpretation' (see also: Śmiałowski 2010). In my opinion, however, the truth of the protagonists is not concealed by recalling history in this case. Things happen completely the other way – history is uncovered thanks to the protagonists' fates. They make the spectator discover that the tragedy of March 1968 is a real tragedy, not a publicized superficial game. Small history allows us to learn big historical mechanisms. With the protagonists' privacy being shown, the tragedy of March 1968 is the fate of concrete real people, even though film characters accumulate stories of a few persons. Thus, the task of a feature film is not to show reality as straightforwardly as a documentary does³. It is, therefore, worth tracing the 'historical crumbs' that can be read in *Little Rose*.

Archive materials play an important role in this picture. Anyone who has already watched, for example, films by Maria Zmarz-Koczanowicz will easily notice that black-and-white fragments of *Little Rose* are original materials of security services. Recordings are introduced in a very skillful manner. For example, Gomułka's speeches are watched by the protagonists on the television. This technique draws the spectator's attention to the fact of social reception of manipulated information and propaganda contents.

The plot of the film starts in 1967. The spectator initially looks at the world through the eyes of Security Service agents. Kamila and Rożek

³ Obviously, reservations, genre limitations and other things are mentioned here, too.

watch a propaganda film concerning the six-day war in Israel in an outdoor cinema. The camera shows the reactions of the audience watching a newsreel. The protagonists do not seem to be interested in the material being displayed, but the camera records the reactions of the surrounding people. Some of them express their indignation by commenting upon the evident manipulation of facts. Others accept the material. The camera looks at them through the eyes of Rożek, for whom criticizing the film is tantamount to criticizing the system – an extremely inappropriate conduct that has to be recorded by the agent's vigilant eye. The newsreel being watched by the protagonists is a sign and proof of actual propaganda measures used at that time. Inspiring hatred, creating a public enemy, building stereotypes and recalling concealed resentment – these are the consequences of intense actions aimed at building the image of the authority.

When explaining Warczewski's 'guilt' to 'Little Rose', Roman Rożek uses typical expressions from the then-prevailing phraseology. Calling someone a 'Jew' was a sufficient accusation. Rożek does not interpret facts himself. He uses ready patterns submitted by the authorities. He is not intellectually independent. He accepts entirely false reasons thoughtlessly. He admits that he is not concerned with the truth – the interest of the party is the most important. When Little Rose discovers that Adam Warczewski is not a Jew and explains this to the agent, he openly states that the truth is insignificant. The girl's task is to prove guilt. It is also necessary to note another psychological motivation of Roman Rożek. Most probably, apart from the thoughtless acceptance of the ruling party's argumentation, the protagonist decided to win the trust of his superiors in order to conceal his own identity and protect himself against potential attacks. This interpretation is confirmed by the end of the film, in which Rożek has to leave the country. Maybe the case of Warczewski was supposed to shift the party's attention away from his person.

The mood of the entire society shown in *Warszawa Gdańska Station* is suggested by Kidawa-Błoński's work only in a few scenes. I have already mentioned one of them. The spectator observes people's reaction to the newsreel. Apart from that, agent Rożek finds the star of David painted in red on his car. This matter has its continuation and culmination in the scene when the party identification card is taken away from the agent.

The 50th anniversary of the October Revolution was to be celebrated very ceremoniously. One of the parts of the celebration was the staging of Adam Mickiewicz's *Forefathers' Eve* directed by Kazimierz Dejmek. Here, historical matters are treated as a context for the story of the protagonists once again. At first, a poster announcing the premiere of the performance is shown. Later, the spectator watches fragments of the performance through the female protagonist's eyes. These are not archival recordings. We see a theatrical performance and a fragment of *Forefathers' Eve* being played out by the actors. However, this manner of presentation made it possible to show the reaction of the audience – when representatives of the authorities leave the room demonstratively, this meets with ovation from those who received the contents communicated from the scene and understood them. Kamila's interview with the agent after the performance reveals the naive perception of the events by the Security Service. Rożek's questions about possible steered reactions of young people and inspirations flowing from some individual group show the version of the events that the official propaganda subsequently tried to impose in spite of obvious contradictions.

At this point, historical events important for the plot are suspended. For Kamila, it is a time of changes and important decisions. At that moment, she discovers that Rożek does not intend to discover the truth, so she approaches Adam and his family. He makes the final decision on the New Year's Eve ball. It is the same ball attended by the party officials that we can see in *An Ordinary March*. Although we may be surprised by the fact that intellectual Warczewski and low-rank security service agent Rożek are present there, it is important that a confrontation of the protagonists takes place and, at the same time, great history connects with small history once again. The protagonists are listening to Gomułka's address...

Another fragment concerning the events of March 1968 directly refers to street manifestations. As I have already mentioned, the fate of the nation runs parallel to the fate of the characters once again. The status of 'Little Rose' as a security service agent is unmasked in a corner, whereas 'great history' takes place in the street. Before the unmasking takes place, the spectator observes the turmoil and fights of ORMO (Volunteer Reserve of Citizens' Militia) services with young people through Rożek's eyes (or rather through the camera of relevant services). Kamila is not present on the scene – she

sees only the consequences. The most important fact for her is that she has been unmasked.

Another significant issue is the presentation of the wave of intensification of anti-Semitic moods. Warczewski and his family watch a fragment of the speech in which he is accused of being co-responsible for the March 1968 incidents. His mother is desperate. Her behavior resembles the behavior of mothers about which the protagonists of *Warszawa Gdańska Station* talk. The generation that survived the war is aware of the fact that its atrocities may happen again. The experience of the war was the factor that united the generation of protagonists' parents. In both films, the reaction of people from this generation is similar – the protagonists are paralyzed with the thought of repeated persecutions. Adam Warczewski meets with attacks from many sides. He loses his job, the printing of his book is suspended and he has to return the royalties. He also receives calls with threats. Even the taxi driver, unaware of who he is talking to, shouts: 'To Siam!'. The culmination of the intellectual's despair was shown through close-ups and details – the face, the eyeglasses, the returned engagement ring, the barrier. Warczewski's world was turned upside down. He grasps elements of reality only in shreds. It is not only a picture of his mental state, but also a harbinger of the events that will follow soon. Presented as suicide by the authorities, the professor's death (pushing out of the balcony) could be officially justified by the story of Warczewski's love of the female agent. In this context, details are like crime scene photographs.

Another direct consequence of the March 1968 events was a purge within the ruling party. In the film, this motif is represented by Rożek's interview with officers. His collaborators suggest that he acts for private reasons, his actual name is 'Skewer' and he 'went over to the enemy positions'. As a result of these accusations, he is ousted from the party and has to leave the country.

The expatriation warrant affected also Warczewski and his newly-wed wife. The family receives a document stating that these persons are not Polish citizens. Unfortunately, this is not the end of the tragedy. The harbinger that the spectator watched earlier turns into reality. On her way back home, Kamila finds her husband lying dead in the blood-stained snow. The roses left on the stairs indicate that the perpetrator knew about her pseudonym – it might have been Rożek, but this is not certain.

The last scene on the *Warszawa Gdańska Station* summarizes the film. The railway station is a place of changes. The pregnant 'Little Rose' can be treated as a symbol of fate variability. The girl who hesitated between both parties to the (political and moral) conflict has finally become alone. Both men suffered defeat. Thus, at the end of the film, Kamila was still standing at the crossroads. Because of the turns of history and her life choices, Kamila remained 'in between' until the end. After all, as the subtitle of the film suggests, 'every love has its own story'. The story of this love (or rather these loves) clashed against the tragedy of the nation. Finally, it is the woman who wins the battle with history, although it is difficult to talk about the victory and happiness here. Here, an important thing is the triumph of life. Kamila's child is the harbinger of a new generation that will face new challenges. The generation of March 1968 will survive (or has survived) and it does not matter whose child the girl is expecting.

The documentaries by Maria Zmarz-Koczanowicz highlighted two aspects of March 1968 events. *Warszawa Gdańska Station* presented a story of forced emigrants. *An Ordinary March* shows events from the perspective of the struggle of intellectuals with the system. *Little Rose* seems to bring these two perspectives together. Firstly, it presents the struggle of intellectuals with the limitations of the people's democracy; secondly, the issue of rousing anti-Semitism in society has been raised; thirdly, the entanglement of ordinary people in the security service world has finally been taken into account. Thus, it seems that the film by Kidawa-Błoński brings the dispersed links of history into a whole.

Little Rose tells the story of March as it may have been seen by the participants of these events. Privacy clashed against the official sphere. The story of Kamila and the two men with whom she had a relationship shows how easy it is to become entangled in a front-page story and how difficult it is to preserve one's own happiness and control of one's own life. The authors of *Little Rose* assure that there was not a single inspiration for the creation of film characters, although the fates of Kamila and Adam are strikingly similar to the history of Paweł Jasienica. The manner in which the authorities dealt with the professor resembles the case of Zawieyski. It is also impossible to ignore similarities between Adam Warczewski and Stefan Kisielewski. One of them is the statement about 'the dictatorship of dunces', which resulted in a brutal beating and a publication ban. The strength

of the story told lies in its high probability – both with regard to psychology and history.

The protagonists of *Warszawa Gdańska Station* stressed that history is important as long as the risk of its repetition exists. *An Ordinary March* ends with a statement by Adam Michnik: ‘It was an ordinary March. Ordinary and not ordinary. Ordinary, because people existed at that time – they fell in love, married, bore children and finished studies. They often (...) turned their heads and did not want to see that the face of their neighbor or friend has been spat upon. So this is a demand to look and not let anyone be spat upon. Anyone’.

Understood as a historical event – an image of memory recorded at a given moment, *Little Rose* shows that the matters of March 1968 continue to be an unhealed wound. In this sense, the film shows not only history, but also the present. It is a challenge for memory and has a chance for broad reception because it tells a story of ordinary people. The narration oriented towards small history creates an opportunity to present great history in a new manner. Because of this, the film is surprisingly authentic and allows us to think not only about factography, but also about the functioning of the human being in society and the methods of his/her reaction to the current needs.

Bibliography

- Marc Ferro (1988), *Cinema and History*, transl. N. Greene, Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Iwona Kurz (2008), „Ludzie jak żywi”. *Historiofotia i historioterapia*, [in:] *Film i historia. Antologia*, ed. I. Kurz, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UW.
- Iwona Kurz (2010), *Różyczka*, „Dwutygodnik. Strona Kultury”, No. 33.
- Robert A. Rosenstone (1988), *History in Images/History in Words: Reflections on the Possibility of Really Putting History onto Film*, „The American Historical Review”, Vol. 93, No. 5.
- Katarzyna Taras (2010), *Historia i kobiety*, „Kino”, No. 12.
- Katarzyna Taras (2011), *Pozostać przy sensie* [interview with Piotr Wojtowicz], „FilmPro”, No. 1.
- Jolanta Tokarczyk (2010), *Różyczka* [interview with Paweł Mantorski, production manager], „Studio-Kamera”, No. 1.

Piotr Śmiałowski (2010), *Gdy żona donosi na męża*, „Kino”, No. 4.

Hayden White (1988), *Historiography and Historiophoty*, „The American Historical Review”, Vol. 93, No. 5.

Summary

The article refers to March 1968 events in Polish cinematography. *Różyczka* [*Little Rose*], a film by Jan Kidawa-Błoński, becomes the main material of the analysis. The first part of the article refers to two documentaries by Maria Zmarz-Koczanowicz that make it easier to interpret many key scenes in the film of Kidawa-Błoński. *Dworzec Gdański* [*Warszawa Gdańska Station*] sheds some light on the final scene of the *Little Rose*. It also shows how dramatically March 1968 events affected the privacy of Polish people. *Zwyczajny marzec* [*An Ordinary March*] presents the struggle of Polish intelligentsia with the system – so it demonstrates what is official. *Little Rose* connects both perspectives – it shows the history from the perspective of ordinary people and does not resign from presenting well-known issues concluded in historical syntheses.

Keywords: March 1968, *Różyczka* [*Little Rose*], Jan Kidawa-Błoński, history in the film.