The Krakow Polish United Workers’ Party from 1975 to June 1981

As a result of the administrative reforms introduced by Edward Gierek in the May of 1975, the districts were abolished and forty-nine new, smaller voivodships were created. One of them was indeed a minor voivodship. It covered three thousand, five hundred and twenty-four square kilometres, or a little under two thousand, two hundred square miles, putting it in the last-but-one place; however, one million, one hundred thousand people lived there, ranking it the fifth highest in the country in terms of population. A new name was introduced for the voivodship’s authorities; rather than the Voivodship Committee, it was now the Krakow Committee. Between 1975 and 1980, the Polish United Workers’ Party there was in its prime. At the beginning of that period it had just over seventy-four thousand members and candidates and, by the end, there were almost ninety-seven thousand. This was the golden age, the heyday for the party nomenklatura and apparatus. The work of such bodies as the Plenary Assembly or the Krakow Committee Executive was dominated by administrative routine. There was none of the heated ideological discussion still familiar from the Gomułka era. At the same time, the so-called democratic centralism was still adhered to and all crucial decisions were delivered from Warsaw. The article presents the functioning of the party at the regional level before the changes which the years 1980 to 1981 brought in their wake.