

**Heirs of Oppression: UNESCO World Heritage in Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary  
between 1978 and 1988**

Heritage and State sovereignty are closely linked together, especially during the Cold War, when the international protection of heritage was a debated issue. No States exemplify this tension more than the only three Soviet Satellite States to have nominated properties to the World Heritage List in its first decade, between 1978 and 1988. Since Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary submitted sixteen nomination files in rapid succession, this dissertation examines how these States employed heritage diplomacy when nominating sites to the World Heritage List between 1978 and 1988. To answer this question, the texts of the sixteen nomination files will be studied based on the strategic narrative analysis, developed by Roselle, Miskimmon and O'Loughlin. The recent research of scholars like Geering and Gfeller on heritage under socialism illustrates the relevance of the topic, and this thesis on properties listed under the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention will further supplement their work.

Cultural heritage in Poland became tied to its national identity after the country lost its independence in 1795, and, after Poland suffered largescale destruction in the Second World War, martyrdom became an added element of this national identity. The Polish nomination files to the World Heritage List fit these previous strategies regarding heritage protection. For example, the cities of Warsaw and Cracow emphasized Poland's royal and artistic past before 1795, while Auschwitz exemplified Polish martyrdom. Though Poland did not nominate any more sites before 1988 after its initial successes in 1978, the accepted Polish properties altered the framework for future nominations by including reconstructed sites, such as Warsaw, and sites of negative memory, such as Auschwitz. Like Poland, Bulgaria successfully submitted nine sites to the World Heritage List between 1978 and 1988, and used heritage protection to establish its own national identity. In this instance, Bulgaria did so by focusing on its long struggle for independence and its value as a rich culture founded among ancient civilizations. Both elements were a key part of Liudmila Zhivkova's cultural policies until 1981. Her emphasis on the early years of the Bulgarian State is illustrated in several nomination files, like the Madara Rider and the Thracian Tomb of Kazanlak. Similarly, when Bulgaria added twelve sites to its Tentative List, these also focused on the country's premodern history. Unlike Poland and Bulgaria, Hungary only nominated two sites to the World Heritage List. Both Budapest and Hollókő illustrated the importance Hungary attached to the harmony between nature and culture. Moreover, heritage was used to remember the history of resistance in Hungary, as exemplified by the file on Budapest.

This thesis concludes that the national narrative prevails in most nomination files, establishing a distinct identity for each State. However, the nominations of natural properties illustrate a prevailing issue narrative, such as the Białowieża Forest and Pirin National Park. Finally, the international system narrative plays a subsidiary role, surfacing when discussing the victims in Auschwitz and the global impact of Bulgarian culture.