In the field of international law, Anglo-American authors played a dominant role for many decades in the second half of the 20th century. In contrast, during that time Eastern and Central Eastern Europe had no real voice in discourse on crucial issues that required legal answers. Under socialist rule, scholars were generally confined to supporting the political interests of their governments. Independent reflection on the legitimate functions of international law was politically undesirable. And going further back into national traditions seemed to be completely useless since doctrines that had been formulated before the great divide in international law, the end of World War II and the emergence of the United Nations, had largely become obsolete. Indeed, 1945 saw the replacement of the basic axioms of the international legal order by new principles, in particular the ban on the use of force, which was meant to make sovereign equality of States a living reality. Thus, delving into the past might be viewed as visiting prehistoric ruins that have little to do with the problems of the contemporary world.

And yet, it would seem to be promising to take stock, establishing a balance sheet of what contributions lawyers from Eastern and Central Eastern Europe have made to the development of international law and what can be expected of them in the future. It is clear that, as already hinted, the history of international law in that region is intimately tied up with its general political history. For many centuries in the Middle Ages, even up to the Napoleonic age, one could not speak of specific national legal cultures in

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Eastern and Central Europe. Scholars belonged to an all-European community whose members communicated with one another in Latin. With the rise of the nation State after 1815, the pattern changed. Insistence on national individuality also found its way into science and culture. Until the outbreak of World War I, the intellectual centres that had a decisive impact on legal thinking were St. Petersburg, Berlin and Vienna. The flourishing of nationalistic feelings in the three leading nations, Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungary, led to a stronger identification of many jurists with their home States or with the component units of those States. However, scholarship was not prepared fully to endorse an attitude of narrow intellectual self-restraint. The Baltic States, in particular, then under Russian rule, were a place where teaching enjoyed a large amount of freedom. August Bulmerincq and Carl Bergbohm, who both taught at the University of Dorpat (Tartu), counted among the leading spirits of their epoch, both in Germany and in Russia. Mention should also be made of Feodor Fedorovich Martens, who was one of the key figures of the two Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907, admired and appreciated as a particularly gifted and responsible jurist all over Europe.

It was after 1919 that the political situation changed again dramatically. The disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the defeat of the German Empire led to the emergence of a considerable number of new States, all of which were in need of legal advice in order to take their first steps on the international stage. International lawyers could not live in an ivory tower: they were required for the defence of national interests. It is significant, in this regard, that in Germany the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Public International and Comparative Law was founded to assist the new republican Government to deal with all the complexities which Germany was confronted with under the Versailles Treaty. It was almost impossible for leading figures to avoid the pressure exerted upon them, opting instead for a scholarly life, committed only to carrying out independent research with a view to unearthing an objective truth.

After 1945, the position of international lawyers was restricted to an even greater extent in Eastern and Central Eastern Europe. All socialist governments required the internationalists to subject their research to the interests of the socialist goals that were to be achieved. Scholars were academic soldiers with specific missions. They had to discharge their professional duties according to pre-determined agendas. This was hard to accept for those who had kept an independent mind. Yet, as victims of an authoritarian system even those scholars who disliked receiving instructions