

Abstract

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Law of Nations and the Legitimation of Identity:

August von Bulmerincq (1822-1890) and His Turn to the History of International Law

The paper is the first part of a larger study that is intended to examine the writings on the history of international law by five successive professors of international law at the University of Dorpat/Iur'ev/Tartu, Estonia from 1855-1985. The whole study will cover the time period from the birth of modern international law scholarship until the end of the Cold War. The present paper concentrates on the history of international law in the work of August von Bulmerincq (1822-1890), one of the founders of *Institut du droit international* and influential “men of 1873”.

The paper demonstrates how the history of international law has been used in the legitimation of identity politics. The turn to the history was usually taken when the present was perceived as troubled and conflictuous. History has often served teleological purpose in international legal arguments.