Introduction

Documenting

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International organizations (IOs) present themselves to the world through a large variety of productions and outputs. Reports and official websites are probably among the best-known objects through which IOs contribute to international politics. Yet IOs are also active producers of images, discourses, statistics, archives, and other artifacts. The contributions gathered in this section, entitled *Documenting*, are dedicated to methods applied to analyze IOs' everyday productions.

Disciplinary traditions and interests have often led scholars to specialize in the study of one specific type of production, developing tailored methodological devices to research them. For instance, traditionally legal documents are studied by scholars of international law (see chapter 7—*Legal Research*), archives by historians (see chapter 8—*Archives*), maps by geographers (see box m—*Analyzing Maps*). The contributions build on these disciplinary developments to present well-established and proven methods while borrowing methodological tools from other disciplines. They show that different scholarships bring fruitful and complementary insights to produce robust knowledge on IO documents.

Indeed, the contributions propose methodological tools adapted to the nature of the productions but also adjusted to the context of IOs. While researching some products may need less methodological adaptation than others, contributors highlight what scholars should pay attention to when they study how IOs produce statistics (see chapter 12—*Statistics and Quantification*), when they delimit what an IO discourse is (see chapter

11—*Discourse Analysis*), or when they work with IO archives (see chapter 8—*Archives*). The contributions also attest to the increasingly diverse set of productions social scientists must make sense of. On the one hand, some objects have long been produced by IOs but have received less scientific scrutiny than others. For instance, while IOs have documented their activities through visual objects, their creations, pictures, and videos have been less studied than treaties and resolutions (see box l—*Visual Archives*, and chapter 9—*Visual Methods*). The same goes with budgets, which have received less attention than other written documents (see chapter 13—*Budget Analysis*). On the other hand, the contributions also address newly developed artifacts, especially in the field of digital communication: websites, tweets, data visualization, and so on. (see box p—*Semiology of Websites*, box q—*Analyzing Tweets*, and box s—*Analyzing Charts, Infographics, and Dataviz*).

Documents and other objects offer a rich material to investigate IOs. The contributions present specific ways of studying IOs through their productions while raising questions of access and data management. Taken together, they show how the different methods help answer three main types of questions. First, the methods introduced in this section tackle questions around IO identity, i.e., how IOs act out in their production, and IOs' roles in world politics, i.e., what IOs produce and to what end. While the analysis of IO websites or annual reports (see chapter 10—*Document Analysis: A Praxiographic Approach* and box p—*Semiology of Websites*) provide relevant data on how IOs present themselves, the study of statistics and maps shows how IOs contribute to governing the world by numbers (see chapter 12—*Statistics and Quantification*, box m—*Analyzing Maps*, and box s—*Analyzing Charts, Infographics, and Dataviz*). Second, exploring the elaboration, creation, and dissemination of IO productions is highly valuable to understand the inner workings of these institutions. Indeed, looking at production processes enables the researcher to address questions around power relationships while rendering visible the dynamics of decision-making, categorization, selection, and framing. These methods help understand the complex functioning of IOs: by studying how a report is written (see chapter 10—*Document Analysis: A Praxiographic Approach* and chapter 11—*Discourse Analysis*), an archive is sorted out (see chapter 8—*Archives*), a logo is designed (see box n—*Branding Analysis*), a colored badge is attributed (see box o—*Artifact Analysis*), or a cover picture is selected (see chapter 9—*Visual Methods*), scholars may capture the entanglements of hierarchical dynamics, organizational cultures, professional habits, and individual decisions. Third, the contributions propose concrete methodological tools to analyze the content of IO productions and their broader effects. Schol-

ars can learn different techniques to interpret rich empirical material and study the social life of IO outputs, be it a specific concept elaborated in an IO report (see box r—*Studying Ideas*), a graph publicized on social medias (see box s—*Analyzing Charts, Infographics, and Dataviz*), or an artifact used in international negotiations (see box o—*Artifact Analysis*). The methods introduced in this part allow us to understand their explicit and implicit meaning(s)—what IOs say about the world through these productions and suggest ways to analyze their effects on global governance, like how IOs support and sustain specific worldviews that impact the way global problems are governed (Interlude III—*What IOs Talk about When They Talk about Themselves, and How They Do It*).

Some methods are more specific than others. Yet they often can be used to study a wide array of empirical material, like discourse analysis ready to investigate legal documents, policy reports, and advocacy pictures (see chapter 11—*Discourse Analysis*). Readers should therefore engage with different chapters and boxes to build their own methodological toolkit. For some productions, researchers may have to acquire specific technical competences, as in the study of IO maps. The contributions in this book provide concrete tools and advice to begin this journey. Overall, the increasing diversity of digital productions, only briefly addressed in this volume, builds a strong case for methodological dialogue, especially between qualitative and quantitative methods.