

Preface

The preface of a book usually sheds light on some of the institutional, inter-personal and substantive dynamics against the backdrop of which the manuscript has been written and by which the latter has been inspired. As far as this book is concerned, however, no such account is possible. Indeed, many of the following chapters, even though they have been subjected to substantial updates, additions and extensive rewriting, originate in articles and essays that have appeared elsewhere. All the chapters of this book have thus been written at different times and for different audiences. Each of them comes with its own history and would deserve to be situated separately. For the same reason, too many colleagues and friends have taken part in the discussions that informed the writing of these chapters for this preface to be able to list them all. The same disaggregated history explains why the style, the tone, the footnoting, and the orientation of each of the chapters varies greatly.

Notwithstanding this heterogeneity, it remains that all the following studies and essays are grounded in an identical thread, namely the idea that international law is an argumentative practice constituted of key doctrines which are themselves deployed through argumentative techniques specific to professional international lawyers. Gathering all these studies in one single volume is not only meant to give the latter a new thrust but also to provide a new dimension to both doctrinal and theoretical debates in international legal scholarship.

Although it would be impossible, for the above-mentioned reasons, to thank all those friends and colleagues whose insights, advice and intelligence have fed into the following lines, a few specific expressions of gratitude must be formulated. My gratitude goes to Iain Scobbie, André Nollkaemper, Ingo Venzke, Sahib Singh, and Valerio Priuli for their substantive insights during the finalization of this book as well as Ben Booth and Jennifer Stanley at Edward Elgar for their patience and continuous guidance.

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