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## International Business, International Management, and International Strategy

### What's in a Name?

**Abstract:** *In 1999, Jean Boddewyn, prompted by the relaunch of the Journal of International Management, published a provocative article, "The Domain of International Management," in which he critiqued current definitions of international management. More recently, the editors of the Journal of International Business Studies have been engaged in clarifying the domain of international business (Eden 2008), building on Boddewyn's (1997) work. With the announcement of a new journal, Global Strategy Journal, from the Strategic Management Society, the question arises: How do these three fields of inquiry differ? Where do they overlap? How does Boddewyn's work on defining international management and international business help us understand the distinctions? In this article, we build on Boddewyn's earlier research to explore the three fields of inquiry, develop new domain statements, and link them to one another.*

A scientific field of inquiry is a socially constructed entity, consisting of a community of scholars who share a common identity and language (Kuhn 1962; Nag, Hambrick, and Chen 2007). The boundaries of the discipline may be more or less

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fuzzy, but scholars working in the field have a consensual understanding of its essential meaning. Asking about the essential meaning of three scientific fields of inquiry—international business (IB), international management (IM), and international strategy (IS)—therefore builds on the foundational work of earlier scholars who have explored the definition and domain of their disciplines.

One of Jean Boddewyn's important scholarly contributions has been his work in defining and clarifying the domain of international business (Boddewyn 1997) and international management (Boddewyn 1999; Boddewyn, Toyne, and Martinez 2004). In this article, we build on his foundational work to explore the meanings of IB, IM, and IS. While the three fields on the surface appear to share considerable overlap, we argue that they are conceptually distinct. As Boddewyn (1999, 4) notes, fields of inquiry must have socially defined boundaries; we must define the scope of what is *in* and what is *out*, recognizing that the definition may be subjective and transitory. Our analysis is therefore time bound: we examine all three fields as of 2010, the start of the second decade of the twenty-first century, 13 years after Boddewyn started us down this path.

Our article proceeds as follows. We start by exploring the meaning of the term "international," building on Boddewyn's work in this area. We then move to develop a domain statement for each of the three fields of inquiry: IM, IB, and IS. We then conceptually link the three fields and show the relations among them graphically. Lastly, we link each field of inquiry to a scholarly journal focused on publishing research in that field and conclude with some suggestions for future work in this area.

### What is international management?

Let us start with defining the term "international." Boddewyn (1997; 1999) defines international activities as those that involve crossing the borders between nation-states. The term "nation-state" brings in both the concept of nation (country-level economic and sociocultural variables) and state (political variables such as national sovereignty). "The implication is that if the world were made up of only one nation-state there would be no *international business*" (Boddewyn 1997, 54; emphasis in original). Boddewyn argues that crossing borders should be defined broadly as including not only tangible and intangible cross-border transfers but also the transfer of "management resources, philosophies and practices" across national borders (Boddewyn et al. 2004, 198). Boddewyn and colleagues expand beyond this definition to include "both the crossing of national borders and the internal and external environmental diversity that organizations and their managers experience when functioning outside their home state," which for organizations implies "an interaction between two or more cultures" (2004, 200). All three authors agree that the term international refers to both the crossing of nation-state borders and to the "mental transformations generated by experiences and exchanges" (2004, 209).

We now need to link international to each of our fields of inquiry. We start with

management rather than business or strategy in order to build on Boddewyn's work on defining the domain of international management studies. As Boddewyn (1999) notes, the term "management" had not been defined, even by the Academy of Management as of the end of the 1990s. He notes that the term originates in the Latin word *manus* for "hand," implying that to manage is to handle people and organizations (1999, 203). Managers "plan, organize, staff, direct and evaluate" and "make decisions" with the goal of adding value to an organization (1999, 204). Following Kuhn (1962), Boddewyn also argues that "management is a historically and socially constructed process" (1999, 205).

The scope and focus of management is also addressed by Martinez and Toyne (2000), who examine three separate approaches to defining management as a field of inquiry: those of Koontz (1961, 1980), the Academy of Management's organizational structure, and Hofstede (1980, 1993). While Boddewyn (1999, 9) originally preferred to restrict the study of management to firms, Martinez and Toyne (2000) and Boddewyn et al. adopt a very broad view of management that includes all "socially constructed activities that take place in multiple types of organizations all over the world—whether profit-seeking, not-for-profit or public" (2004, 209). Martinez and Toyne argue that management inquiry is becoming (and needs to become) "increasingly complex, multidimensional and even multilevel" (2000, 25). They view management inquiry as having broadened to include functions that are not directly management, but supportive (e.g., consulting and education), and management practice as "permeating all of society."<sup>1</sup>

Building on the work by Boddewyn et al. (2004), we adopt the following simple definition of management:

*Management is the process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling the organization, which individuals (managers) use to achieve an organization's goals.*

To develop a domain statement for IM as a field of inquiry, we combine our definitions of international and management.

*International management is the process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling the organization, which individuals (managers) use to achieve an organization's goals when the organization is involved in cross-border activities or functions outside its nation-state.*

However, we emphasize here the *business* focus of IM as a field, wherein such goals, processes, and activities pursued by managers are a subset of the numerous undertakings necessary for a business enterprise to function.

Boddewyn and colleagues argue that defining IM as "management crossing borders" is too narrow as it implies "one-way crossing" (2004, 197) from the home to a foreign country. They argue (and we agree) that IM should be broadened to include "not only the unidirectional crossing of national borders but also the two-directional learning experienced by managers outside their home environment" (2004, 195). We see our definition as including such two-way mindsets and experiences.

There are several textbooks on IM, and it may be useful for comparison purposes to look at their definitions of IM. Perhaps the simplest definition is Hodgetts, Luthans, and Doh (2006) who define IM as the process of applying management concepts and techniques in a multinational environment. Cullen (2001) defines IM as the formulation of strategies and the design of management systems that successfully take advantage of international opportunities and respond to international threats. International management is about how firms become and remain international in scope (Beamish, Morrison, and Rosenzweig 1997) and how people from many cultures work together, compete against one another, or try to cope with one another's differences (Holt 1998). The goal of IM is to achieve the firm's international objectives by effectively procuring, distributing, and using company resources, including people, capital, know-how, and physical assets, across countries (McFarlin and Sweeney 1996). Rodrigues (2009) argues that IM is applied by managers of enterprises, who attain their goals and objectives across unique multicultural, multinational boundaries. These textbook definitions suggest that IM is affected by the environment where the organization is based as well as by the unique cultures (including views on ethics and social responsibility) of the countries where the firm conducts business. Thus, the two-way crossing recommended by Boddewyn et al. (2004) does appear in our selected list of textbooks.

Does the same hold true for our IM journals? Werner (2002), in a review of the 20 top management journals, identifies three categories of IM research. The first category consists of "pure" IM research, which he defines as studies that look at the management of firms in a multinational context. Pure IM research includes topics such as the internationalization process, entry mode decisions, foreign subsidiary management, expatriate management, and so on. Werner's second category contains studies that compare the management practices of different cultures and nations, known as "comparative" or "cross-cultural management studies." His third category consists of studies that examine management in a specific nation outside of North America. Werner argues such studies are international because they provide a non-American view of management, one that is different from research that has a North American bias.

While we agree with Werner (2002) that his first two categories belong in IM as a field of inquiry, we disagree strongly with his third category. Single-country studies of management practices outside of North America are domestic, not international studies. There is no cross-border, either one-way or two-way, interaction or activities involved in such studies and as such they should not be included in IM research.

The same problem arises in Kirkman and Law (2005), where IM research in the *Academy of Management Journal (AMJ)* is defined as including articles or research notes with either (1) one non-North American author, (2) data collected from outside North America, or (3) the topic is related to international or cross-cultural management issues. By our definition of IM, only the third category belongs in IM. Single-country studies, regardless of where the data were collected, if written on

domestic topics, should not be included in IM, nor should domestic management papers written by non-North American authors. While publishing more papers written by non-North Americans and papers using non-North American databases clearly internationalizes the journal, these activities do not mean that *AMJ* is publishing international management research.<sup>2</sup>

### What is international business?

We turn now to our second question: what is IB? We adopt the definition of international we have used above:

*International activities are those that involve crossing the borders between nation-states.*

A simple definition of a business is

*a commercial or industrial enterprise that sells goods or services to customers.*

The domain of business studies is therefore the study of business as an enterprise (an organizational form), its activities, and its interactions with the external environment (i.e., with other actors, organizations, and institutions such as consumers and governments). Putting these two definitions together, a definition of IB must focus on the business enterprise and its activities as it crosses nation-state borders. Noting that business in the IB literature encompasses trade and investment, Boddewyn defines the domain of IB as “negotiated trade and investment that join nations and cross state barriers, as performed by firms (private and public) operating and interacting at various personal, organizational, product, project, function, network, industry, global and other levels” (1997, 60; emphasis in original).

While the *sine qua non* of IB is the multinational enterprise (MNE), a business that conducts value-adding activities in two or more nation-states, the MNE is not the only or perhaps even the most important form of enterprise studied in IB. Indeed, Boddewyn argues that “the domain of IB is not limited to the MNE or to other types of IB firms for that matter” (1997, 60). Furthermore, he notes that the study of IB includes “macro” concepts such as trade and investment as well as “micro” ones such as the IB firm’s resources, governance structure, and relationships, emphasizing the multilevel nature of research in the field. Finally, Boddewyn (1997) suggests that IB assumes the economic, sociocultural, and political dimensions and refers to negotiated trade and investment that join nations and cross state barriers, but with certain IB activities straddling both sets of dimensions.

We therefore propose the following domain statement for IB:

*Business that crosses national borders, that is, it includes the comparative study of business as an organizational form in different countries, cross-border activities of businesses, and interactions of business with the international environment.*

Building on Eden (2008), we argue that the study of IB has six subdomains: (1) the MNE’s activities, strategies, structures, and decision-making processes; (2) interactions between MNEs and other actors, organizations, institutions, and markets; (3) cross-border activities of firms; (4) the impact of the international environment on business; (5) international dimensions of organizational forms (e.g., strategic alliances) and activities (e.g., entrepreneurship, corporate governance); and (6) cross-country comparative studies of businesses, business processes, and organizational behavior in different countries and environments.

We can look at these six subdomains through different lenses. Toyne and Nigh (1998) and Martinez and Toyne (2000) argue that IB studies involve three different sets of lenses, which they call the extension, cross-border, and interaction paradigms. The extension paradigm asks how environmental differences across countries (e.g., variations in national institutions) affect the business enterprise. An example of a research question using the extension paradigm would be asking how differences in legal systems between the United States and Germany affect the human resource management practices of a German firm in the United States. The cross-border paradigm asks how operating simultaneously in two or more countries affects the business enterprise. An example of a research question in the cross-border paradigm would be investigating whether the introduction of a free trade agreement would cause MNEs to close down research-and-development centers in peripheral countries and centralize these activities in the largest member country. The interaction paradigm is the most complex; it addresses the impacts of sustained interaction between businesses from different countries. An example here would be to ask whether emerging market multinationals that engage in foreign direct investment in developed market countries are able to learn and transfer best practices back to the parent firm and other parts of the MNE network.

It is useful to look at textbook definitions of IB. Daniels and Radebaugh (2001) define IB as all commercial transactions, private and governmental, between two or more countries. Griffin and Pustay (2005) similarly define IB as consisting of business transactions between parties from more than one country. Cullen and Parboteeah (2010) provide a definition in terms of activity: IB activities are those a company engages in when it conducts any business functions beyond its domestic borders. Others define IB in terms of the entity that conducts it, as any firm that engages in international trade or investment (Hill 2007). Czinkota, Ronkainen, and Moffett (2003) provide a more detailed definition of IB as consisting of interrelated transactions that are devised and carried out across national borders to satisfy the objectives of individuals, companies, and organizations. These textbooks therefore see IB research as first of all concerned with firm-level business activity that crosses national boundaries or is conducted in a location other than the firm’s home country. Second, IB is construed as dealing in some way with the interrelationships between the operations of the business firm and international or foreign environments in which the firm operates (Wright and Ricks 1994).

### What is international strategy?

Let us now turn to the third question: what is IS?<sup>3</sup> When referring to a research field/discipline, IS has been frequently used as an abbreviation for international strategic management. To define IS, we must first start with a domain statement for strategic management, which is one of the youngest of the business disciplines and therefore can be seen as an “emergent field” (Hitt, Boyd, and Li 2004, 3).

As a young discipline, one might expect the domain statement to be somewhat in flux, with different scholars having different views as to what’s in and what’s out. Because of the newness of the field, Nag et al. (2007) used a large survey of strategic management scholars to develop an implicit consensual definition of strategic management. The domain statement they develop, based on this survey, is: “The field of strategic management deals with (a) the major intended and emergent initiatives (b) taken by general managers on behalf of owners, (c) involving utilization of resources (d) to enhance the performance (e) of firms (f) in their external environments” (Nag et al. 2007, 942). They also provide three additional representative definitions; strategic management is (a) “an explanation of firm performance by understanding the roles of external and internal environments, positioning and managing within these environments and relating competencies and advantages to opportunities within external environments”; (b) “the process of building capabilities that allow a firm to create value for customers, shareholders, and society while operating in competitive markets”; or (c) “the study of decisions and actions taken by top executives/TMTs [top management teams] for firms to be competitive in the marketplace” (Nag et al., 946).

Looking at textbooks may also be useful here. A straightforward definition from a leading textbook defines strategic management as “the full-set of commitments, decisions, and actions required for a firm to achieve strategic competitiveness and earn above-average returns” (Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson 2009, 6) and strategy as the “integrated and coordinated set of commitments and actions designed to exploit core competencies and gain a competitive advantage” (2009, 4). Another leading textbook with a resource-based perspective written by Tallman (2009), one of the founding coeditors of the new *Global Strategic Journal*, defines strategic management as the assembly, protection, and application of unique resources and capabilities to gain sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace.

Key to all of these definitions is the focus on managers developing strategies to improve the firm’s competitive advantage and performance. If management is the process by which managers achieve an organization’s goals, then strategic management must be seen as a subset of the management discipline, focused explicitly on formulation and implementation of the strategic aspects of management. Tying these general definitions of strategic management together with the definition of international we have used above, we propose the following simple domain statement for IS:

*International strategic management is the comprehensive set of commitments, decisions, and actions by firms to gain competitiveness internationally.*

The field of IS is relatively new and deserves much scholarly attention. One of the future IB research areas identified by Werner (2002) was IS (or, in his words, “MNC strategy”). Ricart and colleagues (2004) searched all the articles published in the *Journal of International Business Studies* from 1970 to July 2003 and found only 84 articles with the word “strategy” in their abstracts. Their review of these strategy articles indicates that, while extensive knowledge about multinational companies (MNCs) has been accumulating in the IB literature, we do not know much about IS formulation or “how MNCs should define their strategy in a complex and rapidly evolving globalized environment” (Ricart et al. 2004, 178). Zou and Cavusgil (1996), in their article surveying the global strategy literature, argued that there were two main theoretical frameworks, structure-conduct-performance and the resource-based view, and that the two needed to be linked together in an integrated conceptual framework in order “to reduce the ambiguity and confusion in the literature” (1996, 52).

The undergraduate strategic management textbooks typically define IS as strategies designed to “enable a firm to compete effectively *internationally*” (Griffin and Pustay 2005, 309; emphasis in original). Deresky (2008), for example, suggests that the global strategic formulation process, as part of overall corporate strategic management, parallels the process followed in domestic companies. The differences in the two processes are due to forces governing the IB environment, which include host governments, political and legal issues, exchange rates, competition from local business, government-supported firms, other MNEs, and cultural variation among nations. Differences on all these dimensions result in variations in the strategic planning process among MNEs. Therefore, many of the questions addressed by strategic management scholars (e.g., what/where to produce and where/how to market) are the same for IS scholars, with added complexity due to the increasing geographic spread of resources, markets, management, and/or competition (Griffin and Pustay 2005; Ricart et al. 2004; Tallman and Yip 2001; Wild, Wild, and Han 2005).

We suggest that it might be useful to understand the emerging field of IS by examining the six elements of the field of strategic management, as identified in Nag et al. (2007), and then investigating how the addition of international (or global) to each element alters the domain statement. We therefore offer a more fine-grained domain statement:

*The field of IS deals with (1) the major intended and emergent initiatives, including cross-border initiatives, (2) taken by general managers on behalf of owners, (3) involving utilization of domestic and/or foreign resources (4) to enhance the performance (5) of firms (6) in the international environment.*

The first element of strategic management—major intended and emergent initiatives— involves the understanding and formulation of business and corporate strate-

gies. In this grouping, Nag et al. place terms such as “innovation,” “acquisition,” “investment,” “diversification,” “alliances,” and “transaction” (2007, 942). When interpreted from an IS research perspective, we need to build in a cross-border element and the international environment. As an example, where mainstream strategy research may focus on industry diversification, the issue for IS scholars is more geographic diversification or the combination of geographic and product diversification by MNEs. Similarly, alliance research by strategic management scholars may focus on scope and governance, whereas alliance research in IS tackles the formation and management of alliances with partners from different countries or located in foreign countries where the institutional and cultural differences among partners add complexity to alliance effectiveness.

The second element in the Nag et al. (2007) definition of strategic management is managers and owners, where the authors place terms such as “incentives,” “compensation,” “agency,” “board,” and “ownership.” When interpreted through an IS lens, this element raises the issues of, for example, agency problems stemming from the challenges of managing parent–foreign subsidiary relationships, cross-country comparisons of boards of directors, and the new varieties of capitalism.

The third element—utilizing resources—is associated with terms such as “capability,” “asset,” “slack,” “resources,” and “knowledge.” Utilizing resources has been explored in the IS literature, for example, in terms of exploitation and exploration of resources inside and outside a firm’s home country. Recently more attention has been shifted to questions such as bidirectional knowledge transfers, rather than one-way transfers from parent firms to subsidiaries, metanationals, and knowledge exploration by emerging market multinationals.

The fourth element—enhance the performance—highlights the sameness of the ultimate question to both the strategic management and IS fields, that is, why do some firms perform better than others? The difference between strategic management and IS lies in the evaluation of an MNE’s performance in the international arena rather than in a single market. The fifth element—firms—is typically examined without regard to nationality or location by strategic management scholars. Yet IS scholars focus on categories such as multinationals, foreign subsidiaries, born global firms, and emerging market multinationals. Some strategy scholars, for example, Tallman (2009), would broaden the definition even further to include nonprofits and government organizations if they also engage in strategic activities with an international dimension.

The last element—external environment—includes terms such as “competition,” “market,” “contingency,” “uncertainty,” “threats,” and “risk.” In IS research, the external environment clearly facilitates investigation of topics such as global market scanning, institutional differences, and distance, liability of foreignness, political risk, and exchange rate exposure. We conclude that there is much to be done in developing the field of IS and that reinterpreting Nag et al. (2007) through an international lens may provide a useful way forward.<sup>4</sup>

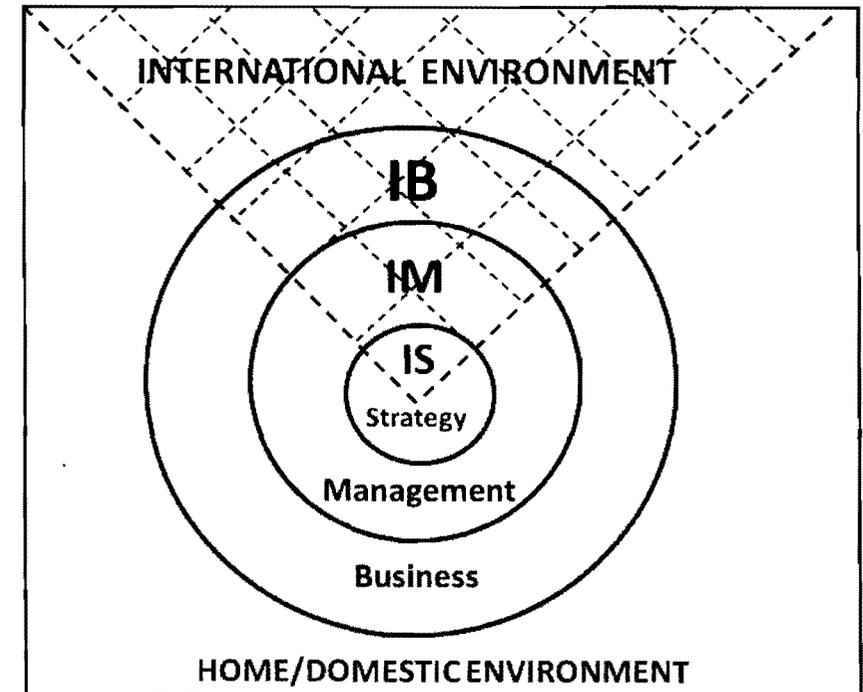


Figure 1. IM, IB, and IS as fields of inquiry: A Venn diagram approach

#### How are international business, management, and strategy related?

Now that we have defined the domains of IM, IB, and IS, how and where do these three fields of inquiry overlap? Boddewyn (1997) argued that conceptualizing a domain such as IB does not necessarily require throwing in “the whole kitchen sink” of all its determinants, processes, and outcomes. For our three domains, what is in and what is out? Figure 1 provides a graphical answer to these questions.

In Figure 1, we illustrate the environmental field in which businesses operate as a large rectangle. We conceptualize the business enterprise as an organization, pictured as a large circle in the environment. Implicit but not shown (for simplicity) in this picture are multiple other circles in this field representing other actors, organizations, institutions, and nation-states. We separate the environmental field into two parts: domestic (home) and international, showing the border lines that must be crossed when a business moves across borders from the domestic to the international environment. The dotted lines therefore represent boundaries between nation-states.

As illustrated, IB is the overlap between the cross-hatched triangle (the international environment) and the circle (the business enterprise). This overlap figuratively

captures the domain of the field of inquiry of IB studies, showing that IB is about business crossing national borders, which includes comparative studies of business as an organizational form in different countries, cross-border activities of businesses, and interactions of business with the international environment. Inside the business circle is a smaller circle that represents management of the business enterprise.

We show the domain of management studies inside the domain of business studies because the field of business is much broader than that of management and includes, for example, marketing, finance, accounting, and so on (Eden 2008). IM is therefore the intersection of the management circle with the cross-border boundaries of the international environment. Conceptually, we see IM as the process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling the organization, which managers use to achieve an organization's goals when the organization is involved in cross-border activities or functions outside its nation-state. IM therefore lies within the domain of IB. Lastly, we graphically position the strategic management (strategy) circle inside the management circle because strategic management is just one of the core management processes. International strategic management or IS is therefore the intersection of the strategic management circle with the cross-hatched triangle representing the international environment. In this way, we conceptualize IS as a field of inquiry focused on understanding major intended and emergent initiatives, including cross-border initiatives, taken by general managers on behalf of owners, which involve utilization of domestic and/or foreign resources to enhance the performance of firms in the international environment. Our graph accordingly reflects our belief that the three domains are nested: IS lies within IM, which lies within IB or, algebraically,  $IB > IM > IS$ . For each field of inquiry, the key to understanding the international dimension is the one-way or two-way crossing of nation-state boundaries.

For comparison purposes, we also provide the domain statements for the three journals that we see as most closely identifying themselves with the three fields of inquiry discussed here: IB, *Journal of International Business Studies (JIBS)*; IM, *Journal of International Management (JIM)*; and IS, the new *Global Strategy Journal (GSJ)*. As Table 1 shows, the three journals do generally track with our domain statements. We note, however, that journal domain statements only provide information on the theoretical boundaries of the discipline as seen by the journal editors; actual boundaries are better captured through analysis of the articles published in the journals and how those change over time.<sup>5</sup>

Although we have not done this here due to space limitations, it might be useful also to examine the domain statements of the three professional groups most closely associated with each discipline: the Academy of International Business (IB), the International Management Division of the Academy of Management (IM), and the Global Strategy Interest Group in the Strategic Management Society (IS). Lastly, a useful follow-up exercise to our article might also be to see whether a similar nesting effect is visible when one examines faculty membership in these three groups.

**Table 1**  
**Comparison of three journals and their domain statements**

<i>Journal of International Business Studies (JIBS)</i>	<i>Journal of International Management (JIM)</i>	<i>Global Strategy Journal (GSJ)</i>
The goal of <i>JIBS</i> is to publish insightful and influential research on international business. <i>JIBS</i> is an interdisciplinary journal that welcomes submissions from scholars in business disciplines and from other disciplines if the manuscripts fall within the <i>JIBS</i> domain statement. Theories whose central propositions are distinctively international are encouraged, as are theories where both dependent and independent variables are international. There are six sub-domains in international business: The activities, strategies, structures and decision-making processes of multinational enterprises; Interactions between multinational enterprises and other actors, organizations, institutions, and markets; The cross-border activities of firms (e.g., intratrade, trade, finance, investment, technology transfers, offshore services); How the international environment (e.g., cultural, economic, legal, political) affects the activities, strategies, structures, and decision-making processes of firms; The international dimensions of organizational forms (e.g., strategic alliances, M&As) and activities (e.g., entrepreneurship, knowledge-based competition, corporate governance); Cross-country comparative studies of businesses, business processes and organizational behavior in different countries and environments.	<i>JIM</i> is devoted to advancing an understanding of issues in the management of global enterprises, global management theory, and practice; and providing theoretical and managerial implications useful for the further development of research. It is designed to serve an audience of academic researchers and educators, as well as business professionals, by publishing both theoretical and empirical research relating to international management and strategy issues. <i>JIM</i> publishes theoretical and empirical research addressing international business strategy, comparative and cross-cultural management, risk management, organizational behavior, and human resource management, among others. <i>JIM</i> also solicits literature reviews and critiques that include a guide for improved theory and international management research as well as contributions that advances educational methodology in the range of international management fields.	The domain of <i>GSJ</i> will be the study of any and all aspects of the environment, organizations, institutions, systems, individuals, actions, and decisions that are a part of or impinge on the practice or study of strategy and strategic management of business and non-business organizations in the global context. By global, we explicitly mean any cross-border activities described as international, global, transnational, multinational, multi-regional or by any other term that substantially implies that the activities take place in multiple countries and/or are integrated across borders. Topics include: International and global strategy; Assembling the global enterprise; Global strategy and inter-organizational networks; Strategic management of the global enterprise; Performance and global strategy; Comparative strategies; Global strategy and the global business environment; Global innovation and knowledge strategies; Strategy and location; Global strategy and emerging economies.

*Source:* *JIBS* ([www.palgrave-journals.com/jibs/jibs\\_statement.html](http://www.palgrave-journals.com/jibs/jibs_statement.html)), *JIM* ([www.elsevier.com/locate/jim](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/jim)), *GSJ* ([www.gsj-journal.com/journaldescription.cws\\_home/601266/](http://www.gsj-journal.com/journaldescription.cws_home/601266/)). All the statements are as of May 28, 2010.

## Conclusion

In this article, we have sought to build on Boddewyn's early work clarifying the domains of IB and IM as fields of inquiry. Following Boddewyn (1997; 1999), we examined the definition of international in conjunction with business, management, and strategy in order to understand the domain of each field. We identified overlaps and differences and argued that the three disciplines are linked: IS is nested inside IM, and IM is nested inside IB. Lastly, we compared our work to the domain statements of three journals that identify themselves as focused on each field of inquiry: *Journal of International Business Studies* (IB), *Journal of International Management* (IM), and the new *Global Strategy Journal* (IS).

Both IM and IB, as fields of inquiry, have long intellectual histories; IS is the newest of the three fields and the least developed. Both IM and IB have strong eclectic orientations that have been both assets and liabilities for their development into mature areas of academic study. On the asset side, the diversity in theoretical and methodological perspectives makes IM and IB research interesting and open to new ideas. On the liability side, there has perhaps been undue fragmentation and difficulty in systematic knowledge accumulation. While IB is deductive, analytical, and axiomatic, IM is practical, empirical, and prescriptive (Buckley 1996). If each of these intellectual fields exists due to a competitive advantage, then it must, according to Boddewyn (1999), come from superior knowledge of foreign and international environments as well as their interaction with management processes, particularly internationalization.

We have argued in this article that the three fields of inquiry are nested: IS lies within IM, which lies within IB. The unifying aspect of the three fields is that they address issues, phenomena, and relationships that do not occur within culture-bound management situations, that is, they are *international*.

## Notes

1. See also Hofstede (1999) on international management in the twenty-first century.
2. Kirkman and Law (2005) find that 14 percent of the 1,911 articles and research notes published in *AMJ* between 1970 and 2004 fall in the IM category. Our best estimate is that the correct figure is 5 percent, using our definition of IM. The bulk of the remaining articles classified by Kirkman and Law as IM were so categorized because at least one of the authors was non-North American.
3. We use the adjective "international" rather than "global" (although most strategy scholars appear to prefer the term "global strategy") for symmetry reasons since we are comparing IS with IB and IM.
4. Interestingly, Nag et al. (2007) completely ignore the international aspect of strategic management in their article. The term "international" only appears once in a sentence arguing that IB has disappeared as a discipline because it has been subsumed by other business disciplines (2007, 945). We believe that fears that IB has been absorbed by other business disciplines, as expressed by Nag et al. (2007), are vastly exaggerated. No other similar term (e.g., "global," "foreign," or "multinational") appears in their article, suggesting that neither the authors nor the strategic management scholars who were surveyed for the article had

thought very much about the international dimensions of strategic management.

5. Whether a journal should have a clear domain statement or not is a relevant question. A clear statement reduces search and other transaction costs for authors, editors, and reviewers. Desk reject rates are lower when authors understand ahead of time whether their article is appropriate for the journal. Reviewers and editors make clearer decisions on "fit" grounds. However, editors of young journals, journals looking to increase submission rates, and journals representing new or emerging disciplines probably prefer and benefit from more ambiguous domain statements. A change in editorial teams is also a good time to take stock, and we suspect many domain statement changes are timed with changes in editorial teams.

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## Le Défi Belge Bringing Politics In

**Abstract:** *Jean Boddewyn has pioneered research on the political dimensions of corporate strategy. Beginning his academic career during a time when research indicated that most firms gave little organizational priority to government relations (Schollhammer 1975), Boddewyn found a rich context for his investigations of market and political strategies in the study of international business and the multinational corporation. We explicate three main positions that Boddewyn has advocated and sought to empirically support in this work: (1) The state can behave as an actor in business affairs; (2) all of a firm's behavior has political dimensions; and (3) effective organization for political action requires legitimacy and internal value infusion. We consider how Boddewyn's scholarly perspectives may have been conditioned by a personal, integrative framing of European social democracy, continental political discourse, and U.S.- style democratic pluralism.*

Early in September 2009, one of the coauthors of this article had occasion to dig through several dusty file drawers of articles copied in 1981 while working as a graduate assistant on a project that concerned multinational corporations (MNCs)

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