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**GEOFFREY JONES**

# International Business in Times of Crisis



EDITED BY

Rob van Tulder • Alain Verbeke  
Lucia Piscitello • Jonas Puck

**INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS IN  
TIMES OF CRISIS**

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PROGRESS IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS  
RESEARCH VOLUME 16

# INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS IN TIMES OF CRISIS

**Tribute Volume to Geoffrey Jones**

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# PREFACE

## TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR GEOFFREY G. JONES

**Rob van Tulder, Alain Verbeke, Lucia Piscitello and Jonas Puck**

It is a privilege to dedicate Volume XVI of the *Progress in International Business Research – PIBR* book series to Professor Geoffrey G. Jones, the Isidor Straus Professor of Business History at the Harvard Business School, and Faculty Chair of the School's Business History Initiative. Professor Jones was educated at Corpus Christi College (University of Cambridge, UK). Prior to his appointment at the Harvard Business School (USA), he was a Professor of International Business History at the Economics Department of the University of Reading (UK).

Professor Jones' reputation as a formidable contributor to the domain of international business is at par with that of the seven other great institution builders in our field who were honoured in earlier *PIBR* volumes, namely Daniel G. Van Den Bulcke, Alan M. Rugman, Louis T. Wells, Rosalie L. Tung, Lorraine Eden, Peter J. Buckley and D. Eleanor Westney.

Professor Jones is the rare scholar who has successfully straddled the interdisciplinary divide between business history and international business. He is the Co-Editor of the renowned *Business History Review*, published by Cambridge University Press. He has published not only in all the leading business history journals, but also in the *Journal of International Business Studies* and other premier management journals such as the *Strategic Management Journal*.

Professor Jones is probably best known for his incisive books on multinational enterprise activity. He has authored 12 books and (co-) edited 28 other volumes. In 1996, he carved out mainstream academic space for the historical perspective of IB in his book *The Evolution of International Business: An Introduction* (published by Routledge). This book is still one of his best cited contributions. His book *Multinationals and Global Capitalism* published by Oxford University Press in 2004 has become the standard textbook on the history of multinational enterprises and it has been adopted at leading universities around the world. It has received over 1,000 citations in academic journals. It is also important to mention Professor Jones' authorship of more than one hundred Harvard Business School teaching cases and notes, which reflect a deep engagement with the practice of strategic and international management.

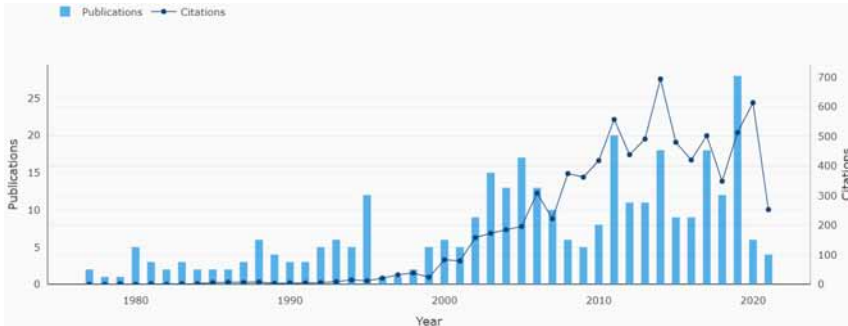
Professor Jones' long-standing and highly significant contributions to international business studies, drawing on business history methodology, are well recognized in the field. The great strength of Professor Jones' scientific oeuvre is the systematic acknowledgment of the complexities of international business. Throughout Professor Jones' writings, we find a strong emphasis on the need to address multinational enterprise complexity in its many appearances. One recent

example includes analysis of the importance of oral histories to understand business trajectories (Jones & Comunale, 2019). A second example is the study of the many difficulties associated with the greening of business and the development of sustainability-related strategies, which cannot simply be imposed by third parties (Jones, 2017, 2018). A third example, and perhaps the most important one, is Professor Jones calling attention to the roles of individual entrepreneurs and firms in the globalization of the world economy. These entrepreneurs and firms have unambiguously demonstrated their almost boundless wealth-creating capabilities but have also contributed, perhaps unintentionally, to considerable wealth disparities (da Silva Lopes, Casson, & Jones, 2019; Jones, 2013).

### The Long Haul

Drawing sustained attention to the relevance of a historical (longitudinal) perspective in any academic and societal setting requires vigilance, intellectual flexibility and stamina. The publication and citation record of Geoffrey Jones since 1995 shows leaps and bounds in numbers of publications – some of these publications were obviously triggered by societal crises that demanded a historical perspective as Geoffrey Jones also explains in Chapter 2 of this volume.

Geoffrey Jones: Publications and citation records over time



From the early publications in the 1980s and 1990s to the turn of the millennium, this has been a struggle for recognition. But since then, influenced by repeated crises and a wave of academic publications, his influence has become constant and growing. From 2007 onwards, not only publications surged, but also citations started to surpass a critical threshold of 200 per year. The financial crisis granted the study of business history extreme relevance. The following era of “globalization under threat” has continued to show the relevance of historical parallels, the importance of longitudinal studies and the importance of understanding the active role played by Multinational Enterprises in shaping the global economy.

Navigating the historical perspective in the IB discourse requires sustained and active attention. Geoffrey Jones has repeatedly reminded us of the relevance of a historical perspective. In 2006 (with Tarun Khnana), he pleaded to “bring

history (back) into international business” (Jones & Khanna, 2006). followed by an even stronger argument in 2020 in favor of the historical perspective as a *fundamental precondition* for the societal relevance of the IB profession (Jones, 2021). This volume can be interpreted as the next step in this effort. The contribution of Prof Jones and a number of his direct colleagues in Part I of this volume provides further evidence of the increased relevance of a longitudinal and historical take on IB.

### HISTORY MATTERS?

Then .....	.... and now
	
<p>1977: Cambridge – Newly elected Research Fellow of Corpus Christi College</p>	<p>2018: Dubai – warning people about the danger of de-globalization</p>

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