

Business Frontiers:

Social Responsibility, Sustainable Development and Economic Justice

By Wayne Visser (ICFAI Books, 2005)



~ EPILOGUE ~

The Poetry of Business

Business is the grand poem of our age, the meta-rhyme of our world, the creative story of our civilization.

Through business, we give expression to our unique humanity and our common animality, to our highest aspirations and our lowest degradations, to our most visionary strategies and our most short-sighted tactics, to the incredible products of our patiently honed talents and the trashy junk of our impulsively stimulated lusts, to our most generous natures and our most selfish traits, to our most brilliant dreams and our deepest darkest nightmares.

Those who believe that business is little more than the science of making money – a profit-making machine churning out endless trinkets for a all-powerful elite of insatiable shareholders – are simply unimaginative poets hypnotised by their own monotonous rhetoric, like a child that takes pride in endlessly reciting a forced rhyming verse constructed in formulaic fashion from its limited monosyllabic vocabulary.

In reality, business is living poetry in action, an art form bursting with variety, flowing with beauty, punctuated with idiosyncrasy, raging with emotion, verbose with narratives, replete with symbols and imagery, swaying with rhythms and swinging with cycles, laden with tragedy and leavened with comedy, an anthology of heroes' journeys and lovers' sagas, a battleground for the forces of good and evil.

Every day in business, we live the poems of our enterprise: the short, sharp, insightful Japanese *haiku* of a wise executive decision quickly made and crisply enacted; the elegant,

beautiful, rhyming Shakespearean sonnet of a complex management system where the parts all sing together to create an uplifting harmonious whole; the fevered, pulsing, warring African drum-poem of a competitive battle for survival and dominance in the marketplace; and the long, meandering, epic Homeric rhyme of a company's saga-like history retold through anecdotal war-stories and meaning-filled rites of passage, all woven into the colourful fabric of the living corporate culture.

So, do not think of business as a place where the spirit goes to die, for it is truly the place where ideas are born, a playground for our mischievous creativity.

Business is an open page on which we can script our highest potential.

Therefore, take heed as you choose the words of your daily tasks, and craft them together into the animated lines of your unique job; listen carefully as you write the lilting rhymes of your career story; and be proud and amazed as you become the author of an incredible poem of your life's enterprise.