

SYMBOLISM AND BUSINESS: THE ECONOMICS OF MYTHOLOGY

BY EDGAR J. RIDLEY

The idea that we live in a mythological world is hard to accept. One of the reasons it is hard to accept is because we base our decisions on a mythological framework. What that means is that most of the decisions that we make are wrong, incorrect, ineffective and non-productive. Remember: mythology is a denial of reality. If mythology is a denial of reality and we live in a mythological world, then our world is basically sick. The reason why racism is so prevalent is because we live in a sick world. There is no doubt that the eradication of mythology would practically cure the mental illness and psychological problems that affect us in today's civilization. In today's business world, many people are on drugs such as Prozac and in psychiatric treatment simply because they are immersed in a mythological system with no way out.

This is the prime reason why drugs used by executives are so prevalent in the business community, because manipulating metaphors and creating new mythologies creates a worsening of the psychological condition of the world population. That means the world business population is primarily mentally confused and psychologically impotent. Businesses cannot flourish if we rely on mythological answers to solve serious problems.

Amos Wilson stated: "Whatever mythology we believe is one that organizes our approach to other people, our perception of ourselves and of other people. It provides answers. The answers may not be right, they may be wrong; but it still provides an answer. And that's psychologically satisfying. Nothing threatens us and nothing upsets us like unanswered questions. Often Man projects a mythology in order to get himself out of his agony of dealing with unanswered questions and to put his mind at rest."

Assumptions held by whites are beginning to backfire. Their own mythological system is backfiring. Set-aside programs for businesses that are owned and operated by women and so-called minorities have undergone scrutiny and evaluation recently. The prevailing attitude among the white population is that the set-aside programs, geared to help so-called minorities, must be eliminated because racism no longer exists. Many whites perceive that the programs that are geared to help people of colour and women have tendencies to produce reverse discrimination. This all comes out of a fear that whites have that they are beginning to lose their power. Whites are coming to a realization of themselves as being the minorities on the world stage. Whites have risen to a state of panic while still practicing racism to the

highest degree. At the same time, whites insist that racism is at such a low that the programs that have been operating to give minorities an opportunity should be eliminated.



"African countries must realize that their ultimate survival rests on their ability to discard their symbols, and by doing that, eliminating any decisions based on myth. That in itself will propel them to world leadership and power. If Europe and the West also follow that lead, we will experience a height of productivity as never before in the history of humankind."

It must be clearly understood that there are two powerful forces deriving from symbolism that affect global business. These two phenomena are racism and religion. With the rather recent emphasis on global transactions, we need a new sophistication in order to do international business. It requires a knowledge base that was previously thought unnecessary. The behavioural sciences have not done an adequate job in educating the workforce on how to do world-class business. The education of managers and the rest of the workforce in an adequate and unbiased way is not in the vested interest of those who would rather see the present way of doing business remain status quo. This produces an elitist, racist, and sexist system that continues to dehumanize the poor, reward the rich, and utilize technology for greed.

The behavioural sciences, as taught in our business schools, stay away from issues they deem touchy, sensitive, or uncomfortable. Business is successfully done by exhibiting appropriate behaviour patterns. How one makes decisions is crucial to the outcome of any business transaction. The fad theories that are promoted by so-called motivational speakers and management gurus tend not to irritate or create a climate of deep thought, but are always on a very superficial level that requires no abstract insight.

By using myths as an escape for reality, we promote myths as the ultimate reality. This is why Tom Peters' book, 'Crazy Times Call for Crazy Organizations', or any management theory promoted in a book, will easily make the New York Times' bestseller list as long as a white person writes the book. Non-whites are not supposed to produce theories or offer solutions that would affect the balance of power in the world. Despite the growing tendencies of whites to discount the factor of race and its influence in the business world, racism in today's world is more vicious and insidious than ever before. If this racism is allowed to stand, the result will destroy the world economy and any chance for progress in health, education, politics, business and the overall welfare. It will cause a continued rise in poverty. What is so disturbing about this racism is its total and unequivocal rejection of ideas of Blacks and other people of colour.

New concepts and theories by people of colour can have an enormous effect on the enhancement of disciplines such as medicine, physics, science, and other major fields of study. The contributions of Africa and Asia are no secret. However, most concepts and ideas are tainted and discounted for the sole reason that their creators are non-whites. This practice must be eliminated so we can do business in an effective and efficient manner. This form of intellectual racism is supported and reinforced by academia, media, government, religion, business, and all areas where decisions are made to affect world policy. What is so appalling is the gall of whites and their mindless support of these racist practices.

In a global business world, it is neither polite nor considered appropriate to discuss racism and its continuous and damaging effects. It is not politically correct or good business practice to do this. The only code word that is acceptable in the global business community is diversity. This term has become an acceptable password for entertaining the ideas, out of necessity, of non-white workers in the global economy. What does diversity really mean?

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