



THE END OF CAPITALISM AND THE RISE OF VALUEISM

**The Radical Transformation Of Human
Needs And Drives Creating An Entirely
New Economic Reality In The 21st Century**

ERIC BARTELS

THE AUTHOR



Eric Bartels grew up in a free-thinking Dutch family with deep entrepreneurial roots. Already as a teenager he combined a passion for music with a fascination for philosophy and the human sciences. Later he studied law, but soon discovered his true calling as an entrepreneur and researcher.

In the late 1980s Bartels founded the very first online shop in the world, and in the early 1990s he launched the first Amazon-like electronic marketplace, long before the internet became mainstream. These pioneering ventures reflect a career marked by vision and a continuous search for what lies ahead of the curve.

For more than twenty years Bartels has been investigating the logic behind exceptional leaders and organizations. He conducted more than 600 in-depth interviews with CEOs and studied 100 companies from the inside out. This long-term research uncovered the hidden systemic patterns that distinguish business outliers such as Apple under Steve Jobs from the vast majority. It also became the foundation of The Become Framework®, a business architecture that enables organizations to align their identity, strategy, and operations with their true inner why.

Bartels is not only an entrepreneur and researcher, but also an author and speaker. With his English-language trilogy — *Be A Steve*, *The End of Capitalism and the Rise of Valueism*, and *The Become Framework* — he aims to redefine how we understand business, leadership, and the role of organizations in the 21st century. His work positions him at the intersection of philosophy, science, and business practice, with one clear mission: to show that companies can and must become instruments of meaning and value in a world beyond capitalism.

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TESTIMONIALS

In *Human – The Secret of Being* you develop an interesting vision that certainly gives food for thought and that I will undoubtedly put to the test in the time ahead... Once again, thank you for your stimulating ideas. **Piet Hein Donner, Dutch Minister of State, former Vice President of the Council of State of the Netherlands, and former Minister of Justice, Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, and Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relation**

Eric Bartels' book *Human – The Secret of Being* (originally published in the Netherlands as *MENS – Het Geheim van het Zijn*) is provocative and challenging, yet thoroughly well-founded. It absolutely makes you think – and that's the whole point. Everyone knows I admire independent minds and provocateurs. Well, Bartels certainly is one! **Jort Kelder, Dutch journalist and television personality**

When I open the new Eric Bartels book, the first review immediately catches my eye: 'The book is provocative and challenging (...) It definitely makes you think (...).' Another 507 pages to go!

On page 274, I read: 'The core hypothesis of this book is that a revolutionary change is currently taking place in our behavior that will radically alter our existing social, economic, and political order. A change that we sense, but do not yet understand.' I immediately understand what Eric is talking about and use every free moment to con-

TESTIMONIALS

tinue reading. It feels like a journey of discovery... crisis, change, self-management – these are exactly the issues that concern me. When I finally turn the last page and put the book aside, I feel deep respect for the author. Something radical must change, and if we don't set it in motion ourselves, the universe will do it for us. Waiting around won't help. I consider the book a masterpiece. It's a book that will stay with me for a very long time. **René Kuiper, NLP trainer and co-owner of the NLP NTI Institute**

Eric, I saw you on TV yesterday and thought you were great. Taboo-breaking. How you dared to show your vulnerability, clearly and explicitly. In those few minutes, you have undoubtedly moved people and that's what it's all about. **Anke van Houtum, Buddhist.**

I read each page of *The Plan* with supreme interest...mega-enjoyable. Hats off to you!!! **Annett van Os, lifestyle coach**

Thanks Eric for your dazzling and absorbing performance last Friday. Your book was a real wake-up call and has inspired me to 'take control'. Your book, *The Plan*, makes for an amazing read because of your writing style and also because of its pleasing layout. The book is convincing, spiritual and inspiring!" **Joost Wäckerlin, physical geographer.**

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This book is part of **The Telogeny Trilogy**

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GEORGE BERNARD SHAW:

“The reasonable man adapts himself to the world: the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.”

George Bernard Shaw was an Irish playwright, critic, polemicist, and political activist, he reshaped Western theatre and culture from the 1880s onward. The author of more than sixty plays, he became the leading dramatist of his generation and was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1925. His words remind us that true progress does not come from adapting to the status quo but from those willing to think differently, question convention, and create from within. In the same way, working from the inside out means refusing to copy-and-paste from the public domain and instead building from one's own DNA and intrinsic logic.

CHAPTER 1

WHY THIS BOOK EXISTS ---

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WHY THIS BOOK EXISTS

A Shift Deeper Than Headlines

Every right-minded person can sense that something profound is happening in the world today. The unrest we experience is not just a series of isolated events; it feels deeper than that, as if something more fundamental is shifting, something structural, even civilizational.

Twenty Years of Discovery

Since 2005, I have been conducting long-term research into the behavior of leaders and their organizations. My initial aim was modest: to better understand what it takes to be a truly successful entrepreneur. But over the course of twenty years, my research began to reveal something far greater than individual excellence. I discovered that a small number of business leaders operate according to a radically different logic, not merely tactically, but systemically. They do not merely outperform their peers. They embody an entirely different way of thinking, deciding, building and leading. And more than that, their way of working is not an anomaly. It is part of a much larger shift.

The Emergence Of Telogeny

My research shows that we are now entering a third great transformation in the evo-

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lution of Western society — following the **Renaissance** and the **Enlightenment**. I call it **Telogeny**, from the ancient Greek telos (purpose) and genesis (becoming).

Telogeny is the name I give to the age in which people, organizations and societies begin to become what they are intrinsically meant to be. It marks the end of external control, external adaptation and external justification. It signals the emergence of a new logic, a logic of intrinsic coherence and inside-out creation.

An Inner Why-Driven Universe

This idea is not spiritual or religious. It is philosophical, biological, and increasingly scientific. From Aristotle to Hegel to modern quantum physicists, the idea has endured: life is not a brilliant accident but an inner potential-driven phenomenon, an *inner why*-driven phenomenon. Everything in the universe unfolds from potential toward actualization, not randomly, but according to an inner direction. What many organizations have come to call “purpose” is, in fact, this inner why: the intrinsic reason for existence that is embedded in the very DNA of a person, an enterprise, or even a society. Unlike the overused and often superficial interpretations of “purpose,” the purpose is not invented or imposed. It is discovered. A truly *inner* why. It is the final cause Aristotle described, the force that gives coherence, direction, and necessity to becoming.

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The same pattern governs the development of human societies. And as the American psychologist Abraham Maslow showed, our human needs are not chaotic, but hierarchically ordered. First survival, then safety. Then belonging. Then status. And finally, self-actualization and transcendence. History itself follows this logic. In the West, it led to the flourishing of the arts and the individual in the **Renaissance**, and later to the rise of science, rationalism and democracy during the **Enlightenment**. But these were not end points. They were necessary phases in a larger evolution, one that now leads to **Telogeny**.

And just as the Enlightenment gave rise to industrial capitalism and modern economics, this new era brings forth something else entirely. Not **industrial capitalism**, but what I call **intrinsic valueism**. Not an **economy**, but a **beconomy**, a value system not built on scarcity, manipulation and efficiency, but on inner why, reciprocity and alignment. That is the deeper context for this book. But it is not the only subject.

The Architecture Of a New Business Logic

This book is also about the architecture that this new era demands. It describes the structural business logic and architecture that are shaping the rise of Valueism and the beconomy within the 21st century Telogeny. A logic already visible in the way companies like like Apple under Steve Jobs were designed and operated. *The methodology*

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presented in this book is not speculative. It has been reverse-engineered from the most valuable, resilient and culture-defining businesses of our time. What you will find here is the coherent system behind them, a complete operating model that integrates identity, strategy, structure, tactics, culture and execution into one unified whole.

One Trilogy, Three Gateways

This book is part of my **Telogeny Trilogy**, which consists of three volumes that together explore the great transformation from capitalism to ‘*valueism*’. Each book can be read on its own, but together they provide a complete picture of the historic shift and what it means for leadership, organizations, and business architecture.

- **Be A Steve** is the book through which I want to reach as many people as possible. Because in the end, every human being performs work that creates value for the world. In our Western Enlightenment and capitalist programming, we have been conditioned to think in terms of business and non-business. We think of companies driven by money, that happen to need products as a means to that end. And we think of institutions like hospitals, governments, schools, or medical practices as something different, somehow outside the economic logic. In the new era of Telogeny, and therefore of valueism and beconomies, that separation no longer exists. All of these entities create value. Be A Steve is written to show that anyone can be

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a Steve. In any company, brand, or institution, you can embody the same radical focus on creating optimal value for the world. This book explains why you must do that — and how you can do it.

- **The End of Capitalism and the Rise of Valueism** takes a broader and more intellectual perspective. It explains the deeper historical and systemic transformation from the Enlightenment to today, and why this shift is both necessary and inevitable for the future of business. It also introduces The Become Framework®, the modeled and reverse-engineered business logic and architecture of outliers such as Steve's Apple, NVIDIA, and others that already embody the principles of valueism.
- **The Become Framework** book presents The Become Framework® in full. It is the concrete description of this new business architecture and how organizations can make optimal use of it. The book combines the underlying philosophy and systemic logic with practical tools, canvases, and processes that translate valueism into strategy, tactics, and operations..

Together, these three books form a coherent whole: three gateways into the same historic transformation. Each book highlights a different perspective. This book explains the systemic and historical shift from capitalism to valueism and shows how The Become Framework® models the business logic and architecture of the companies that already

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embody this new order. It presents the architecture and operating system that define how 21st-century organizations can grow from inner why into real-world value. Not by adapting to markets, but by embodying what they are meant to become. The ideas in this book are grounded in more than 20 years of research, including 600 interviews with business leaders and deep fieldwork inside 100 companies. What emerged is not a collection of best practices, but a systemic framework: the hidden structure behind the outlier companies that are not only succeeding, but reshaping the landscape of value creation. More importantly, it reveals a structure that belongs to the future. Not just of business, but of how we live, create, and relate.

That is why this book exists.