



THE PERENNIALIST REVIEW

International Collaboration

ABSTRACT

This review essay offers a friendly, constructive analysis of Joshua Kyle T. Rovero's *The Perennialist* (2026), evaluating its ambitious attempt to re-enchant modern thought by synthesizing Eastern and Western sacred traditions with Heideggerian ontology.

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Worldviews

The Perennialist Review

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Abstract

This review essay offers a friendly, constructive analysis of Joshua Kyle T. Rovero's *The Perennialist* (2026), evaluating its ambitious attempt to re-enchant modern thought by synthesizing Eastern and Western sacred traditions with Heideggerian ontology. Through the analytical lens of Bernard Williams's *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* and Dr. Neville Buch's framework of Spiral Historiography, the essay explores the epistemological boundary between abstract metaphysical universalism and lived historical experience. While traditional Perennialism risks collapsing into static, ahistorical dogma—a danger highlighted by Williams's critique of foundationalist ethical theories—Rovero successfully navigates this limit by framing truth as a dynamic, temporal disclosure of Being (*Aletheia*). By applying Spiral Historiography,

¹ Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) has been fairly used in the production of this work. The tool used is Google NotebookLM (recently rebranded as Gemini Notebook). It is an AI-powered virtual research assistant and thinking partner designed to help a person interact deeply with their own documents. Unlike general chatbots, it is source-grounded, meaning it only generates answers based on the specific PDFs, documents, or links uploaded. The A.I. process in the production of this work has been limited to the attached (prompts) on each of the questions in turn. This ensures an accurate reading of each source. The author then rearranged and re-edited the answers the A.I. provided. The human author publishes this work. A.I. is never an author when used properly. This assistance is not qualitatively different from a human research assistant when that assistance is deemed to have no authorial status but is acknowledged.

Rovero's thesis is shown not as a regressive nostalgia, but as a progressive, cyclical learning process that uncoils historical forgetfulness. The ultimate importance of Rovero's message lies in its capacity to restore human authorship and Aristotelian flourishing (eudaimonia) in an era increasingly threatened by technological reductionism and "denoetization."

Re-Enchanting the Mind: A Friendly Review of Joshua Kyle T. Rovero's *The Perennialist*

In an era marked by rapid technological acceleration, hyper-consumerism, and what Bernard Stiegler terms "symbolic misery," Joshua Kyle T. Rovero's *The Perennialist* (2026) arrives as an earnest and timely philosophical invitation^{[1][2]}. Written with a passion for civilizational renewal, Rovero's treatise diagnoses the contemporary 21st-century condition as fundamentally "philosophically deficient" and spiritually exhausted^[3]. Rovero argues that the modern West, having severed philosophy from ancient wisdom, has traded the depth of Being (*Sein*) for the mere accumulation and manipulation of objects (*beings*)^{[2][4]}. In response, he calls for a "Golden Age of Eastern Thought" and a global Perennialist revival that reconnects the material world with its underlying sacred foundation^{[5][6]}.

Rovero's work is noteworthy for its friendly and inclusive spirit; it seeks not to divide East and West, but to construct a "metaphysical bridge" where plural religious traditions reveal their shared primordial root^{[7][8]}. However, to fully appreciate the rigor and potential of Rovero's argument, his thesis must be brought into dialogue with two critical philosophical touchstones: Bernard Williams's critique of the limits of philosophy, and Dr. Neville Buch's concept of Spiral Historiography^[9].

1. The Limits of the Perennialist in the Limits of Philosophy (as per Williams)

To evaluate Rovero's project fairly, one must first confront the warnings laid out by the British philosopher Bernard Williams in *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (1985) and *Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline* (2008). Williams was famously skeptical of any philosophical system that claims to discover a single, universal, context-free "Archimedean point" or totalizing theory to govern human life^[9]. Williams argued that:

- **Philosophy Cannot Replace Lived Experience:** Ethical and metaphysical understanding cannot be formulated in advance by an abstract system; it must be discovered through "reflective living" embedded in specific social and historical contexts (Williams 1985, p. 162).
- **The Danger of Ahistorical Dogma:** When philosophical concepts are stripped of their historical bearings and treated as timeless formalisms, they become "thin" abstractions

that lose touch with the “thick” reality of local practices and human character (Williams 1985, p. 140; Williams 2008, p. 212).

- **The Reflection Paradox:** Purely abstract reflection, when detached from concrete cultural forms, risks destroying the very practical confidence and knowledge it seeks to analyse (Williams 1985, p. 148).

Herein lies the primary vulnerability for traditional Perennialism. If a Perennialist thesis asserts that all historical differences between religions are mere surface illusions masking an identical, static, ahistorical absolute, it risks falling into the exact trap Williams critiques: constructing a “foundationalist illusion” that ignores historical contingency (Buch 2025, p. 2; Williams 2008, p. 180). A Perennialism that ignores the historical particulars of human cultures can easily degenerate into a “static dogma” or an unreflective “obscurantist nostalgia” (Rovero 2026, p. 22, 1134).

2. How the Perennialist Thesis Synthesizes Limits into Rovero’s Argument

Remarkably, Rovero himself anticipates this exact limitation and builds a defence against it. Rovero explicitly acknowledges that traditional Perennialism (such as the classical formulations of René Guénon or Frithjof Schuon) remains incomplete and vulnerable to becoming a “mere historical artifact” if it relies solely on static metaphysical claims (Rovero 2026, pp. 21–22).

Rovero resolves this dilemma through a novel synthesis: he insists that Perennialism must pass through Martin Heidegger’s phenomenology of disclosure (*Aletheia* **)**^{[14][15]}. By integrating Heidegger’s insistence on the historical, temporal, and situational “unconcealment” of Being with the comparative breadth of Eastern mysticism, Rovero transforms Perennialism from a rigid dogma into a dynamic, lived reality^{[16][17]}:

- **Being as Lived Mystery:** Rather than treating universal wisdom as a set of static propositions, Rovero asserts that “the human being itself is a metaphysical mystery” whose existence (*Dasein*) is experienced through lived reality (Rovero 2026, p. 62).
- **The Union of Particular and Universal:** In Rovero’s framework, the particularity of local cultures and historical traditions is not erased; rather, “the universal is just as particular as the particular is universal” (Rovero 2026, p. 31).
- **Phenomenological Opening:** By grounding Perennialism in Heidegger’s “world-disclosure,” Rovero ensures that truth remains an active, ongoing “presencing” rather than a closed, dogmatic formula (Rovero 2026, pp. 20–22).

Through this synthesis, Rovero answers Williams's challenge. Philosophy does not deliver a static, context-free formula from above; instead, as Williams advocated, it functions as a humanistic practice where truthfulness to one's social and historical bearings enables individuals and communities to make sense of their lives (Williams 1985, p. 198; Rovero 2026, p. 62).

3. The Role of Spiral Historiography in Understanding Limits and Progress

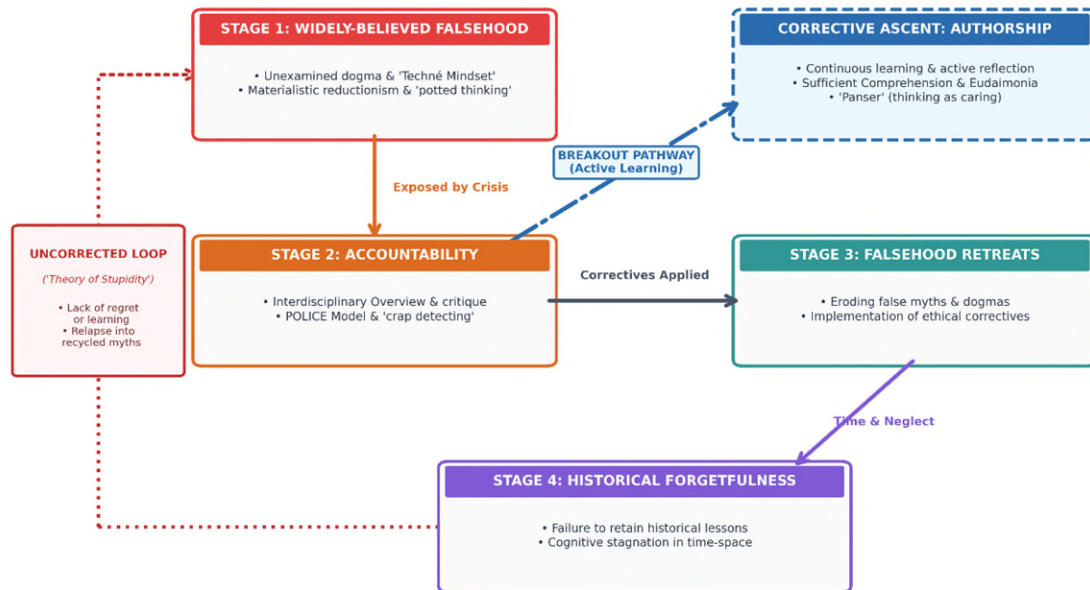
To prevent Rovero's call for a "return to origin" from being misread as reactionary anti-modernism, we must introduce Dr. Neville Buch's model of Spiral Historiography^{[11][18]}. Spiral Historiography is a "post-post-postmodernist" interpretive framework that rejects both linear views of endless progress and pessimistic views of inevitable civilizational decay (Buch 2024f, p. 1; Buch 2025, p. 1).

Instead, Buch conceptualizes historical cognition as a cyclical movement through four recurring stages^{[11][18]}:

1. **Widely-Believed Falsehood:** The dominant, unreflective paradigm of an epoch (e.g., modern technocratic reductionism or market-driven materialism).
2. **Accountability:** A period of crisis and critique where the falsehood is exposed and challenged.
3. **Falsehood Retreats:** The dismantling of flawed dogmas and the recovery of deeper truths.
4. **Historical Forgetfulness:** The risk of forgetting past lessons, leading back into repetitive cognitive errors ("the spiral theory of stupidity").

Informatic Graph: Spiral Historiography

Dr. Neville Buch's Model of Historical Cognition & Cognitive Cycles



Source: Dr. Neville Buch, 'Spiral Historiography: 1. Widely-Believed Falsehood, 2. Accountability, 3. Falsehood Retreats, 4. Historical Forgetfulness' (2024)

When viewed through Spiral Historiography, Rovero's *The Perennialist* represents an essential moment of **Accountability**^{[2][11]}. Modernity's "techné mindset"—which reduces human beings to data sets, consumers, or mechanical algorithms—is identified as a *Widely-Believed Falsehood* (Buch 2024f, p. 1; Rovero 2026, p. 16).

Furthermore, Spiral Historiography explains how progress occurs: progress is not about wiping the slate clean (the Cartesian illusion), but about "reading ancient or foundational texts with modern inclusivity" (Buch 2025, p. 3; Toulmin 1990, p. 179). Rovero's thesis does not advocate a naive regression to the past; rather, it "uncoils" historical forgetfulness by bringing ancient Eastern wisdom into a sophisticated dialogue with 20th-century phenomenology and 21st-century global challenges (Rovero 2026, pp. 18–20; Buch 2025, p. 3).

4. Why This Message Is Important

The convergence of Rovero's perennial vision, Williams's humanistic limits, and Buch's spiral historiography carry profound urgency for contemporary society:

1. **Reclaiming Human Authorship over Technical Systems:** In an age dominated by artificial intelligence, automated metrics, and bureaucratic “denoetization,” Rovero reminds us that the human person (“Who”) must remain the master of the technical system (“What”)^[19]. Without a sacred and philosophical anchor, humanity risks regressing into a purely animalistic or algorithmic state (Rovero 2026, p. 5; Buch 2026, p. 378).
2. **Overcoming Civilizational Polarization:** By asserting that “the many are one” and demonstrating that diverse cultures share a deep metaphysical concern for human dignity, Rovero provides an antidote to the destructive “culture-history wars” and geopolitical fragmentation of our time (Rovero 2026, p. 42; Buch 2021a, p. 1).
3. **Fostering Aristotelian Flourishing (Eudaimonia):** Ultimately, philosophy fulfills its highest calling when it moves away from narrow, instrumental utility and toward the cultivation of wisdom, character, and mutual flourishing (Williams 1985, p. 198; Buch 2026, p. 379). Rovero's work is a passionate plea for “existential peace”—a state where intellectual inquiry and spiritual reverence unite to give meaning to human life (Rovero 2026, p. 1141).

Conclusion

Joshua Kyle T. Rovero's *The Perennialist* (2026) is a courageous and inspiring contribution to contemporary humanities. By welcoming Bernard Williams's insights on the limits of philosophy and grounding his historical vision in Dr. Neville Buch's Spiral Historiography, Rovero's thesis transcends the threat of static dogmatism. It stands as a vibrant, open invitation for global thinkers to put down abstract maps, engage in reflective living, and re-discover the sacred light that gives meaning to our shared human journey.

A combined framework applies to evaluating policy decisions, educational curricula, or corporate governance models.

Applying the combined Dynamic of Cognition (DoC) matrix and Spiral Historiography framework creates a diagnostic and prescriptive tool for institutional analysis^[1]. While the DoC matrix functions as a structural compass—mapping where cognitive judgment sits across Prejudice, Exclusion, Inclusion, Attitudes, and Typologies of Value^[3]—Spiral Historiography provides the temporal lens, tracking how ideas evolve, stagnate in loops of Historical Forgetfulness, or break out toward Human Authorship^[2].

When brought together, this combined framework evaluates whether institutional practices are trapped in a “techné mindset” (a mechanical, data-obsessed reductionism) or are ascending toward Sufficient Comprehension and Aristotelian flourishing (*eudaimonia* **)**^[6].

1. Evaluating Policy Decisions

In public policy, governance frequently regresses into “retail management” or “Government House Utilitarianism,” where decisions are driven by immediate metrics, cost-cutting, and “rates, roads, and rubbish” pragmatism rather than deep social inquiry^[11].

- *Stage 1: Unmasking Policy Prejudice (The Baseline)*: The framework identifies how policy proposals often begin with unreflective Prejudice—accepting “potted thinking,” market-driven slogans (such as “job readiness”), or raw statistical indicators as self-evident realities^[2].
- *Stage 2: Exposing Exclusions & Testing Attitudes (Accountability)*: By applying diagnostic tools like the POLICE model (*Philosophically Ontology Logic Intersect Compatibility Education*) and “crap detecting,” policymakers test the Attitudes behind public claims^[16]. This stage exposes what has been systematically Excluded—such as “messy” lived human experience (*Erlebnis*), “thick” local contexts, and the historical roots of social inequality^[19].
- *Stage 3: Restoring Context through Inclusion (Falsehood Retreats)*: Rather than relying on “thin,” abstract formalisms (e.g., treating policy purely through cost-benefit calculations), policy analysis forces Inclusion^[19]. It brings the “social and historical bearings” back into the open, establishing a Reflective Equilibrium between overarching administrative principles and concrete human needs^[25].

- *Stage 4: Achieving Comprehensive Social Policy (Breakout)*: If uncorrected, policy cycles back into Historical Forgetfulness, repeating past legislative failures^{[2][8]}. However, when guided by the Synthesis of the Five Intentions (Self, Mind, Reason, Utility, Love), policy breaks out of the loop to form a Comprehensive Social Policy grounded in Substantial Fairness—ensuring governance serves human dignity rather than bureaucratic expediency^[28].
-

2. Designing and Assessing Educational Curricula

Modern educational systems are routinely undermined by the “Job-Ready” reductionism, which treats schools and universities as mere “training sites” or “information mills” for corporate workforce supply^[12].

- *Stage 1: Diagnosing the “Hidden Curriculum” (Prejudice)*: The framework begins by revealing the Prejudice embedded in curricula—specifically the “hidden curriculum” and the “banking model” of education that position students as passive vessels for pre-packaged, unexamined data^[33].
 - *Stage 2: Unpacking Specialized Ignorance (Accountability)*: The DoC matrix maps how narrow specialization creates an “Analytical Abyss” where students know “more and more about less and less” without understanding broader social meaning^{[36][37]}. Through critical pedagogy (drawing on Henry Giroux, Paulo Freire, and Nel Noddings), the framework transforms passive compliance into an active “discourse of critique”^[38].
 - *Stage 3: Implementing a “Worldview Curriculum” (Inclusion)*: To escape the provincialism of “scissors and paste” learning, the curriculum adopts a “Worldview” and interdisciplinary approach^[41]. It connects local geography and history directly to global themes of social justice, reframing education as an oppositional democratic public sphere^[29].
 - *Stage 4: Cultivating Human Authorship (Breakout)*: Instead of reproducing market-driven “widely-believed falsehoods,” the curriculum aligns learning with Aristotelian Flourishing^[2]. By developing Sufficient Comprehension, students transition from “Junior” conduits of social directives to “Senior” proactive authors of their own lives^[45].
-

3. Structuring Corporate Governance Models (The MICE Framework)

In corporate and organizational environments, governance often succumbs to short-termism, hyper-industrial extraction, and “denoetization”—the mechanical liquidation of human judgment in favour of automated algorithms and profit maximization^[49].

- **Stage 1: Identifying Corporate Short-Termism (Prejudice):** The framework exposes the Prejudice of viewing corporate value strictly through “unvarnished self-interest,” market egoism, and one-dimensional financial metrics^[52].
- **Stage 2: Ethical Deliberation & Value-Sensitive Design (Accountability):** Using socio-technical standards (such as IEEE 7000 and CertifAIEd), corporate governance moves beyond vague, non-enforceable codes of conduct^[56]. It implements ethical deliberation across three modes: *disclosive* (identifying values), *weighing* (balancing trade-offs), and *applicative* (embedding ethics into technical and operational design)^[60].
- **Stage 3: Shifting from Shareholder to Stakeholder Value (Inclusion):** The framework drives Inclusion by replacing pure shareholder profit with Digital Humanism and multi-stakeholder governance^[63]. It treats cooperation as a productive force, prioritizing noodiversity (diversity of knowledge) and an “economy of the commons” over extractive exploitation^[49].
- **Stage 4: The Contributory Economy (Breakout via MICE):** The culmination of this application is the Management Institute for Contributory Economy (MICE) model^[50]. Guided by its mandate, corporate governance becomes:
 1. *Radical enough* to shift the agenda away from reductive metrics toward human values^{[7][67]};
 2. *Liberal enough* to ensure broad social placement and open participation^{[67][69]}; and
 3. *Conservative enough* to preserve valuable historical knowledge, ecological resilience, and human dignity^[7].

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Summary of the Synthesis

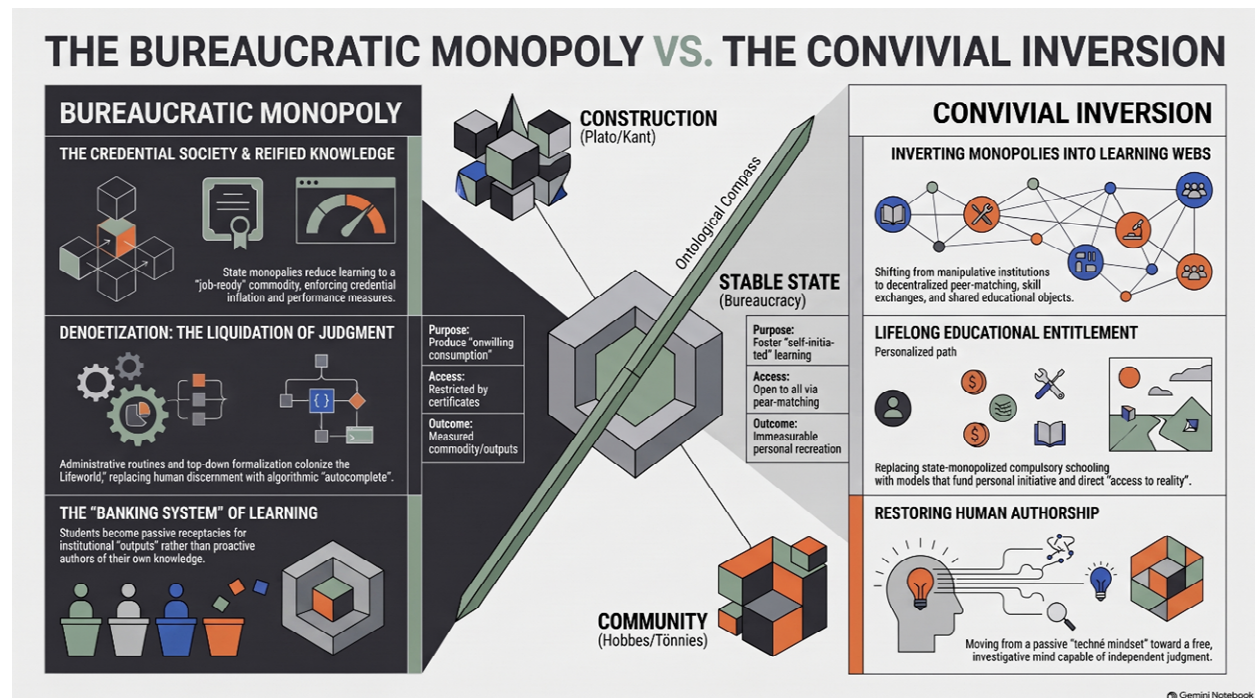
Domain	Stage 1: Prejudice (The Loop Baseline)	Stage 2: Accountability (DoC Intervention)	Stage 3: Inclusion (Horizon Expansion)	Stage 4: Breakout Pathway (Ascent)
Policy Decisions	Techné mindset, “rates, roads, rubbish” reductionism[8].	Diagnostic “crap detecting” via the POLICE model[16].	Re-integrating historical/social bearings & thick ethical concepts[19].	Comprehensive Social Policy & Substantial Fairness [28][29].
Educational Curricula	“Banking model” & “Job-Ready” workforce reduction[12].	Oppositional public sphere & “discourse of critique”[29].	Interdisciplinary overview & Worldview Curriculum[41].	Aristotelian Flourishing & Human Authorship [9].
Corporate Governance	Extractive capitalism & algorithmic “denoetization”[50].	Value-sensitive design (IEEE 7000/CertifAIEd) & ethical deliberation[57].	Stakeholder value, Digital Humanism, & Noodiversity[49].	Contributory Economy (MICE Mandate) & Social Accountability [7].



How this Spiral Historiography model interacts with Dr. Buch's 5-component Dynamic of Cognition (DoC) matrix

The interaction between Dr. Neville Buch's Spiral Historiography and the 5-component Dynamic of Cognition (DoC) matrix represents a powerful synthesis: DoC provides the structural, cognitive architecture of how human judgment functions, while Spiral Historiography provides the temporal, historical trajectory of how those cognitive states evolve, stagnate, or ascend over time.

Where DoC maps *where the mind is sitting*, Spiral Historiography tracks *where thought is moving*.



Mapping the DoC Matrix to Spiral Historiography

Dynamic of Cognition (DoC) Component	Primary Spiral Stage	Mechanism of Interaction
1. Prejudice (Centre)	Stage 1: Widely-Believed Falsehood	Unreflective baseline belief in commonality. The mind accepts compressed “potted thinking” and unexamined cultural dogmas as self-evident truth.
2. Exclusion (Sensation)	Stage 2: Accountability (Diagnostic Phase)	Identifies what has been systematically filtered out (e.g., specialized ignorance, “thin” concepts, lived experience). Confronting this gap triggers the crisis of accountability.
3. Attitudes (Thinking)	Stage 2: Accountability (Critical Phase)	The default social stance or rationalization mechanism. Under Socratic critique (using tools like the POLICE model), unreflective defence transforms into active, rational inquiry.
4. Inclusion (Intuition)	Stage 3: Falsehood Retreats	Expanding the Horizon Worldview . As dogmas erode, the mind incorporates the perspective of the “Other,” historical contingency, and “thick ethical concepts.”
5. Typology of Values (Feeling)	Stage 4 & The Breakout Pathway	The ultimate arbiter of direction. Re-evaluating what is important determines whether thought lapses into Historical Forgetfulness or ascends to Human Authorship .

How the Two Models Dynamically Interact

1. The Origin: Unreflective Baseline (Prejudice + Stage 1)

In Stage 1 (Widely-Believed Falsehood), cognitive activity is dominated by Prejudice—the unexamined assumption that one's personal worldview is universally shared. In this state, the “techné mindset” or institutional dogma operates without challenge. The individual uses “potted thinking” (ready-made slogans) to avoid the effort of deep reflection, remaining a passive conduit for dominant narratives.

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2. The Critical Pivot: Unpacking Ignorance (Exclusion, Attitudes + Stage 2)

The movement into Stage 2 (Accountability) occurs when an epistemological crisis forces a confrontation with Exclusion. The thinker realizes that key historical, moral, or contextual facts have been filtered out by an oversimplified model.

- By applying diagnostic tools (such as “crap detecting” or the POLICE model), entrenched Attitudes—which usually function as defensive rationalizations—are brought under conscious critique.
- This stage transforms “Junior” unreflective execution into “Senior” Socratic questioning.

3. The Horizon Expansion: Restoring Context (Inclusion + Stage 3)

As accountability takes effect, the cycle enters Stage 3 (Falsehood Retreats). Here, Inclusion becomes the driving force. The individual achieves a “fusion of horizons,” systematically internalizing perspectives and historical realities that were previously excluded. The “thin” formalisms of dogma are replaced by “thick” ethical concepts rooted in lived human experience.

4. The Ethical Fork: Value Orientation (Typology of Values, Stage 4, vs. Breakout)

The crucial boundary occurs at Stage 4 (Historical Forgetfulness), where the Typology of Values determines the final trajectory:

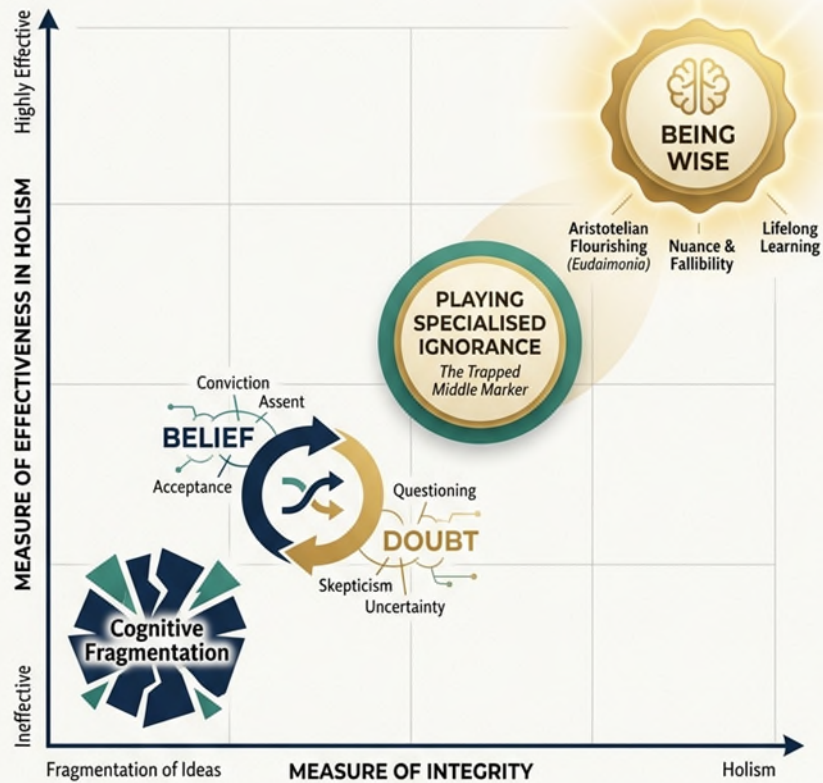
- *The Uncorrected Feedback Loop* (“Theory of Stupidity”): If the collective valuation remains anchored in narrow, instrumental utility or immediate comfort, the hard-won insights of Stage 3 are taken for granted. Society loses its historical bearings, lapses back into Historical Forgetfulness, and recycles back into a new Widely-Believed Falsehood (Stage 1).
- *The Breakout Pathway (Ascent to Human Authorship)*: If the Typology of Values is anchored in Aristotelian flourishing (eudaimonia), Socratic care (panser), and continuous learning, the spiral “uncoils.” The thinker breaks free from time-space stagnation, restoring Human Authorship over technical systems and securing genuine wisdom.

Summary Insights

By superimposing the Dynamic of Cognition onto Spiral Historiography, Dr. Buch demonstrates that civilizational or personal growth is never guaranteed by time alone. History only progresses when cognitive Prejudice is continuously subjected to the accountability of Inclusion and Reflective Value. Without active cognitive maintenance, the spiral inevitably collapses into an uncorrected loop of historical repetition.

MODEL OF INTELLECT

Measuring the Fitness of Ideas & Cognitive Movement



POLICE Diagnostic Method: Philosophical, Ontological, Logical, Intersect, Compatibility, Education



Philosophical: Examining foundational assumptions and worldviews.



Ontological: Assessing the nature of being and reality.



Logical: Analyzing the validity, consistency, and structure of arguments.



Intersect: Identifying connections across disciplines and ideas.



Compatibility: Evaluating coherence and harmony between concepts.



Education: Facilitating learning, growth, and intellectual development.

Dr. Neville Buch — Management Institute for Contributory Economy

Gemini Notebook

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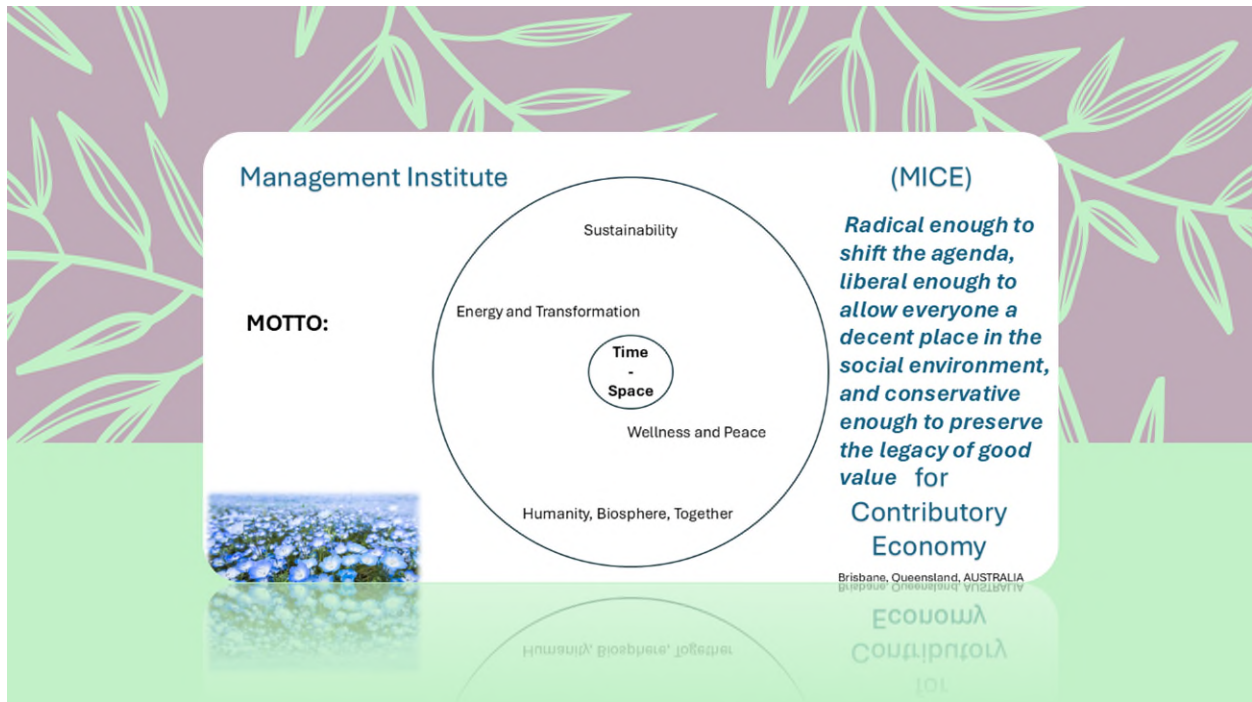
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