MICE Methodological Projects: Applied Philosophy, Digital Humanism, and Cognitive Transformation in a Contributory Economy

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Abstract

The Management Institute for Contributory Economy (MICE) Methodological Projects, established and directed by Dr. Neville Buch, represent a pioneering framework in applied historiography, digital humanism, and personalist social science[1]. Grounded in the foundational axiom that "understanding history is philosophy in practice," MICE projects deploy specialized analytical tools—most notably the Dynamic of Cognition (DoC) framework, Spiral Historiography, and the POLICE diagnostic model—to address the contemporary civilizational crises of "Historical Forgetfulness" and technological "denoetization"[2]. By moving beyond rigid transactional utility

[1] The original articles and essays are humanly-devised. 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.

and superficial marketing paradigms, MICE projects construct a restorative communicative architecture grounded in personalism, panser (thinking as caring), and *sermo* (living conversation)[8]. This essay examines the operational mechanics of MICE methodological projects, formulates strategies for their effective communication, details their profound contributions to societal well-being, and articulates why reclaiming human authorship through these projects is vital for fostering democratic agency and Aristotelian flourishing (eudaimonia) within a Contributory Economy[6].

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1. How MICE Methodological Projects Work

MICE Methodological Projects operate as an applied social-science and philosophical intervention designed to transform passive data accumulation into active, reflective judgment[14]. The architecture of MICE methodology rests on four interconnected theoretical and diagnostic pillars[6]:

A. The Core Axiom: History as Philosophy in Practice

At the heart of every MICE project is the conviction that historical inquiry is not a static archival exercise or a nostalgic gathering of "folk history," but the mandatory empirical grounding for ethical critique and comprehensive social analysis (Buch 2025, p. 1; Buch 2026b, p. 1)[19]. History provides the *historical a priori* necessary for genuine judgment, ensuring that social policies and educational programs remain anchored in concrete human experiences rather than abstract bureaucratic metrics (Buch 2026j, p. 2)[22].

B. The Dynamic of Cognition (DoC) Diagnostic Model

The primary analytical engine across MICE projects is the Dynamic of Cognition (DoC), a diagnostic model that maps human thought processes across four Jungian axes—Sensation, Intuition, Thinking, and Feeling—to identify and correct cognitive failures (Buch 2026e, p. 1; Buch 2026h, p. 1)[4]. The model tracks five core states of affairs[26][27]:

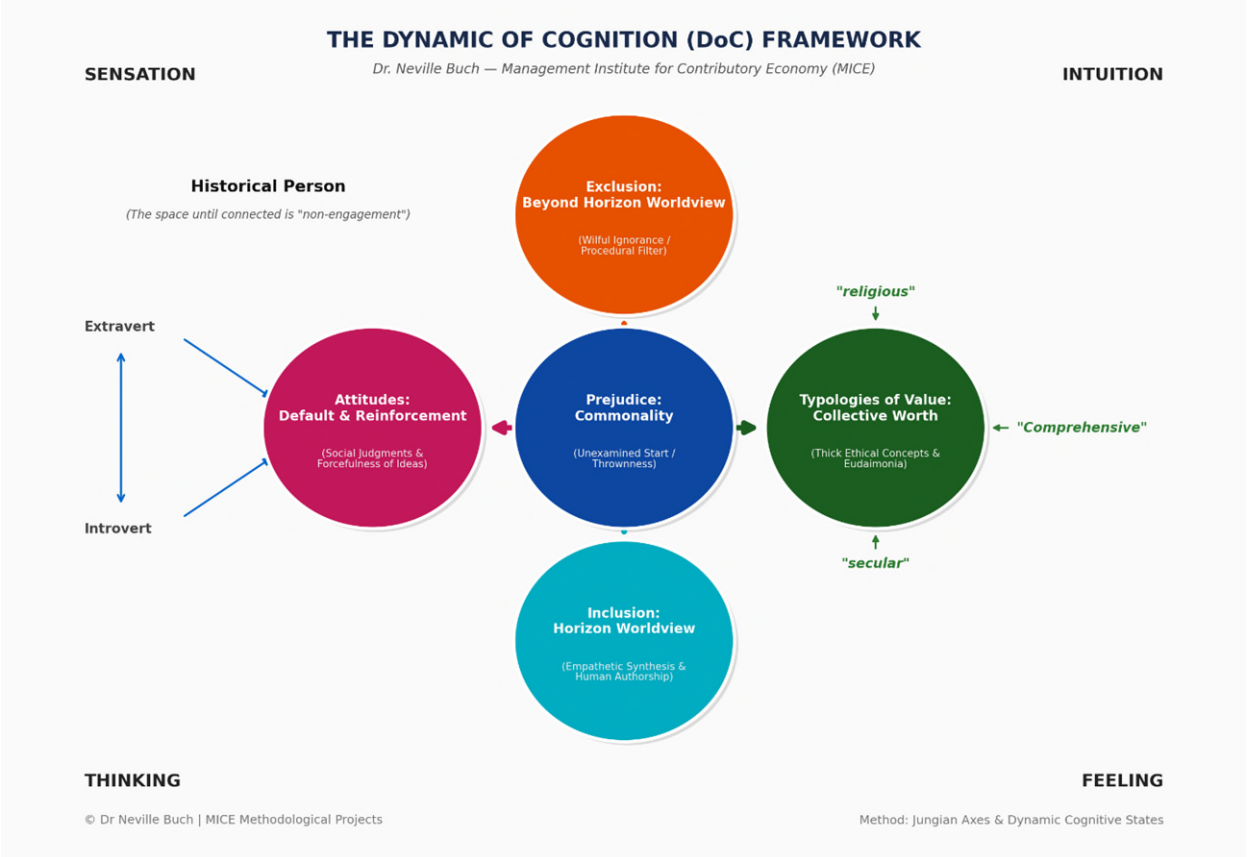
1. *Prejudice (Centre)*: The unavoidable, "thrown" starting point of thought (Heideggerian *Geworfenheit*), representing unexamined assumptions of commonality that must be recognized and transformed through reflective inquiry (Buch 2026e, p. 1)[26].

2. *Attitudes (Thinking Axis)*: The "forcefulness of ideas" and default positions used to interpret social reality, requiring active critical negation to resist propaganda and dogmatic capture (Buch 2026e, p. 2)[30].

3. *Typologies of Value (Feeling Axis)*: Collective perceptions of importance structured around "thick ethical concepts" (such as justice, courage, and care) that unite factual description with evaluative meaning to promote Aristotelian flourishing (*eudaimonia*) (Buch 2026e, p. 2)[28].

4. *Exclusion (Sensation Axis)*: The procedural filter that identifies what is banished from a worldview through "wilful ignorance" or specialized reductionism, exposing how "thin" technical formalisms create an "Analytical Abyss" (Buch 2026e, p. 3)[28].

5. *Inclusion (Intuition Axis)*: The achievement of a comprehensive "Horizon Worldview" through empathetic *Verstehen* (understanding) and Socratic reflection, restoring "Human Authorship" over social narratives (Buch 2026e, p. 3)[28].



C. Spiral Historiography and the POLICE Diagnostic Framework

To overcome linear, deterministic myths of progress, MICE methodology utilizes Spiral Historiography (Buch 2026b, p. 2; Buch 2026h, p. 4)[6][36]. This non-linear lens "uncoils" repetitive

historical patterns of error by revisiting foundational insights from earlier reforming movements with modern inclusivity (Buch 2026b, p. 2; Buch 2026h, p. 4)[6][36].

To operationalize this uncoiling, MICE deploys the POLICE framework as an "intellectual immune system" for "crap detecting" against institutional myths and "potted thinking" (Buch & Peach 2024, p. 157; Buch 2026b, p. 2)[6]:

- **P (Philosophically):** Interrogating unexamined foundational assumptions (Buch 2026h, p. 5)[38].
- **O (Ontology):** Grounding social theory in the reality of the concrete historical person (Buch 2026h, p. 5)[38].
- **L (Logic):** Exposing systemic contradictions, fallacies, and double ignorance (Buch 2026h, p. 5)[38].
- **I (Intersect):** Bridging local, situated experiences with broader global knowledge (Buch 2026h, p. 5)[38].
- **C (Compatibility):** Fostering ideological compatibilism over polarized culture wars (Buch 2026h, p. 5)[38].
- **E (Education):** Reclaiming lifelong, collaborative, and self-critical learning (Buch 2026h, p. 5)[38].

D. Digital Humanism and Spatial Narrative

MICE operationalizes these theoretical models through Digital Humanism, most prominently instantiated in the *Mapping Brisbane History (MBH)* project (Buch 2025, p. 1; Buch 2026j, p. 1)[19][39]. Clustering data into 67 distinct Local Study Areas (LSAs) across four historical epochs, MBH uses 20-year interval cartographic snapshots (e.g., 1901, 1921, 1941) to spatially represent over 1,060 foundational sites of belief, education, and scholarship (Buch 2025, p. 2; Buch 2026j, p. 1)[39]. This spatial narrative reveals the specific human agency behind urban transformations, transforming local studies from static "folk history" into a dynamic laboratory for social science (Buch 2026j, p. 1)[21][43].

E. The Mind-Body-Cognition Nexus

Underpinning all MICE projects is a triadic model of the human subject that integrates Mind (interiority and reflective consciousness), Body (somatic embodiment), and Cognition (active sensing and reasoning) (Buch 2026h, p. 4)[18][44]. Their intersections generate the vital capacities

of human personhood: Mind and Body yield *Emergence*; Body and Cognition anchor *Disposition* (*habitus*); Mind and Cognition drive *Agency*; and the union of all three yields *Intention*—reinstating the "Historical Person" as an active agent (Buch 2026h, p. 5)[44].

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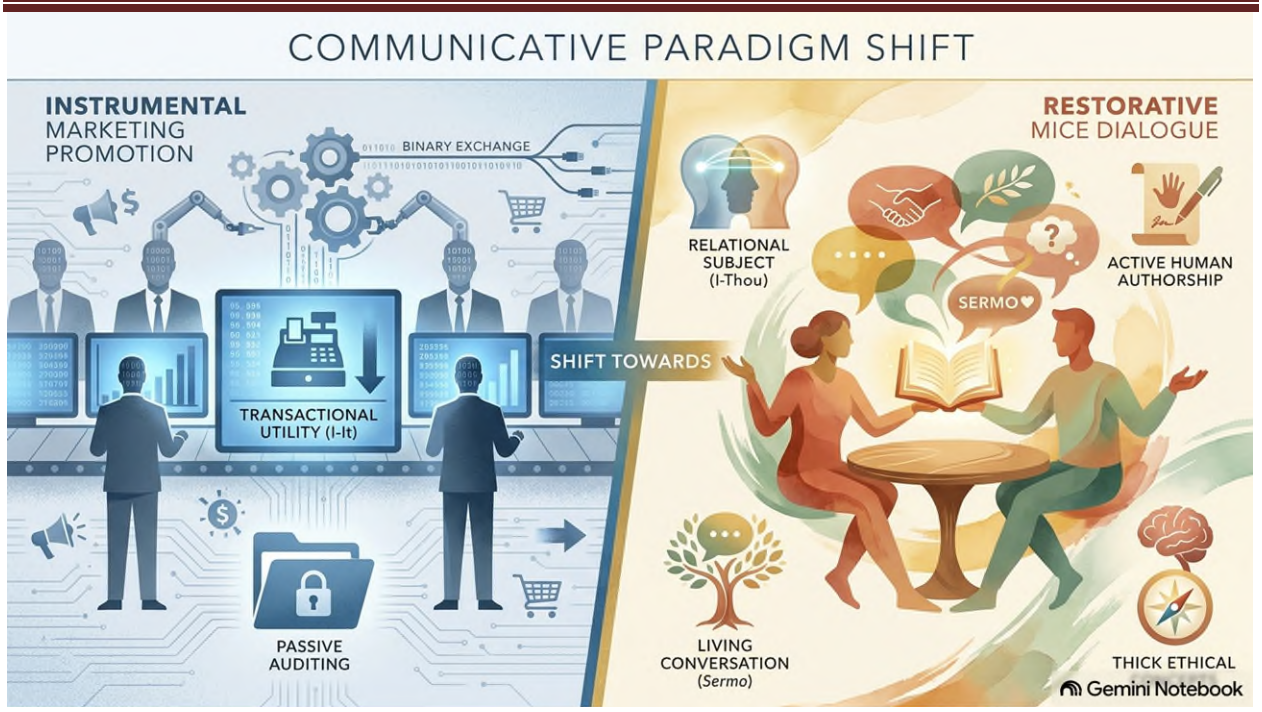
2. How MICE Methodological Projects Can Be Better Communicated

A central critique within MICE scholarship is that modern communication has been "killed" by market fundamentalism, managerialism, and promotional PR tactics (Buch 2026d, p. 1)[45][46]. To communicate MICE Methodological Projects effectively, several strategic communicative shifts are necessary[8]:

A. Replacing Instrumental Promotion with *Sermo* and Dialogical Reciprocity

Modern marketing reduces human discourse to transactional utility, treating audiences as passive "receivers" or consumer-auditors through 4Ps/4Cs promotional frameworks, binary choices (click/scroll, buy/don't buy), and fear-based threat appeals (Buch 2026d, pp. 2–3)[48]. This generates message fatigue and cognitive numbness (Buch 2026d, p. 3)[51].

To communicate MICE projects effectively, engagement must reclaim Renaissance humanist *logos* as *sermo*—dynamic, interpersonal conversation and transformative dialogue (Buch 2026d, p. 2; Buch 2026f, p. 2)[9][52]. Communication must adopt an *I-Thou* relational stance that treats participants as active contributors in a "Goodwill Market" rather than targets of persuasion (Buch 2026d, p. 4; Buch 2026f, p. 5)[53].



B. Resolving Category Errors: Synthesizing Policy Critique and Lived Experience

In academic and public discourse, projects frequently suffer from a "category error" identified in functional sociology—the artificial separation between Function A (objective, generalizable scholarly policy critique) and Function B (personal polemic and lived grievance) (Peach 2025, p. 1; Buch 2026h, p. 3)[56].

MICE projects demonstrate that true communication integrity requires "getting into the shoes of the case" (Peach 2025, p. 1; Buch 2026h, p. 3)[58][59]. Lived experience provides the existential motivation and empirical starting point, while rigorous scholarly methodology provides the communicative scaffolding (Buch 2026h, p. 3)[59]. Communicating MICE projects requires explicitly presenting this synthesis so that policy critiques remain grounded in human realities (Peach 2025, p. 1; Buch 2026h, p. 3)[56][59].

C. Transitioning from "Thin" Formalisms to "Thick" Ethical Concepts

Public communication often fails because it relies on "thin," abstract slogans (e.g., "job readiness" or generic "compliance") stripped of context (Buch 2025, p. 3; Buch 2026d, p. 2)[60][61]. MICE projects must be communicated using thick ethical concepts (a term from Bernard Williams) that seamlessly unite factual evidence with evaluative moral meaning (such as integrity, Socratic care, and educational authorship) (Buch 2025, p. 3; Buch 2026e, p. 2)[33][60].

D. Practicing *Panser*: Thinking as Caring

Communication must embody panser—a concept adapted from Bernard Stiegler where the communicator acts as a *panseur* (healer) who transforms thinking (*penser*) into an act of relational care (Buch 2026d, p. 5; Buch 2026f, p. 5)[10][62]. Through Methodological Tenderness, historical and sociological findings are communicated not as cold technical audits, but as active truth-telling that "tends to social wounds" and restores public trust (Buch 2026b, p. 3; Buch 2026c, p. 2)[63].

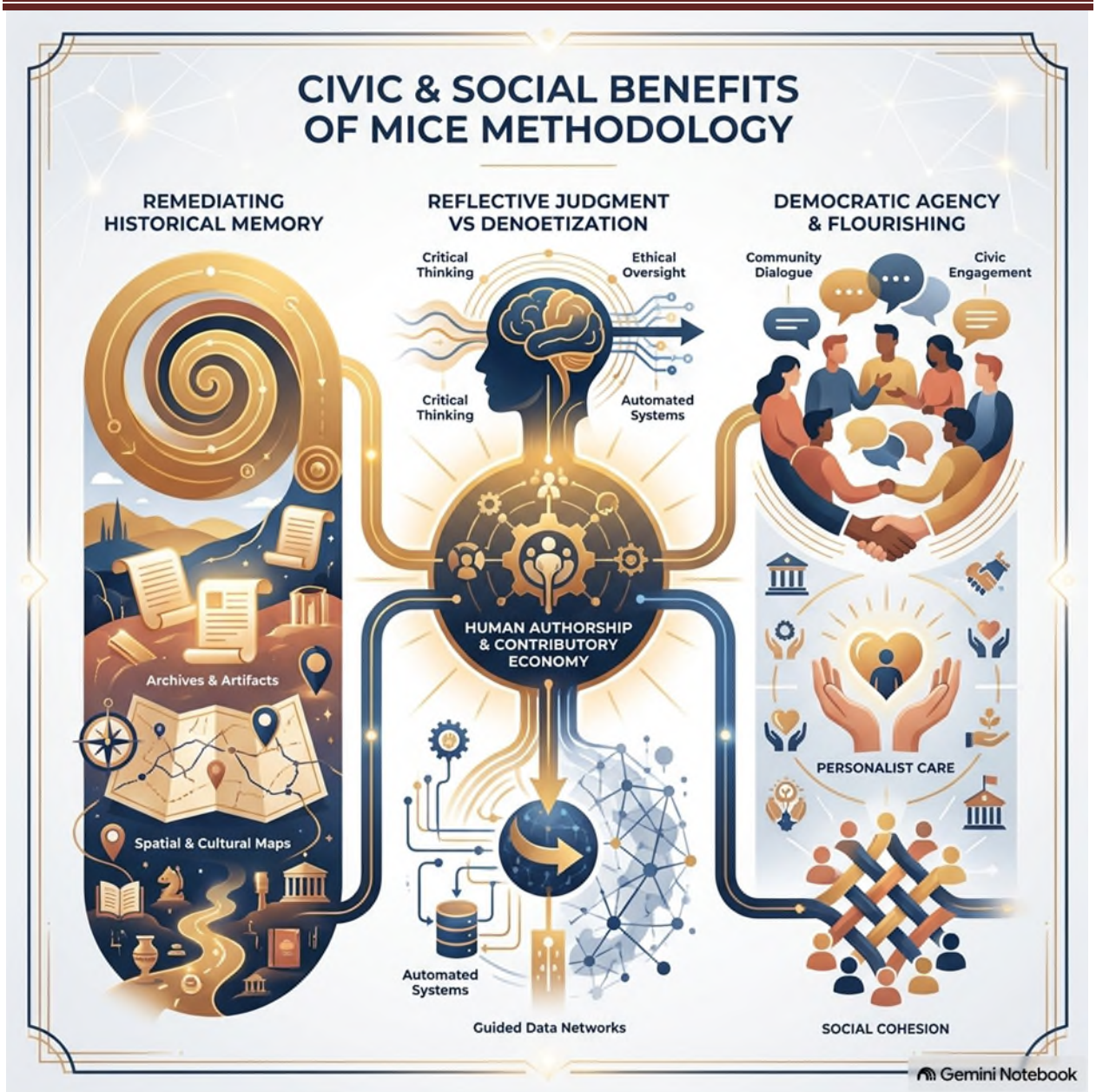
E. Leveraging Digital Humanism and Convivial Learning Networks

Rather than relying on static academic monographs or closed journals, MICE projects can be better communicated through open-access Digital Humanism (Buch 2025, p. 1; Buch 2026b, p. 3)[19][66]. Utilizing interactive digital cartography, community oral history invitations, digital repositories, and decentralized "convivial learning webs" (a concept from Ivan Illich) allows MICE methodology to reach diverse public cohorts—from independent scholars to municipal planners (Buch 2026i, p. 5; Buch 2026j, p. 1)[32][43].

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3. What MICE Methodological Projects Do for Society

MICE Methodological Projects deliver concrete social benefits by operating as a critical infrastructure for public intelligence and civic health[2].



A. Curing "Historical Forgetfulness"

A primary pathology in contemporary governance and culture is Historical Forgetfulness—a systemic amnesia where communities repeat past intellectual, political, and social errors because the origins of their core concepts have been erased from memory (Buch 2026b, p. 2; Buch 2026c, p. 2)[5]. MICE projects function as a "cognitive sonar," uncoiling repetitive patterns of failure and unmasking manufactured political myths (such as the anti-intellectual "Queensland character" myth) to restore historical bearings (Buch 2026b, p. 2; Buch 2026c, p. 2)[6].

B. Countering "Denoetization" and Algorithmic Alienation

Under the pressure of hyper-industrialized attention extraction, market metrics, and generative AI/LLM shortcuts, modern society suffers from denoetization—the mechanical liquidation of human reflective judgment (Buch 2026b, p. 2; Buch 2026g, p. 5)[5]. When individuals outsource memory and synthesis to automated systems, they develop an "algorithmic character" that values speed over critical discernment (Buch 2026g, p. 5; Buch 2026i, p. 1)[69][70]. MICE projects provide an "intellectual immune system" that preserves deep reading, metacognitive monitoring, and independent discernment against "artificial stupidity" (Buch 2026b, p. 2; Buch 2026c, p. 3)[6].

C. Restoring Human Authorship

MICE projects systematically restore Human Authorship—the principle that human beings (*the "Who"*) must remain the proactive, intentional pilots over automated technical, economic, and administrative systems (*the "What"*) (Buch 2026b, p. 2; Buch 2026g, p. 5)[6]. In an era where individuals are reduced to "puny nodes" in data networks or passive consumer-auditors, MICE methodology equips citizens to be the active authors of their shared social and historical reality (Buch 2026c, p. 2; Buch 2026j, p. 2)[39].

D. Unearthing Hidden Histories and Correcting Historical Exclusion

MICE projects like *Mapping Brisbane History* actively remediate Historical Exclusion by mapping sites and narratives omitted from mainstream colonial or commercial histories (Buch 2025, p. 2; Buch 2026j, p. 2)[42][74]. This includes spatializing institutions of cultural and spiritual plurality—such as the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of St Nicholas, the Holland Park Mosque, the Murri School, and 1970s radical communal households like the House of Freedom (HOF)—thereby fostering genuine intercultural reconciliation and democratic participation (Buch 2025, p. 2; Buch 2026j, p. 2)[41].

E. Establishing a Contributory Economy

MICE projects provide the intellectual framework for transitioning from a transactional market economy toward a Contributory Economy (Buch 2026b, p. 5; Buch 2026l, p. 1)[3]. In a Contributory Economy, societal success is not measured by short-term fiscal metrics or narrow "job readiness," but by "truth value," community education, stable externalized memories, and the creation of shared public goods that maximize human flourishing and minimize social harm (Buch 2025, p. 3; Buch 2026l, p. 1)[3].

4. Why MICE Methodological Projects Are Important

The civilizational importance of MICE Methodological Projects extends across political, ethical, and epistemological dimensions[11]:

A. Safeguarding Democracy Against Authoritarian Drift and Anti-Intellectualism

As social theorists like Martha Nussbaum, Richard Hofstadter, and Hannah Arendt have demonstrated, democratic political systems grow fragile, hollow, and vulnerable to authoritarian drift when independent scholarship in the Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) is repressed or reduced to technical calculation (Buch 2026g, p. 1; Buch 2026i, p. 1)[16]. Deprived of critical historical self-awareness, public discourse devolves into paranoid style, manufactured culture wars, and populism (Buch 2026i, p. 1)[81]. MICE projects provide the essential "critical plumbing" required to sustain a free, self-reflective democratic citizenry (Buch 2026i, p. 1)[80].

B. Facilitating Aristotelian Flourishing (*Eudaimonia*)

The ultimate telos of MICE methodology is normative: guiding individuals and communities from a "Junior" state of unreflective compliance to a "Senior" state of social accountability and Aristotelian flourishing (eudaimonia) (Buch 2026b, p. 5; Buch 2026c, p. 3)[11]. By integrating the Five Intentions—Self (identity), Mind (reflective judgment), Reason (logic), Utility (socialized action), and Love (*Panser*)—MICE projects ensure that human energy is directed toward a life of virtue, wisdom, and mutual care (Buch 2025, p. 3; Buch 2026m, p. 4)[76][78].

C. Fostering Ideological Compatibilism and Universal Pragmatics

Contemporary public life is fractured by artificial binaries—such as the sharp opposition between "Secularity and Religion" or "Empirical Science and Human Values" (Buch 2025, p. 2; Buch 2026h, p. 5)[82][83]. Drawing on Jürgen Habermas's theory of Universal Pragmatics and Communicative Action, MICE projects demonstrate that secular and religious worldviews utilize identical neuro-philosophical mechanisms of belief (*creditions*) to reduce uncertainty and construct meaning (Buch 2025, p. 2; Buch 2026m, p. 2)[82]. MICE methodology builds an "Ideological Compatibilism" where diverse belief systems engage in unforced, rational dialogue aimed at mutual understanding (*Verständigung*) for the common good (Buch 2025, p. 2; Buch 2026h, p. 5)[38][82].

D. Maintaining Epistemological Ballast

While MICE projects engage in vigorous social critique, they maintain rigorous academic standards by employing Allan Megill's four historical tasks—description, explanation, argument, and interpretation—as "epistemological ballast" (Buch 2026b, p. 3; Buch 2026c, p. 3)[66]. This

ballast ensures that digital humanism and social interventions remain disciplined, objective defences of truth against both dogmatic absolutism and radical postmodern skepticism (Buch 2026b, p. 3; Buch 2026c, p. 3)[66].

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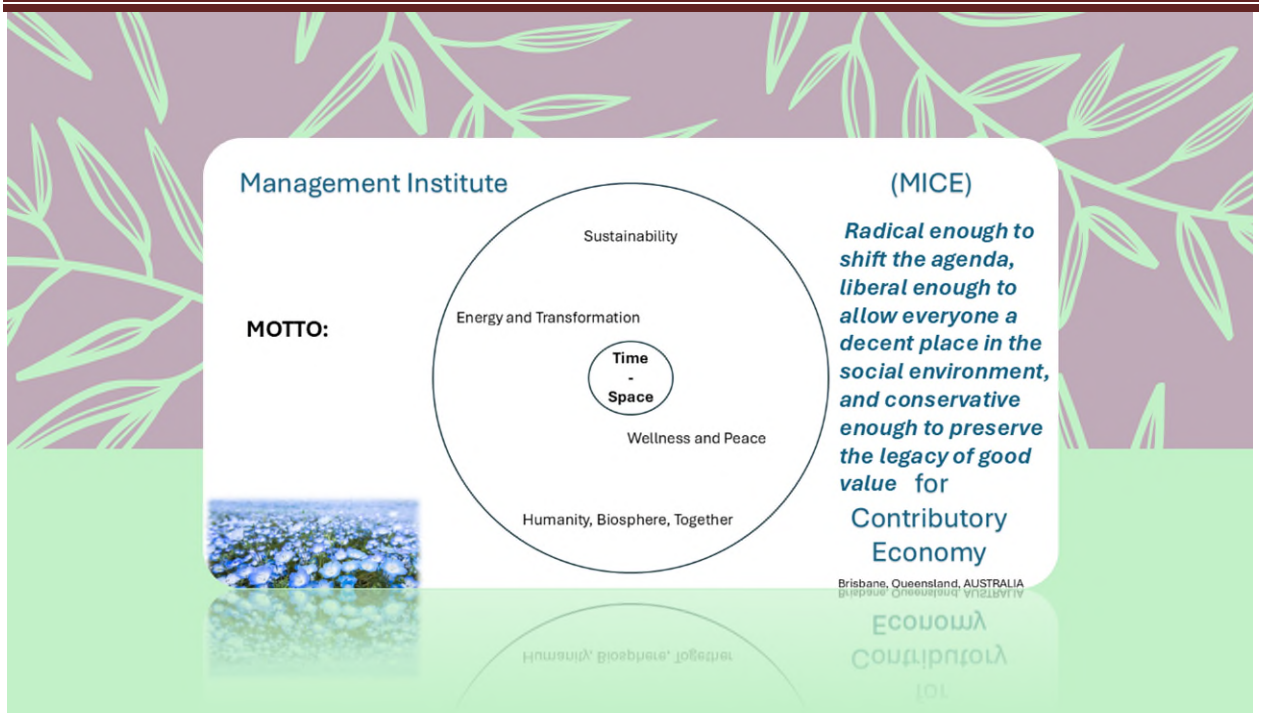
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