The Guardians of Memory: Spiral Historiography, Professional Historians, and the Preservation of Global Liberty

Dr Neville Buch and MICE[1]

Abstract

This essay analyses the global problem-challenge revealed in Danielle Paquette's (2026) report on a Statue of Liberty tour guide in New York—namely, the systemic pressure to sanitize, "fudge," and commercialize historical narratives into upbeat, palatable folklore amidst political polarization, xenophobic enforcement, and historical amnesia. Drawing on the post-post-postmodernist framework of the Management Institute for Contributory Economy (MICE) and the scholarship of Dr. Neville Buch, this paper demonstrates: (1) how Spiral Historiography proves that fudging or sanitizing historical accounts is an intellectual vice and cognitive pathology ("Historical Forgetfulness") that traps societies in "vicious circles of stupidity"; (2) how human liberty inherently depends on the rigorous labour of professional historians who safeguard the democratic lifeworld from authoritarian myth-

[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.

making and algorithmic "denoetization"; (3) what professional historians actively do to promote liberty (unearthing suppressed historical realities, applying Allan Megill's abductive inference, practicing "methodological tenderness" / panser, and constructing digital humanism "we-spaces"); and (4) why professional historians ought to be paid through MICE's non-extractive Contributory Income Scheme to liberate historical scholarship from commercial tourism, political gatekeeping, and "job-ready" vocational reductionism.

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1. Introduction: The Global Problem-Challenge of Historical Sanitization in Paquette (2026)

In contemporary public discourse, history is frequently reduced to a transactional consumer product—a cheerful backdrop for tourism, nationalistic propaganda, or corporate branding. Danielle Paquette's (2026) article in *The Washington Post*, *"Her Statue of Liberty tour was supposed to be upbeat. Then she erupted,"* vividly illustrates the profound global problem-challenge that arises when historical truth encounters the oppressive realities of modern political overreach and commercialized historical amnesia.



Paquette (2026, pp. 1–3) follows Isabelle Garbani, a 59-year-old French-born tour guide leading visitors across New York Harbor to Liberty Island and Ellis Island. To survive financially in New

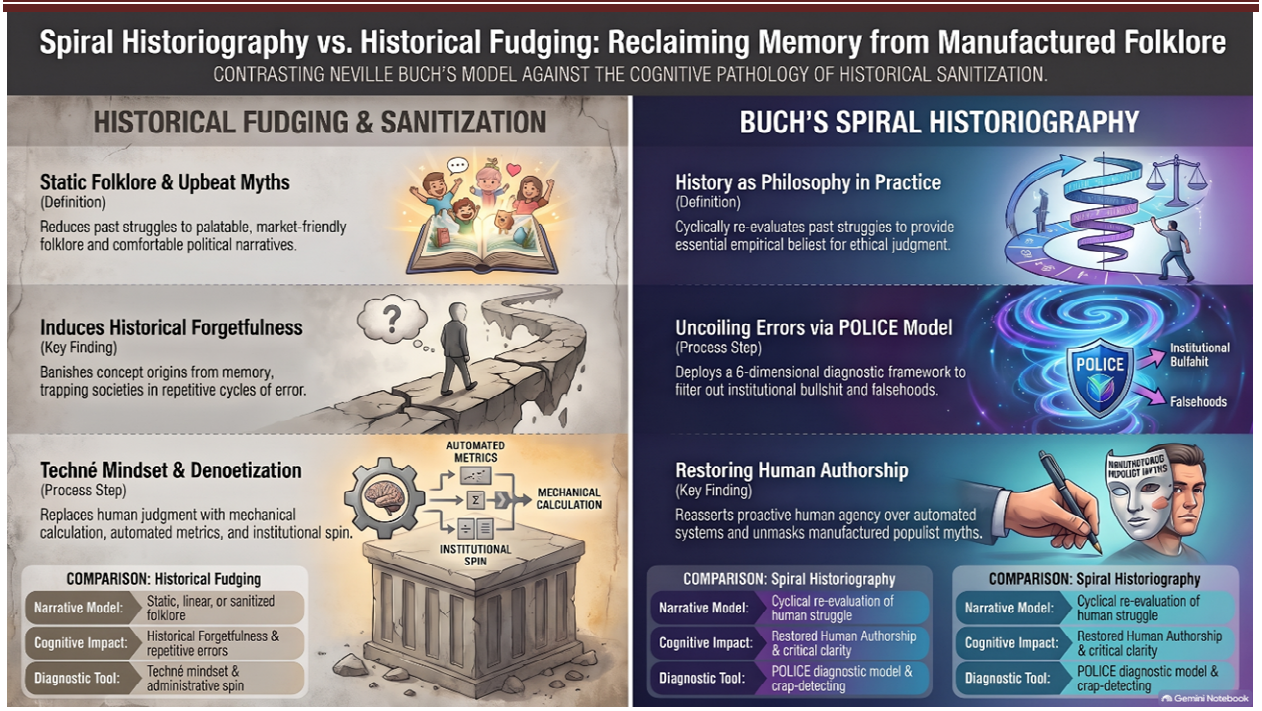
York's precarious gig economy, Garbani relies on $396 four-hour private tours, where her income depends entirely on maintaining five-star customer reviews by projecting a “cheerful,” “approachable,” and “fun” persona (Paquette 2026, p. 1). However, as federal immigration authorities in 2026 carry out mass deportations, arrest individuals outside courthouses without warrants, and use lethal force against unarmed immigrants, Garbani finds herself unable to reconcile the sanitized, “upbeat” historical script of Lady Liberty with the lived realities of state coercion happening 14 miles away (Paquette 2026, pp. 1–4).

When Garbani breaks character on Ellis Island—abandoning her scripted “Ellis Island spiel” to inform startled tourists about the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the racial quota laws of 1924, and contemporary federal enforcement abuses—she exposes a deep civilisational rift (Paquette 2026, pp. 4–5). The global problem-challenge revealed in Paquette (2026) is the systemic sanitization and “fudging” of historical memory. When society demands that history remain “upbeat,” “painless,” and entertaining, it transforms historical monuments into what Dr Neville Buch terms a “metaphysics of appearance” and a “tourist attitude toward existence” (Buch 2026a, pp. 9, 31). Fudging history to avoid unsettling consumers or political authorities induces a state of Historical Forgetfulness, leaving citizens disarmed against authoritarian overreach, digital misinformation, and democratic regression (Buch 2026e, p. 125; Paquette 2026, p. 2).

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2. Point 1: How Spiral Historiography Makes it Very Incorrect to Fudge Historical Accounts

To understand why “fudging” or sanitizing historical accounts is an intellectual error, one must examine the methodological framework of Spiral Historiography, developed by Dr Neville Buch within the Management Institute for Contributory Economy (MICE) (Buch 2025b, p. 1; Buch 2026c, p. 1; Buch 2026e, p. 121).



A. The Axiom: History as Philosophy in Practice

Spiral Historiography operates on the foundational axiom that *"understanding history is philosophy in practice"* (Buch 2025b, p. 1; Buch 2026c, p. 1; Buch 2026e, p. 124). Contrary to postmodern relativism—which treats history as mere subjective storytelling—and linear modernist dogmatism—which assumes uninterrupted upward progress—Spiral Historiography is a post-post-postmodernist methodology (Buch 2025b, p. 1; Buch 2026e, p. 146). It posits that historical data provides the essential, non-negotiable empirical ballast for all ethical, political, and social judgment (Buch 2026d, p. 2; Buch 2026e, p. 139).

B. Remediating Historical Forgetfulness and the "Spiral of Stupidity"

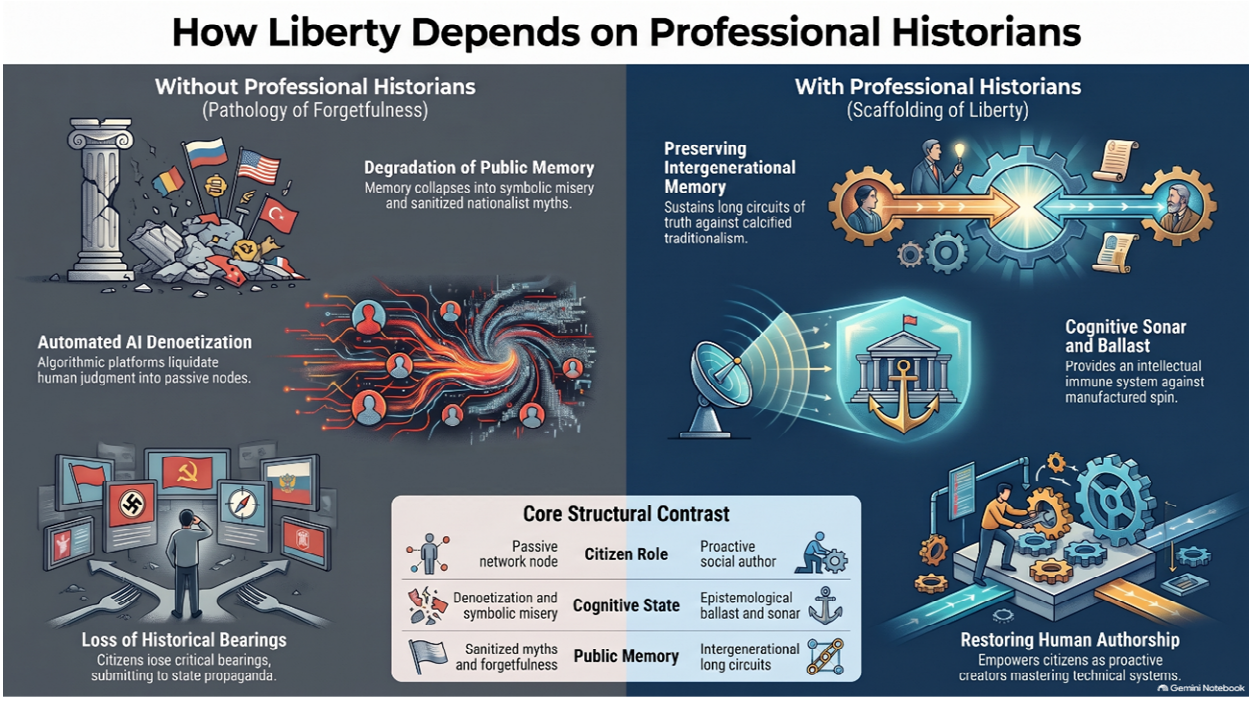
When tour guides, politicians, or educational boards "fudge" historical accounts—omitting state violence, racial exclusion, or labour struggles to produce a comfortable narrative—they trigger a systemic cognitive pathology known as Historical Forgetfulness (Buch 2026a, p. 17; Buch 2026c, p. 2; Buch 2026e, p. 125). Buch defines Historical Forgetfulness as the active intellectual vice where a population forgets the origins and historical struggles of its core concepts, causing society to get "stuck in time-space" and repeat past intellectual errors in a "vicious spiral of stupidity" (Buch 2026c, p. 2; Buch 2026e, p. 146).

As mapped in the MICE **Dynamic of Cognition (DoC)** matrix, fudging historical accounts replaces "Historical Reason" with a "Techné Mindset" and "Widely-Believed Falsehoods" (Buch 2026a, p. 7; Buch 2026e, p. 128). In the American context shown in Paquette (2026, p. 2), the "fudged" myth that *"my ancestors followed the rules"* conceals the fact that pre-1924 immigration operated without modern screening systems, visa restrictions, or border patrols (Paquette 2026, pp. 2–5). By uncoiling these manufactured myths through the **POLICE model** (**P**hilosophically, **O**ntology, **L**ogic, **I**ntersect, **C**ompatibility, **E**ducation), Spiral Historiography proves that fudging history destroys a society's "intellectual immune system," rendering citizens vulnerable to populist propaganda and state coercion (Buch & Peach 2024; Buch 2026e, p. 145).

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3. Point 2: How Liberty Depends on the Work of Professional Historians

Human liberty is not an abstract, self-sustaining natural state; it is a fragile, historically contingent achievement that depends directly on the rigorous labour of professional historians (Pettit 1997, p. 12; Allen 2021; Buch 2021, pp. 1–3).



A. Republican Liberty and Non-Domination

Drawing on Philip Pettit's (1997) neo-republican theory of freedom as **non-domination** and Danielle Allen's (2021) civic philosophy, Buch emphasizes that true liberty requires protection from arbitrary power and state surveillance (Pettit 1997, p. 21; Allen 2021; Buch 2021, p. 1).

Citizens cannot detect or resist arbitrary power if they do not understand the historical mechanisms through which power operates.

When historical scholarship is suppressed, state authorities and corporate platforms step into the void, constructing "toxic social scripts" and "propaganda imaginaries" that manipulate public fears (Buch 2026e, pp. 141, 144). In Paquette (2026, p. 2), political actors deploy anti-immigrant rhetoric ("poisoning the blood of our country") to justify warrantless raids. Without professional historians to provide accurate contextual memory, citizens lack the critical tools needed to challenge these authoritarian manoeuvres (Buch 2021, p. 3; Paquette 2026, p. 2).

B. Rescuing Society from Denoetization and "Symbolic Misery"

Furthermore, in an era dominated by high-speed algorithmic platforms and generative AI, society suffers from what French philosopher Bernard Stiegler and Dr Neville Buch call **denoetization**—the mechanical liquidation of the collective capacity to think and judge (Stiegler 2018; Buch 2026e, p. 125). Denoetization induces "symbolic misery," reducing human beings to passive "puny nodes" in automated networks (Stiegler 2018; Buch 2026e, p. 127).

Professional historians act as a vital "cognitive sonar" and an "intellectual immune system" for democracy (Buch 2026d, p. 1; Buch 2026e, p. 136). By preserving intergenerational "long circuits" of memory, historians maintain the "historical a priori" required for Habermasian communicative action, ensuring that citizens retain the intellectual capacity for self-governance and moral agency (Habermas 1979; Stiegler 2010; Buch 2026e, p. 135). Liberty, therefore, cannot survive the demise of professional history.

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4. Point 3: What Professional Historians Do to Promote Liberty

Professional historians—such as certified members of Professional Historians Australia (MPHA)—do not merely collect dusty artifacts; they perform four distinct, active operations to promote public liberty:



1. **Restorative Truth-Telling and Unmasking Manufactured Myths:** Professional historians actively dismantle state-sponsored propaganda and "upbeat" folklore. Whether unearthing the realities of colonial frontier violence in Queensland or exposing the legislative cruelty of the 1924 U.S. immigration quotas, historians replace "thin," sanitized myths with "thick," multi-textured historical truth (Paquette 2026, p. 5; Buch 2026c, p. 3; Buch 2026e, p. 142).

2. **Practicing Methodological Tenderness (*Panser*):** In the MICE framework, the historian is redefined as a *panseur* (healer) who practices Methodological Tenderness (Stiegler 2018; Buch 2026d, p. 2). By carefully researching marginalized communities, forgotten radical movements, and dispossessed First Nations peoples, professional historians "tend to social wounds," restoring historical dignity to those who have been erased by elite power (Buch 2026d, p. 2; Buch 2026e, p. 165).

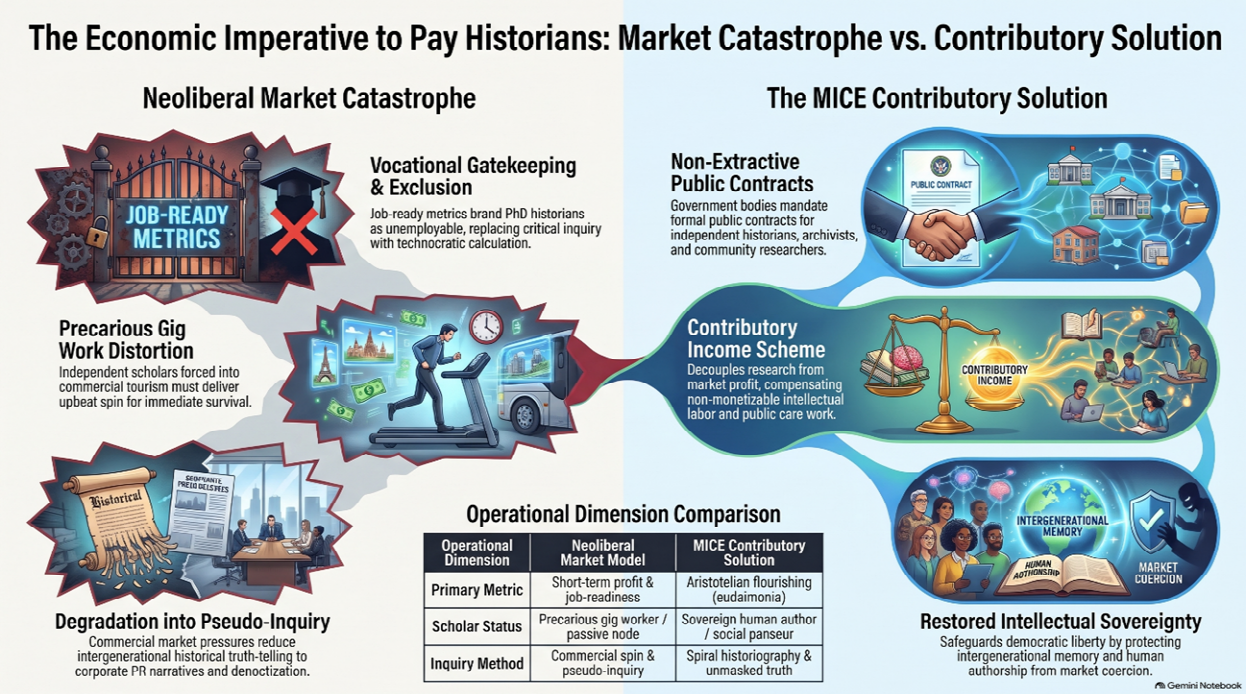
3. **Constructing Digital Humanism and Oppositional Public Spheres:** Through place-based historical initiatives—such as Dr Neville Buch's Mapping Brisbane History (MBH) Project—professional historians map specific human agency across physical space (Buch 2026c, p. 5; Buch 2026d, p. 2). By spatializing historical memory, historians construct "oppositional democratic public spheres" and communicative "we-spaces" where citizens reciprocally evaluate Habermasian validity claims of truth, rightness, and sincerity (Habermas 1979; Buch 2026e, p. 70).

4. **Providing Epistemological Ballast through Abductive Inference:** Drawing on Allan Megill's (2007) *Historical Knowledge, Historical Error*, professional historians enforce strict disciplinary standards, integrating four distinct tasks: description, explanation, argument, and interpretation (Megill 2007, p. 84; Buch 2026d, p. 2). This abductive, error-correcting methodology provides the "epistemological ballast" required to filter out political spin, corporate "bullshit," and administrative "satisficing" (Frankfurt 2005; Megill 2007; Simon 1957; Buch 2026d, p. 2).

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5. Point 4: Why Professional Historians Ought to be Paid for This Work

Despite performing an indispensable public service, professional historians face a catastrophic structural crisis in contemporary society (Buch 2020, p. 4; Buch 2025e, pp. 1–3; Buch 2026a, p. 21).



A. The Collapse of Scholar Employment and the Market Trap

In his treatise *"Why not job? The Crisis of Scholar Employment,"* Dr Neville Buch diagnoses how neoliberal economic rationalism and university "job-ready" metrics have decimated humanities scholarship (Buch 2020, p. 4; Buch 2025e, p. 1). Access to paid academic labour is increasingly controlled by corporate gatekeepers who prioritize "political labour"—organizational manoeuvring and grant-hunting—over deep historical production (Buch 2025e, p. 2; Haack 2018,

p. 215). Highly trained PhD historians are routinely discarded as “unemployable” because their critical work cannot be monetized through short-term transactional metrics (Buch 2025e, p. 1; Buch 2026a, p. 21).

When professional historians are denied non-extractive public funding, they are forced into the market trap demonstrated in Paquette (2026, p. 2). Isabelle Garbani, holding a Master of Fine Arts, must rely on improvisational tour-guiding to pay rent for her apartment, leaving her vulnerable to customer complaints if her historical accounts clash with tourists' political biases (Paquette 2026, p. 2). When historical truth is forced to compete in a commercial market, it degenerates into what Charles Sanders Peirce and Susan Haack term “pseudo-inquiry”—fake research designed to cater to customer satisfaction or institutional branding rather than uncover truth (Peirce 1879, p. 198; Haack 2018, p. 215; Buch 2026g, p. 1).

B. The MICE Solution: Contributory Income for Intellectual Sovereignty

To liberate professional historians from commercial coercion and political gatekeeping, the Management Institute for Contributory Economy (MICE) advocates for the Contributory Income Scheme (Stiegler 2010; Buch 2025e, p. 3; Buch 2026e, p. 75; Jameel & Buch 2026, p. 10). MICE argues that professional historical research, local archiving, and care work (*panser*) produce vast, non-monetizable positive externalities that sustain the democratic lifeworld (Buch 2026e, p. 75; Jameel 2026b, p. 1).

Under the Contributory Economy framework, municipal councils, state governments, and public institutes must contract independent professional historians under formal public agreements, providing guaranteed, non-extractive Contributory Income (Buch 2025e, p. 3; Jameel & Buch 2026, p. 10). Paying professional historians for their labour guarantees their Intellectual Sovereignty, ensuring they can research, publish, and educate without fear of eviction, customer retaliation, or political censorship (Buch 2026d, p. 1; Buch 2026g, p. 2). Paying historians is not a charitable concession; it is a vital public investment in the cognitive scaffolding of human liberty.

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6. Conclusion

Danielle Paquette’s (2026) reporting on the Statue of Liberty tour guide provides a striking warning of what happens when historical memory is forced to be “upbeat,” cheerful, and commercially compliant in an era of encroaching state power. When history is fudged to entertain consumers, society succumbs to Historical Forgetfulness, losing the critical bearings required to defend human rights.

Through Dr. Neville Buch's Spiral Historiography, MICE proves that fudging historical accounts is an intellectual error that traps communities in repetitive loops of stupidity. Human liberty depends directly on professional historians who act as an intellectual immune system, applying abductive rigor, unearthing suppressed truths, and practicing methodological tenderness to heal social wounds.

To safeguard this democratic function, society must move beyond neoliberal market reductionism and institutionalize MICE's Contributory Income Scheme. By compensating professional historians for their vital public labour, we secure their intellectual sovereignty, protect public memory from commercial corruption, and build a flourishing Contributory City of Intellect where history is practiced as philosophy, and human liberty remains firmly anchored in truth and Aristotelian *eudaimonia*.

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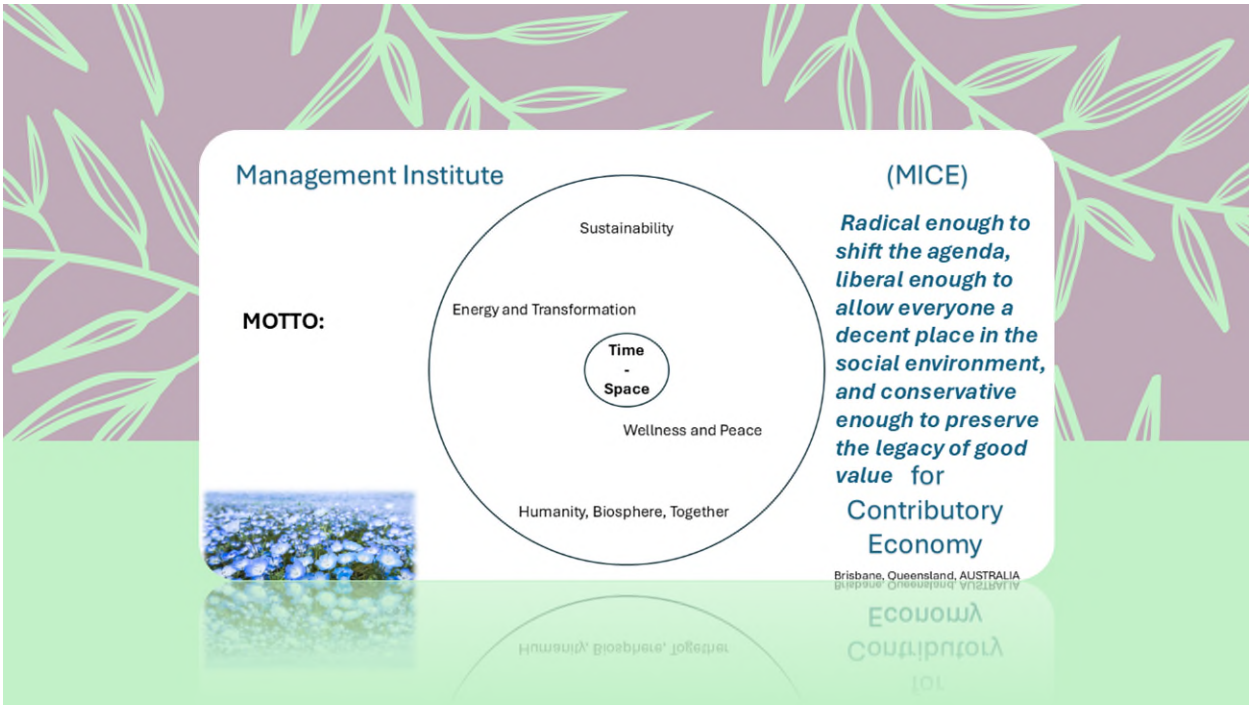
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