



## Reclaiming the Narrative: An Epistemological Analysis of Integrating Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into the History Curriculum under NEP 2020

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### Abstract

This research article theorises the systemic integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) within the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as a decisive intervention against the enduring coloniality of the Indian historical consciousness. For nearly two centuries, the discipline of history in the subcontinent has been defined by a ‘Macaulayan rupture’, institutionalising a Eurocentric teleology that rendered indigenous epistemologies as stagnant or mythical. This study critically evaluates the structural and philosophical reconstitution of history education as operationalised through the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023 and the Higher Education Credit Frameworks. Utilising Critical Policy Discourse Analysis (CPDA), the research deconstructs a stratified corpus of state directives to investigate the transition from a contributionist heritage model to a ‘hard epistemology’ framework. The study employs a decolonial theoretical lens—drawing upon the concepts of ‘Ontological Sovereignty’ and ‘Cognitive Justice’ to analyse how the integration of IKS dismantles colonial periodisation and re-centres indigenous agency. Crucially, the paper argues that this reclaim is not merely an elite-nativist project but a recovery of diverse subaltern knowledges, ranging from artisanal metallurgy to community-led water management. The findings suggest that India’s transition towards a ‘Pluriversal Modernity’ offers a scalable template for the Global South to reclaim intellectual sovereignty. This study concludes that the cultivation of a ‘Globalised Indian Mind’ is essential for fostering a multipolar historical canon that recognises the diversity of human reason.

**Keywords:** *NEP 2020, Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), Decoloniality, Cognitive Justice, Historiography, NCF 2023, Epistemicide, Pluriversality, Ontological Sovereignty.*

### I. Introduction: The Epistemic Break and the Decolonial Turn

The architectural landscape of Indian historical consciousness has, for nearly two centuries, been defined by a profound ‘epistemic break’—a structural alienation from its indigenous intellectual and philosophical lineages. This rupture was formally codified through Thomas Babington Macaulay’s *Minute on Indian Education* (1835), a seminal document that functioned as a tool of ‘epistemic violence’ (Spivak, 1988). Macaulay’s objective was not merely the introduction of the English language, but the systematic dismantling of the Indian pedagogical psyche to create a class of intermediaries ‘Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect’ (Macaulay, 1835, p. 11). By dismissively asserting that a ‘single shelf of a good European library’ was worth more than the entire native literature of India and Arabia, the colonial project institutionalised a Eurocentric historiography that relegated Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) to the realm of the pre-logical, the mythical, or the static.



The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents a radical departure from this Macaulayan legacy, signalling a ‘decolonial turn’ in Indian pedagogy. It mandates a comprehensive integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into the national curriculum, not as a peripheral elective or a romanticised return to antiquity, but as a core epistemological framework. IKS is defined here as a living, multidisciplinary tradition; incorporating linguistics (*Vyakarana*), logic (*Nyaya*), mathematics (*Ganita*), and ethics (*Dharma-Sastra*) that offers a continuous thread of inquiry from the Vedic period through the medieval era into the modern age. This policy initiative seeks to achieve ‘cognitive justice’ (Visvanathan, 2009), asserting that indigenous knowledge has the inherent right to coexist with, and challenge, Western-universalist paradigms.

Within the discipline of History, this shift necessitates a critical re-evaluation of how ‘The Idea of India’ is constructed. For decades, Indian historiography has been dominated by a top-down linear narrative, often restricted by Western periodisation and Marxist-materialist frameworks that have struggled to account for the intellectual complexities of the subcontinental past. Consequently, this research article seeks to examine the extent to which the integration of IKS under NEP 2020 dismantles the established historiographical hierarchies that have historically marginalised indigenous agency. Significantly, this reclaim is not limited to classical textual traditions; it encompasses the empirical knowledges of the *Shramic* (labour) and artisanal traditions—metallurgists, weavers, and farmers, whose cognitive contributions were doubly erased by colonial bias and internal social rigidities.

The significance of this inquiry is heightened by India’s current transition into *Amrit Kaal*, the decisive twenty-five-year period leading to the centenary of its independence. In this era, the quest for *Atmanirbharta* (self-reliance) is increasingly centred on ‘Educational Sovereignty’. As India seeks to redefine its role as a *Vishwa Guru* (global mentor) in a multipolar world, the reclamation of its historical narrative is not merely a nationalist endeavour; it is a contribution to a ‘pluriversal’ global history (Mignolo, 2011). By integrating IKS, the NEP 2020 aims to produce a ‘Globalised Indian Mind’, one that is intellectually rooted in its own soil while remaining proficient in the discourse of global modernity.

## II. Theoretical Framework: Decoloniality, Cognitive Justice, and Epistemic Reflexivity

The analytical architecture of this study is situated at the intersection of three robust theoretical domains: the Decoloniality framework of the Global South, the principle of Cognitive Justice, and the critique of Epistemic Violence. These theories provide the heuristics necessary to evaluate the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) not as a nostalgic revival, but as a critical intervention in the global ‘geopolitics of knowledge’.

### 1. From Post-colonialism to Decoloniality

While post-colonialism focuses on the cultural legacy of empire (Said, 1978), ‘decoloniality’ represents a more fundamental rupture. Grounded in the work of Quijano (2000) and Mignolo (2011), this framework distinguishes between *colonialism* (the historical administration) and *coloniality* (the enduring ‘darker side’ of modernity). The ‘coloniality of knowledge’ refers to the ontological hegemony of Eurocentric paradigms that classify non-Western epistemologies as ‘past’ or ‘mythic’.

Mignolo (2009) argues that Western modernity is contingent upon the silencing of other ways of knowing. Therefore, the integration of IKS under NEP 2020 is framed here as an

act of **epistemic disobedience**. It seeks to ‘delink’ the Indian historical consciousness from the universal linear time of the West, asserting ‘Pluriversality’, a world where many intellectual worlds can coexist on equal terms.

## 2. Cognitive Justice and Internal Reflexivity

To move beyond a ‘contributionist’ approach, this paper employs Visvanathan’s (2009) concept of **Cognitive Justice**, which demands the recognition of the right of different forms of knowledge to exist simultaneously. However, a world-class decolonial project must also apply ‘Epistemic Reflexivity’ to avoid the trap of ‘elite nativism’.

Historical IKS in India was often mediated through social hierarchies. A truly decolonial historiography must, therefore, be intersectional; recovering not only the classical Sanskritic traditions but also the ‘knowledges of the *Shramic* (labour) and subaltern’. This involves recognising that the metallurgical sophistication of pre-colonial India was the intellectual property of artisanal communities, and that traditional medicine often resided in the community practices of women and forest-dwellers. By centring these internal heterodoxies, the NEP 2020 framework can facilitate a ‘politics of recognition’ (Taylor, 1994) that is inclusive of the diverse regional and social histories of the subcontinent.

## 3. Deconstructing Epistemic Violence

The framework utilises Spivak’s (1988) critique of **Epistemic Violence** to analyse the silencing of the subaltern through Western discursive practices. In Indian historiography, this violence manifested in the systematic categorisation of indigenous achievements as ‘irrational’. By utilising these three theoretical pillars, the research examines how the current curriculum reform seeks to ‘re-map’ the Indian past, restoring agency to indigenous actors across the social spectrum.

### III. Methodology: Critical Policy Discourse Analysis (CPDA)

This research is conducted through the lens of **Critical Policy Discourse Analysis (CPDA)**, which conceptualises policy as a ‘discursive construction’ that orchestrates power-knowledge relations (Ball, 1993; Fairclough, 2013).

#### 1. The Tripartite Document Corpus

The study analyses a stratified corpus of state directives representing the journey from vision to implementation:

- **Macro-Level (Visionary):** The *National Education Policy (NEP) 2020*, analysed for its overarching philosophical shift.
- **Meso-Level (Structural):** The *UGC’s Curriculum and Credit Framework (CCFUP)*, which translates policy into institutional degree requirements.
- **Micro-Level (Pedagogical):** The *National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023*, specifically the Social Science segment, to examine the granular reordering of historical content.

#### 2. Intertextual Keyword Analysis: 2005 vs. 2023

A core methodological innovation in this study is the **Intertextual Keyword Comparison**. By identifying the frequency and context of specific terms in the NCF 2005 versus the NCF 2023, the research maps the shifting ‘regime of truth’ (Foucault, 1980).

Feature	NCF 2005 (Legacy Framework)	NCF 2023 (IKS Framework)
Primary Theme	Social Harmony & National Identity	Epistemic Rootedness & IKS
View of India	A ‘Diversity’ to be managed	A ‘Civilizational State’ to be



		reclaimed
History Marker	1757 (Colonial Modernity)	Indigenous Evolution (Longue Durée)
Scientific Role	Western Science (Standard)	IKS as 'Hard Epistemology'

This comparative mapping allows the researcher to identify 'Epistemological Silences' in previous frameworks where indigenous agency was omitted, and 'Emergent Themes' in the current reform where IKS is newly prioritised as a verifiable academic discipline. Through this CPDA framework, the study provides a nuanced critique, distinguishing between authentic reclamation and the potential for ideological instrumentalisation.

#### IV. Historiographical Evolution: From Colonial Archive to Indigenous Emic

The evolution of Indian historiography represents a profound epistemological transition from the 'Colonial Archive', a site of surveillance and erasure, to an 'Indigenous Emic' framework that seeks the recovery of civilisational agency. To appreciate the mandate of NEP 2020, one must deconstruct the layered hegemonies that have historically dictated the boundaries of the 'attainable past' in the Indian context.

##### 1. The Colonial-Marxist Synthesis: The Archive as an Epistemic Filter

The foundational structures of modern Indian history were constructed upon what may be termed 'epistemological distrust'. James Mill's *The History of British India* (1817) institutionalised a teleological bias that defined 'History' strictly as linear, secular, and documented in state archives. Because Indian intellectual traditions, codified as *Itihasa-Purana*, utilised allegorical, poetic, and cyclical modes of transmission, colonial scholars dismissed them as 'fable' rather than 'fact'. This created a hierarchy of evidence where the colonial archive was positioned as the sole arbiter of truth, effectively 'silencing' (Trouillot, 1995) the indigenous intellectual voice.

In the post-1947 era, this structural distrust was inherited and refined by the Marxist-Modernist school. While Marxist historiography (e.g., Kosambi, 1956; Thapar, 1966) provided invaluable insights into socio-economic structures and 'modes of production', it frequently operated within a Eurocentric developmentalist paradigm. Within this framework, IKS was often relegated to the 'ideological superstructure'; viewed as a tool of class domination rather than a rigorous, empirical epistemology. Crucially, this period often overlooked the 'Artisanal Archive', the sophisticated knowledge systems of India's guilds and labouring classes whose contributions to metallurgy and textiles were treated as accidental rather than the result of a deliberate 'Shramic' science.

##### 2. Deconstructing the 'Three-Period Fallacy'

A pivotal critique offered by the IKS framework concerns the 'Three-Period Fallacy' the communal division of Indian history into 'Hindu', 'Muslim', and 'British' eras. This periodisation imposed a religious rupture onto a civilisational continuum. The integration of IKS under NEP 2020 proposes a shift towards **Thematic and Civilisational Continuity**. For instance, the transmission of mathematical concepts from Aryabhata (5th Century) to the Kerala School of Astronomy (14th Century) demonstrates a narrative of cognitive persistence that transcends communal timelines. This approach reframes India as a 'Civilisational State' defined by a shared epistemological core rather than fluctuating political borders.

##### 3. The Dharampal Intervention: Recovery of Agency

The scholarly justification for this shift finds its catalyst in the 'Emic' (insider) turn, most notably through the work of Dharampal (1983). By mining British colonial archives,



Dharampal's *The Beautiful Tree* provided empirical evidence that a sophisticated, decentralised, and indigenous system of multidisciplinary education existed across the subcontinent before 1835. This was not a 'pre-modern' vacuum but a highly functional system of cognitive justice that NEP 2020 seeks to restore.

## V. Policy Analysis: The Structural Architecture of Legislated Epistemology

The transition of IKS from the margins to the curricular core is facilitated by a 'statutory imperative'—a state-led reorganisation of the hierarchy of knowledge. Within NEP 2020, IKS is an 'epistemic anchor' for the 21st-century Indian student.

### 1. Statutory Mandates: Sections 4.27 and 11.2

The institutional legitimacy of IKS is codified through a bifurcated framework. **Section 4.27** (School Education) mandates the integration of 'traditional knowledge of India' into the foundational stages of schooling. This represents an attempt at 'early-stage cognitive rooting', ensuring that the student's primary encounter with the world is filtered through indigenous conceptual categories before being exposed to Western paradigms. In Higher Education, **Section 11.2** functions as the catalyst for 'Institutional Isomorphism', compelling universities to align their historical departments with the IKS framework through credit-based mandates in the *Curriculum and Credit Framework for Undergraduate Programmes* (CCFUP).

### 2. NCF 2023 and the Chronopolitics of Modernity

The most significant historiographical intervention occurs within the **National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023**. Here, the policy engages in **Chronopolitics**—the use of time as an instrument of agency. For two centuries, Indian historiography has been anchored to 1757 (the Battle of Plassey) as the absolute rupture marking the transition to the 'Modern'. The NCF 2023 critiques this as a teleological fallacy that equates modernity exclusively with European intervention.

By de-centring 1757, the framework recovers a 'lost century' of indigenous evolution. It reframes the 18th Century as a period of indigenous political experimentation and scientific inquiry (e.g., the astronomical innovations of Jai Singh II). This structural shift dismantles the 'stagnation-rescue' narrative, asserting that India's movement towards modernity was an internal civilisational trajectory.

### 3. The National Research Foundation (NRF): Epistemic Validation

A world-class research policy requires the 'validation of truth' through empirical research. The establishment of the **National Research Foundation (NRF)** serves as the intellectual engine for this validation. By allocating resources to IKS-based historical inquiry, the NRF seeks to bridge the gap between tradition and peer-reviewed science. This ensures that the history being taught is not merely a nationalist narrative but is backed by a global standard of evidence, shielding the reform from charges of 'unscientific glorification'.

## VI. The Tri-Axial Framework of IKS Integration: Reconstructing Civilisational Agency

The substantive heart of the NEP 2020's pedagogical reform lies in the transition from a history of 'dynastic events' to a history of 'epistemic and systemic evolution'. This is operationalised through a tri-axial framework designed to dismantle the Eurocentric 'stagnation narrative' by restoring the cognitive, political, and ecological agency of Indian civilisation. Crucially, this framework seeks to bridge the gap between classical textual knowledge and the 'Shramic' (labour-based) expertise of the artisanal classes.



### 1. Pillar I: Scientific Rationalism and the ‘Shramic’ Intellectual Tradition

The most pervasive erasure in colonial historiography was the delegitimation of Indian scientific inquiry, which was historically categorised as either serendipitous discovery or ‘theological mysticism’. To counter this, the new curriculum integrates the history of science as a rigorous, empirical tradition rooted in the *Pramana Shastra* (the science of valid knowledge).

A world-class decolonial approach must recognise that scientific advancement in India was not solely the preserve of a textual elite. The production of high-carbon **Wootz steel** and the atmospheric corrosion resistance of the Delhi Iron Pillar are analysed not merely as ‘artefacts’ but as empirical triumphs of the *Vishwakarma* communities, artisanal castes whose metallurgical sophistication was based on a systematic chemical engineering of the time. Similarly, the mathematical logic of the **Sulba Sutras** and the later **Kerala School of Astronomy** (Madhava, 14th Century) represent a continuity of ‘Ganita’ (mathematics) that pre-dates and arguably influenced Hellenistic and Renaissance algebraic logic (Seidenberg, 1978). By integrating these into the mainstream narrative, NEP 2020 establishes a record of ‘**Cognitive Persistence**’, proving that rational inquiry was a cumulative tradition across both textual and artisanal archives.

### 2. Pillar II: Socio-Political Ontologies and Institutional Subsidiarity

The second pillar reconfigures the history of governance, de-centring Western ‘Social Contract’ theories (Hobbes, Locke) in favour of indigenous political ontologies. Central to this is the concept of **Rajdharm**, which posits that sovereignty is not absolute but is subordinated to *Dharma*, a transcendent moral and constitutional order. Unlike the Hobbesian ‘Leviathan’, the Indian monarch functioned within a **Polycentric Polity** where power was shared with autonomous guilds (*Shrenis*), village councils (*Panchayats*), and religious institutions.

The curriculum recovers the history of the **Gana-Sanghas** (early republics), demonstrating that deliberative democracy and republicanism were flourishing in the Gangetic plains by the 6th Century BCE, offering a potent parallel to the Athenian *Polis* (Jayaswal, 1924). Furthermore, the administrative record of the **Imperial Cholas** is utilised as a case study in **Institutional Subsidiarity**. The Uttaramerur inscriptions (10th Century CE) provide an extraordinary blueprint for decentralised governance, detailing sophisticated electoral qualifications, committee-based resource management, and fiscal autonomy. By re-centring these models, the IKS framework challenges the ‘Oriental Despotism’ trope and asserts that India evolved complex democratic and bureaucratic structures independent of Western influence.

### 3. Pillar III: Thalassocracy and Hydro-Social Cycles

The final pillar addresses India’s interaction with the global commons and its physical environment. Colonial historiography frequently framed India as an ‘inward-looking’ agrarian society. The IKS integration subverts this by emphasising India’s **Maritime Thalassocracy**. The Chola naval expeditions across the Bay of Bengal and the merchant guilds (*Manigramam*) that dominated the ‘Spice Route’ positioned India as a central node in a pre-colonial ‘World System’. This maritime agency redefines India not as a landlocked entity but as a dominant oceanic power that facilitated trans-continental cultural synthesis.

Domestically, the curriculum emphasises the **Hydro-Social Cycles** of traditional India. The history of water management, evidenced by the **Baolis** (stepwells) of the arid West and the **Grand Anicut** (Kallanai) of the South, is presented as a masterpiece of community-led ecological engineering. These systems represent a sophisticated understanding of



topography and hydrology that ensured agricultural resilience for millennia (Agarwal & Narain, 1997). By integrating this ecological history, NEP 2020 provides a historical precedent for sustainability, suggesting that the ‘modernity’ of Indian water-wisdom offers viable solutions to contemporary climate crises.

## VII. Global Comparative Context: Indigenous Epistemologies and the Geopolitics of Knowledge

The integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into the national curriculum is frequently misinterpreted as a move towards cultural insularity; however, a critical systemic analysis reveals it to be a sophisticated participation in the global ‘Decolonial Turn’. By situating NEP 2020 within the international landscape of educational reform, it becomes evident that India is navigating a path shared by other post-colonial societies seeking to dismantle what Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2014) terms ‘**Epistemicide**’, the systematic suppression of non-Western forms of knowing.

### 1. Trans-National Parallels: Kaupapa Māori and Indigenisation

India’s reclamation of the *Itihasa* tradition finds a profound theoretical resonance in the **Kaupapa Māori** movement in New Zealand, and the **Indigenisation** mandates in Canadian higher education. Much like the IKS framework, Māori pedagogy (Smith, 2012) rejects the Western-universalist ‘deficiency model’, which historically framed indigenous knowledge as a pre-modern obstacle. The Māori concept of *Mātauranga Māori* (indigenous knowledge) is now integrated into New Zealand’s national curriculum as a valid epistemological lens through which science and history are interpreted.

The core of these global parallels lies in the transition from ‘History of the Indigenous’ to ‘**History as the Indigenous**’, where the indigenous is the subject of historical reason. India’s integration of *Gana-Sangha* republicanism or *Ayurvedic* medicine mirrors this global shift towards ‘**Epistemological Pluralism**’, where multiple regimes of truth are placed in a horizontal, rather than hierarchical, dialogue.

### 2. India as a Template for Global South Solidarity

The NEP 2020 framework serves as a potent template for **Global South Solidarity**. For nations across Africa and Latin America, the Indian model offers a resolution to the post-colonial dilemma: how to achieve technological modernisation without succumbing to cultural Westernisation. By demonstrating that a nation can mine its classical and artisanal past to solve 21st-century problems—such as using traditional water-management systems for climate resilience—India positions itself as a vanguard of ‘**Pluriversal Modernity**’. This model suggests that the future of global education lies not in a single Western-defined ‘Universalism’, but in a ‘Pluriverse’ where many intellectual worlds are recognised as equally valid (Mignolo, 2011).

## VIII. Critical Synthesis: Navigating the Heritage–Historiography Paradox

The integration of IKS is situated at the epicentre of a profound ideological contestation, frequently framed within the ‘Saffronization’ discourse. This debate concerns the potential for ‘**Ideological Instrumentalisation**’, wherein the multidimensionality of the past is flattened to serve contemporary nationalist teleologies. To maintain a world-class standard of scholarship, this study critiques these tensions, proposing a framework of ‘**Critical IKS**’.

### 1. The Heritage vs. Historiography Conflict

The primary tension lies in the conflict between **Heritage**—which functions as a tool for social cohesion—and **Historiography**, which demands a rigorous, evidence-based interrogation of the past. Critics argue that the emphasis on ‘civilisational pride’ may lead to an ‘Intellectual Enclosure’, producing a homogenised narrative that erases internal heterodoxies and social hierarchies.

Drawing on Eric Hobsbawm’s (1983) concept of ‘**The Invention of Tradition**’, a world-class curriculum must remain vigilant against the sanitisation of history. The IKS framework should not present India as a monolithic entity, but as a site of **Internal Epistemic Contestation**. This involves acknowledging that Indian intellectual history is characterised as much by the materialist scepticism of the *Charvakas* and the logic of the *Nyaya* as it is by Vedantic metaphysics. A robust decolonial project must facilitate a ‘Politics of Recognition’ (Taylor, 1994) that is inclusive of the diverse regional, tribal, and subaltern histories; specifically, recovering the voices of artisanal communities and women whose knowledge was often marginalised even within indigenous structures.

### 2. Proposing ‘Critical IKS’: Reflexivity and Falsifiability

To transcend ideological polarisation, this study proposes a methodology of ‘**Critical IKS**’. This approach insists that indigenous knowledge systems be subjected to the same standards of ‘**Falsifiability**’ (Popper, 1959) as any other scientific claim. For example, the study of the *Sulba Sutras* should focus on the mathematical logic of area transformation rather than mere cultural assertion. By treating IKS as a **Living Archive** rather than a ‘Sacred Canon’, the curriculum can foster a spirit of inquiry. This requires teaching the *Pramana Shastra* (epistemology) as a method of critical doubt and verification.

### 3. Preventing Teleological Anachronism

A critical challenge is the risk of ‘**Teleological Anachronism**,’ the practice of reading modern scientific outcomes back into ancient texts. The objective of NEP 2020 must be ‘**Hermeneutic Hygiene**’, ensuring that ancient texts are interpreted within their specific historical contexts. Authenticity must take precedence over glorification. This involves a critical reflexivity that is honest about India’s historical complexities, including its scientific achievements and its social inequities. Ultimately, the goal is to produce a student who possesses ‘**Civilisational Confidence**’, an individual rooted in their own intellectual tradition, yet capable of engaging with the global academic community with objectivity.

## IX. The Digital Frontier: Computational Historiography and Algorithmic Decoloniality

The integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into the contemporary historical narrative is increasingly mediated by the ‘Digital Turn’ in the humanities. Within the framework of NEP 2020, the mandate of the **National Educational Technology Forum (NETF)** facilitates a ‘Techno-Epistemic Synthesis’. By deploying advanced computational heuristics to reclaim and democratise the Indian past, this intersection represents the new frontier of ‘**Algorithmic Decoloniality**’.

### 1. AI-Driven Philology and the ‘Silent Archive’

India’s intellectual heritage is preserved in an estimated five million manuscripts, of which less than 10% have been critically edited. This ‘Silent Archive’ is being reactivated through **Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR)** and Deep Learning algorithms optimised for Indic palaeography (Brahmi, Sharada, Grantha). This process involves the creation of a **Semantic Web of IKS**, where AI-driven cross-referencing identifies hidden patterns in



ancient scientific discourses. By structuring this data into machine-readable formats, the IKS project ensures ‘Semantic Interoperability’ with global databases, providing a verifiable empirical base for the historical reconstruction of Indian logic.

## 2. Digital Sovereignty and the Critique of Data Colonialism

A world-class decolonial strategy must also address the emerging threat of ‘**Digital Colonialism**’. As Western Large Language Models (LLMs) increasingly scrape indigenous data without epistemic attribution, the mandate of the NETF includes safeguarding ‘Digital Sovereignty’. This involves ensuring that IKS data is not merely ‘mined’ for global AI development but is protected through indigenous intellectual property frameworks. This ensures that the recovery of the Indian narrative is not co-opted by new forms of technological hegemony, maintaining what scholars term ‘Epistemic Autonomy’.

## 3. GIS and Geospatial Ontologies

Complementing textual recovery is the ‘Spatial Turn’ in historiography, operationalised through **Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**. Within the IKS curriculum, GIS is utilised to construct ‘**Geospatial Ontologies**’ overlaying ancient trade routes (such as the *Uttarapatha*) onto high-resolution topographical models. This ‘Deep Mapping’ serves as visual proof of India’s spatial agency, reframing the Chola thalassocracy as a networked ‘World System’. Furthermore, mapping traditional hydro-engineering against modern climate data demonstrates the temporal relevance of IKS, positioning ancient wisdom as a viable blueprint for contemporary environmental resilience.

## X. Conclusion: Towards a Pluriversal Historical Consciousness

The integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into the national history curriculum under NEP 2020 represents far more than a curricular revision; it is a fundamental reconfiguration of the Indian ‘epistemic compass’. This research has demonstrated that the decolonial turn is not an exercise in nativist insularity, but a necessary corrective to a century of ‘epistemicide’. By reclaiming indigenous intellectual traditions, ranging from the algorithmic precision of the *Kerala School* to the decentralised subsidiarity of the *Chola* administration, India is asserting its ‘**Ontological Sovereignty**’ within the global community of knowledge.

The success of the NEP 2020 rests upon the cultivation of a ‘**Globalised Indian Mind**’, a student characterised by ‘**Epistemological Rootedness**’. Such an individual possesses the ‘Civilisational Confidence’ to view the world through a lens that is both traditionally grounded and globally proficient. This transition allows India to fulfil its role as a *Vishwa Guru* (Global Mentor), offering ‘Pluriversal’ solutions to the crises of the Anthropocene by leveraging ancient ecological wisdom and ethical statecraft.

Looking forward, the structural implementation of the **Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUP)** and the **National Research Foundation (NRF)** provide the institutional scaffolding necessary for this reform to transcend ideological shifts. The final year of research-intensive study serves as a laboratory for ‘Computational Historiography’, where a new generation of scholar-citizens will bridge the gap between ancient archives and modern inquiry. Ultimately, the integration of IKS ensures that the ‘Idea of India’ is no longer a colonial artefact but a living, data-driven, and globally interoperable intellectual force. In doing so, India does not merely join the global historical canon; it expands the very definition of what it means to be a ‘knowing subject’ in the 21st Century.



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