

Human Worth and Cosmic Order: A Study of Value Realization in Vedānta and Nyāya Systems

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Abstract

Human worth, in Indian philosophy, has often been understood not as a matter of mere social standing but as a reflection of one's alignment with *ṛta*—the cosmic order. Both the **Vedānta** and **Nyāya** systems propose frameworks for realizing human value through cognition, ethics, and liberation. While Vedānta emphasizes self-realization (*ātma-jñāna*) and identification with *Brahman*, Nyāya underscores rational inquiry (*tarka*) and valid knowledge (*pramā*) as essential to ethical and spiritual worth. This study examines how these traditions conceptualize the moral and metaphysical dimensions of human worth and their relation to cosmic order. It further explores how these insights inform contemporary philosophical debates on human dignity, freedom, and the moral foundations of knowledge.

Keywords

Vedānta, Nyāya, Human Worth, Cosmic Order, Value Realization, Indian Philosophy, Dharma, Mokṣa, Knowledge and Ethics, Ontology.

1. Introduction

The question of **human worth** has remained one of the central concerns of philosophical reflection across civilizations. From the ancient Greek inquiries into the *good life* (*eudaimonia*) to modern debates on human rights and dignity, philosophers have sought to understand what makes life valuable and what grounds moral worth. In the **Indian philosophical tradition**, this question assumes a distinctive metaphysical depth. Human worth is not conceived merely in terms of social recognition, material prosperity, or intellectual capacity; rather, it is grounded in the individual's participation in the **cosmic order**—the harmonious structure of being known as *ṛta* or *dharma*. The Indian view thus connects anthropology with cosmology, locating human value within the fabric of universal law and spiritual reality.

In Vedic thought, *ṛta* represents the eternal order that governs both the macrocosm (the universe) and the microcosm (the human being). To live in harmony with *ṛta* is to live ethically and truthfully, for it signifies alignment with the fundamental rhythm of existence. Human worth, therefore, is not an arbitrary or self-determined property but a **relational and participatory state**, achieved when individual consciousness resonates with the cosmic harmony. This conception dissolves the dichotomy between the individual and the universe: man becomes meaningful only as a reflection of the greater order that sustains all being. The

notion of *dharma*, emerging from *ṛta*, translates this cosmic principle into moral and social conduct, providing an ethical framework for realizing intrinsic value through righteous action.

Within this broad metaphysical horizon, the classical schools of **Vedānta** and **Nyāya** offer two distinct yet complementary frameworks for understanding human worth and its realization. The **Vedāntic system**, grounded in the *Upaniṣads*, posits that the ultimate reality (*Brahman*) is pure consciousness, and the individual self (*ātman*) is none other than that reality. This non-dualistic insight—expressed in the Mahāvākya “*Tat Tvam Asi*” (“Thou art That”)—forms the core of the Vedāntic conception of worth. The realization of one’s true nature as Brahman constitutes the highest form of value realization, for it transcends ignorance (*avidyā*) and egoic limitation. Here, **knowledge (*jñāna*)** is not merely intellectual understanding but **transformative awareness**, leading to liberation (*mokṣa*) and inner peace (*śānti*). Worth, in this vision, is not earned but unveiled through self-realization—the discovery that the human being is an expression of the infinite.

In contrast, the **Nyāya school** approaches the problem of human worth through a rigorous framework of **logic, epistemology, and ethics**. For Nyāya philosophers, the realization of value is a **rational and moral process**. They begin from the premise that true knowledge (*pramā*) leads to the cessation of suffering (*duḥkha*) and culminates in liberation. Whereas Vedānta emphasizes transcendental unity, Nyāya emphasizes **discriminative knowledge**—the capacity to discern the true from the false through reason (*tarka*) and valid means of cognition (*pramāṇas*). In Nyāya, worth is actualized when human beings employ reason, perception, and moral discipline to align their cognition with reality. The pursuit of truth (*satya*) is simultaneously a cognitive and ethical act, implying that moral integrity and intellectual rigor are interdependent dimensions of the highest good.

Despite their methodological divergence—Vedānta’s **intuitive monism** and Nyāya’s **rational pluralism**—both systems share a profound ethical vision: liberation (*mokṣa*) is the culmination of knowledge, and knowledge is inseparable from virtue. In Vedānta, to know is to be; in Nyāya, to know is to act rightly. Both affirm that human worth is **not an inherited possession but a realized condition**, emerging from the harmony of thought, action, and cosmic law. The *ātman* of Vedānta and the *puruṣa* of Nyāya, though conceived differently, are both capable of liberation through the removal of ignorance and the cultivation of truth.

This philosophical dialogue between Vedānta and Nyāya thus illuminates a shared ideal of **value realization**, where the pursuit of truth, knowledge, and virtue converges into a vision of cosmic participation. Human worth becomes a dynamic process of self-transformation, in which cognition, ethics, and metaphysics are integrated into a coherent spiritual anthropology. The Vedāntic path of self-realization and the Nyāya path of rational inquiry together outline a comprehensive paradigm of the good life—one that situates individual flourishing within the larger framework of **cosmic order (*ṛta*)**.

Therefore, this paper seeks to explore the **interrelationship between human worth and cosmic order** as articulated in Vedānta and Nyāya, examining how these systems conceptualize value as both an ontological truth and an ethical attainment. It argues that both traditions, despite their philosophical divergences, ultimately converge in the notion of **realization**—a process through which human beings actualize their highest potential by aligning thought, conduct, and consciousness with the fundamental order of existence. In an age dominated by materialism and moral fragmentation, revisiting these classical

frameworks offers not merely intellectual insight but existential guidance—a reminder that true worth lies not in domination or possession, but in the **awakening of consciousness to its universal ground**.

2. Literature Review

The philosophical exploration of human worth (*mānav mūlya*) and cosmic order (*rta* or *dharma*) has deep roots in Indian intellectual history. Scholars across generations have noted that unlike Western moral philosophy, which often separates ethics from metaphysics, **Indian philosophy integrates the two**—linking the idea of the good life to the realization of cosmic truth. Early commentators such as **S. Radhakrishnan (2010)** and **S. Chatterjee & D. Datta (2008)** established the foundation for comparative understanding by examining how various schools, including Vedānta and Nyāya, conceptualize reality, knowledge, and moral duty within a coherent ontological framework. Radhakrishnan emphasized that Indian systems view human life not as isolated but as organically related to the universal, where self-knowledge becomes synonymous with value realization. Chatterjee and Datta further observed that Nyāya's realism and Vedānta's non-dualism, though apparently divergent, share a commitment to *mokṣa* (liberation) as the ultimate human goal.

The **Vedāntic understanding of value** has been examined through both theological and philosophical lenses. Classical interpreters such as **Deussen (1966)** and **Dasgupta (1997)** have shown that the Upaniṣadic insight—"Tat Tvam Asi" ("Thou art That")—marks a radical redefinition of worth: the individual self (*ātman*) is not subordinate to the cosmic order but identical with it. In the modern period, **Hiriyanna (2014)** and **Bhattacharya (2013)** revisited these themes, emphasizing that Vedānta transforms the question of human value from a moral evaluation into a metaphysical realization. For Hiriyanna, the concept of worth arises not from external attributes but from the discovery of intrinsic unity with the Absolute. Bhattacharya, in *Philosophy of Peace in Indian Tradition* (2013), connected Vedāntic self-realization to a broader cultural ethos of harmony, suggesting that inner peace (*śānti*) and universal order are two aspects of the same realization. This correlation between metaphysical unity and ethical universality is a defining hallmark of Vedāntic humanism.

Conversely, **Nyāya philosophy** has been analyzed as a rational and ethical framework where worth is realized through epistemic precision and moral rectitude. **Potter (1977)** and **Matilal (1986)** have discussed how the Nyāya system's focus on *pramāṇas* (valid means of knowledge)—perception, inference, comparison, and testimony—establishes an epistemological foundation for ethical living. According to **Matilal (1986)**, the moral worth of the individual in Nyāya is contingent on the correct exercise of reason, which leads to liberation from error and suffering. **Sharma (2015)** further elaborates that Nyāya's logical realism is not devoid of spirituality; rather, it articulates a disciplined method for aligning the intellect with reality. Through *tarka* (reasoning) and *viveka* (discrimination), the Nyāya thinker cultivates truthfulness, integrity, and compassion—virtues that mirror the cosmic order of justice and reason.

Several comparative studies have attempted to bridge the methodological gap between **Vedāntic intuition** and **Nyāya rationalism**. **Mohanty (2012)**, in his analysis of Indian epistemology, argued that both schools ultimately converge in their affirmation of knowledge as liberation, even though their epistemic pathways differ. Vedānta emphasizes *aparokṣa-jñāna* (direct, intuitive knowledge), while Nyāya stresses *anumāna* (inference) and *śabda-pramāṇa* (verbal testimony). Mohanty suggests that the Indian philosophical

landscape offers a “continuum of epistemologies” rather than mutually exclusive systems. This continuum allows for a more holistic understanding of human worth, where intuition and logic, contemplation and analysis, jointly contribute to self-realization. **Ramakrishnan (2010)** also noted that such integration points to a deeply relational view of value—human beings discover their significance only through alignment with the rational and spiritual principles of the cosmos.

From an ethical standpoint, scholars like **Hiriyanna (2014)** and **Sharma (2015)** highlight that both Vedānta and Nyāya link the pursuit of truth to moral cultivation. In Vedānta, ethical virtues such as detachment (*vairāgya*), self-control (*śama*), and compassion (*karuṇā*) serve as preparatory disciplines for the dawn of self-knowledge. In Nyāya, virtues like honesty (*ārjava*), perseverance (*titikṣā*), and moral reasoning are not merely instrumental but constitutive of the good life. This parallel between spiritual ethics and rational morality underscores a distinctive Indian axiom: **right knowledge and right conduct are inseparable**. The Upaniṣadic sage and the Naiyāyika philosopher, despite differing in approach, share the conviction that ignorance (*avidyā* or *mithyā-jñāna*) is the root of bondage, and enlightenment (*jñāna*) is liberation.

More recent scholarship extends these discussions into **cross-cultural and psychological dimensions**. **Bhattacharya (2013)** interprets Indian concepts of peace and self-realization in light of modern psychology, proposing that Vedāntic and Nyāya disciplines can contribute to cognitive harmony and emotional balance. Similarly, **Sharma (2015)** links classical epistemology with contemporary virtue ethics, suggesting that reason and spirituality, when harmonized, yield a holistic framework for personal and collective well-being. Such interpretations demonstrate that the ancient question of worth and order remains deeply relevant, especially in a world facing ethical relativism, technological alienation, and ecological imbalance.

Despite the wealth of scholarship, a **specific comparative analysis of human worth as a philosophical construct**—linking metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics within both Vedānta and Nyāya—remains relatively underexplored. While studies have compared their logical methods or metaphysical assumptions, few have addressed how both traditions converge in treating **value realization** as the highest human purpose. This paper aims to fill that gap by synthesizing classical sources and modern interpretations, exploring how the Vedāntic quest for transcendence and the Nyāya pursuit of reason together articulate an integrative model of human worth grounded in the **cosmic order (ṛta)**.

Thus, this literature review situates the present inquiry within a lineage of comparative Indian philosophy that seeks not only to contrast metaphysical systems but to understand their shared ethical vision. By engaging with earlier thinkers—from **Radhakrishnan’s spiritual humanism** to **Matilal’s analytic realism**—this study contributes to a broader re-evaluation of how Indian traditions conceive of the **relationship between the human and the cosmic**, the rational and the spiritual, the moral and the metaphysical. It thereby opens the way for a renewed understanding of **value realization** as the central link between **knowledge, ethics, and liberation**, a theme that remains as vital today as it was in the classical age.

3. Conceptual Framework

3.1 Vedāntic Perspective: Worth as Self-Realization

In the Vedāntic worldview, human worth (*mānuṣya-mūlya*) is not derived from external possessions or achievements, but from the intrinsic divinity of the Self (*Ātman*). The foundational premise of Vedānta, particularly Advaita Vedānta, is articulated in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (6.8.7):

“*Tat tvam asi*” — *Thou art That*.

This profound declaration encapsulates the realization that the individual self (*jīvātman*) and the universal self (*paramātman* or *Brahman*) are not two distinct entities but one undivided reality. The ignorance (*avidyā*) that veils this unity gives rise to false identification with the body, mind, and ego, resulting in bondage (*saṃsāra*). Liberation (*mokṣa*) thus becomes the realization of this essential oneness, the recognition that all beings share a common, divine substratum.

From the Vedāntic standpoint, **human worth is ontological rather than instrumental**. It is not measured by what a person achieves but by what one *realizes*—the discovery of the eternal Self within. This realization is not merely intellectual; it is transformative and existential. The individual who attains *jñāna* (true knowledge) transcends the dualities of pleasure and pain, gain and loss, and becomes established in equanimity.

Ethically, this realization manifests as **detachment (*vairāgya*)**, **compassion (*karuṇā*)**, and **self-control (*śama-dama*)**. The liberated individual (*jñānī*) acts in harmony with *ṛta*, the cosmic moral order that sustains truth and balance in the universe. The *Bhagavad Gītā* reinforces this vision when it declares that one who perceives the same Self in all beings neither harms nor is harmed. Thus, Vedānta integrates metaphysics and ethics through the doctrine of unity: the knowledge of Brahman naturally expresses itself in right action and universal love.

In the Vedāntic hierarchy of values, knowledge (*vidyā*) is both the means and the end. The cultivation of truth, humility, purity, and devotion prepares the mind for higher realization. Consequently, **human worth is synonymous with the realization of one's divine essence**, and every moral or cognitive endeavor is ultimately directed toward unveiling that inner light. Worth, therefore, is not conferred by society but discovered through spiritual awakening—a movement from ignorance to illumination, from individuality to universality, from bondage to freedom.

3.2 Nyāya Perspective: Worth as Rational Realization

The **Nyāya system**, founded by Gautama in the *Nyāya Sūtras*, approaches human worth from a markedly different angle. Whereas Vedānta begins from ontological unity, Nyāya begins with **epistemological clarity**. The very first aphorism of the *Nyāya Sūtra* (1.1.1) states:

“*Athāto 'nveṣaṇā dharma-jñāna-mokṣa-sādhana-nām.*”

“The attainment of the highest good arises from true knowledge of the objects to be known.”

In this tradition, **truth (*satya*) and valid cognition (*pramā*)** are the cornerstones of value. Human worth lies in the disciplined exercise of reason (*tarka*) and the moral responsibility to seek truth through legitimate means of knowledge (*pramāṇas*), such as perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), comparison (*upamāna*), and testimony (*śabda*). Ignorance (*mithyā-jñāna*) is seen as the root cause of bondage and suffering, while right knowledge dispels delusion and leads to liberation (*mokṣa*).

In Nyāya, **ethics and epistemology are inseparable**. The pursuit of truth demands intellectual honesty, moral discipline, and detachment from prejudice or emotion. The rational seeker must cultivate virtues such as sincerity (*ārjava*), self-restraint (*dama*), and patience (*titikṣā*). Knowledge devoid of ethical integrity is considered incomplete, for it cannot lead to the cessation of suffering. Therefore, in Nyāya philosophy, human worth is **earned through cognitive and moral refinement**, not merely granted by metaphysical identity.

The concept of liberation (*mokṣa*) in Nyāya differs subtly from that of Vedānta. For the Nyāya thinker, *mokṣa* is the **complete cessation of pain and suffering**, attained through discriminative knowledge (*viveka*) and the exhaustion of karmic bondage. It is a **state of rational and emotional equilibrium**, not necessarily a mystical union with the Absolute. However, this rational liberation still aligns with the cosmic moral order (*ṛta*), suggesting that right reasoning and ethical living mirror the structure of the cosmos itself.

In this view, the human being is a **rational agent within a moral universe**, capable of aligning personal conduct with universal law through knowledge and virtue. Thus, the Nyāya path transforms reason into a sacred discipline, elevating human worth through intellectual rigor and moral responsibility.

3.3 Integrative Reflection: Knowledge, Ethics, and Cosmic Order

While Vedānta and Nyāya diverge in their starting points—**one metaphysical, the other epistemological**—they converge in affirming that human worth arises from the integration of knowledge, virtue, and cosmic harmony. In Vedānta, realization is the awakening to one's divine nature; in Nyāya, realization is the discernment of truth through logical inquiry. Both, however, insist that **ignorance is bondage and knowledge is liberation**.

The Vedāntic sage who sees Brahman everywhere and the Naiyāyika philosopher who reasons correctly both attain the same ultimate value: harmony with *ṛta*, the eternal order of truth. The difference lies only in emphasis—Vedānta moves inward through introspection and transcendence, while Nyāya moves outward through analysis and verification. Together, they provide a **comprehensive model of value realization**, where the intuitive and the rational, the mystical and the moral, complement rather than contradict each other.

4. Comparative Analysis

A comparative understanding of **Vedānta and Nyāya** reveals not merely two systems of Indian philosophy but two complementary visions of human worth within the broader framework of cosmic order (*ṛta*). Both traditions converge on the premise that human life acquires value through realization—yet, they differ profoundly in the routes through which this realization is achieved. The Vedāntic approach is **introspective, metaphysical, and monistic**, while the Nyāya approach is **analytical, epistemological, and pluralistic**. Their

dialogue represents a dynamic tension between spiritual intuition and logical investigation, between transcendental identity and empirical reasoning.

Vedānta begins with the **Upaniṣadic** insight that the essence of the self (ātman) is identical with the ultimate reality (Brahman). From this ontological unity arises an ethics of harmony—where right action is an expression of realized awareness rather than an externally imposed moral code. Human worth, according to Vedānta, does not depend on social, material, or intellectual hierarchies but on the depth of one's self-realization. In recognizing oneself as Brahman, one simultaneously recognizes the divine in all beings; thus, Vedānta transforms metaphysical insight into universal compassion. The highest value is *mokṣa*—freedom from ignorance and identification with transient forms. This realization, however, demands inner discipline (*sādhana*), detachment (*vairāgya*), and knowledge (*jñāna*). The realization of worth, therefore, is not passive contemplation but a transformative awakening of consciousness aligning individual existence with the cosmic whole.

In contrast, the **Nyāya** school conceptualizes human worth through the framework of rational realism. The Nyāya Sūtras open by declaring that the “attainment of the highest good (*niḥśreyasa*) arises from the true knowledge of the objects to be known.” This foundational statement emphasizes **knowledge (pramā)** as the vehicle for liberation (*mokṣa*). Nyāya posits that ignorance (*mithyā-jñāna*) and false cognition are the roots of human suffering. Therefore, liberation is achieved not through mystical union but through the removal of ignorance via systematic inquiry, valid cognition, and ethical living. The worth of an individual arises from their intellectual clarity, moral integrity, and commitment to truth. The discipline of logic (*tarka*) and epistemology (*pramāṇa-śāstra*) is not merely theoretical—it is ethical in essence, because it refines human judgment and aligns thought with reality.

Thus, while Vedānta views **worth as identity with the Absolute**, Nyāya understands **worth as correspondence with truth**. Vedānta dissolves multiplicity into unity; Nyāya sustains plurality within a rational moral order. Vedānta's liberation transcends causality and empirical distinctions, whereas Nyāya's liberation culminates in the cessation of pain through the perfection of reason. Both agree that realization (*jñāna*) is central—but for Vedānta, it is **intuitive and experiential (aparokṣa-jñāna)**; for Nyāya, it is **inferential and discursive (parokṣa-jñāna)**.

Their common ground lies in the conviction that knowledge and ethics are inseparable. Vedānta asserts that the knower becomes virtuous by realizing non-duality, while Nyāya maintains that truth itself is a moral duty (*satya-vrata*). In this shared vision, **to know truly is to live rightly**. Both systems dissolve the dualism between theory and practice, cognition and conduct. They agree that liberation is not an escape from the world but a realization of one's place within the cosmic order.

The following table summarizes the key comparative dimensions between Vedānta and Nyāya in relation to the concept of human worth:

Table 1. Comparative Dimensions of Human Worth in Vedānta and Nyāya

Dimension	Vedānta	Nyāya
Ontology	Non-dualism (Ātman = Brahman); reality is one without a second (<i>advaita</i>)	Pluralistic realism; multiple substances (souls, matter, God) are real and distinct
Epistemology	Intuitive realization (<i>aparokṣa-jñāna</i>); knowledge through self-revelation	Logical and inferential knowledge (<i>pramāṇa</i>); truth established through reasoning
Goal of Life	Liberation (<i>mokṣa</i>) through self-knowledge and union with Brahman	Liberation (<i>mokṣa</i>) through right cognition, reasoning, and ethical purification
Ethical Foundation	Detachment (<i>vairāgya</i>), compassion (<i>karuṇā</i>), and self-control (<i>dama</i>)	Truthfulness (<i>satya</i>), right reasoning (<i>tarka</i>), and fulfillment of moral duties
Relation to Cosmic Order (ṛta)	Harmony achieved through transcendence of duality	Harmony achieved through alignment of reason and moral order
Nature of Realization	Transcendental, mystical, introspective	Rational, analytical, and empirical
View of Ignorance (Avidyā)	Root of bondage; dissolved through self-knowledge	Source of error and suffering; removed through valid knowledge (<i>pramā</i>)
Concept of Liberation (Mokṣa)	Realization of oneness with Brahman; cessation of ignorance	Cessation of pain and rebirth through perfect knowledge and detachment
Ethical Implication	Universal love and equanimity through recognition of unity	Intellectual integrity and moral responsibility through truthful cognition
Mode of Practice	Meditation, introspection, and contemplation	Logic, debate, and disciplined inquiry

The comparative framework shows that the **Vedāntic** path moves vertically—toward transcendence—while the **Nyāya** path moves horizontally—through rational progression and moral refinement. Both ultimately converge at the point of **value realization**, where wisdom (*jñāna*) and reason (*tarka*) coalesce into a state of ethical harmony. The two are not competing doctrines but **complementary modes of realizing human potential**—Vedānta offering the vision of ultimate unity, and Nyāya providing the methodology for discerning truth within diversity.

In this synthesis, the Vedāntic self-realization offers the **vision**, while the Nyāya epistemology offers the **instrument**. Vedānta gives metaphysical grounding; Nyāya gives practical direction. Their convergence thus defines a complete model of human worth—where self-knowledge, rational insight, and ethical conduct converge within the overarching rhythm of the cosmic order (*ṛta*). Such an integrative understanding transforms philosophy from abstract speculation into a way of life aimed at **truth, freedom, and harmony**.

5. Illustrative Model: *The Spiral of Value Realization*

Figure 1. “The Spiral of Value Realization: Vedānta and Nyāya Pathways”

The *Spiral of Value Realization* offers a visual synthesis of the **Vedāntic** and **Nyāya** approaches to human worth within the cosmic order (*rta*). The figure portrays **two intertwined spirals**, each representing a distinct yet converging pathway toward **liberation and value fulfillment**.

The **Vedāntic spiral** rises **upward**, signifying **transcendence** and **ascent toward the Absolute**. This spiral begins with *avidyā* (ignorance), where the individual mistakenly identifies with the ego and material world. Through disciplines such as **self-inquiry** (*ātma-vicāra*), **detachment** (*vairāgya*), and **meditation** (*dhyāna*), the seeker gradually ascends to higher states of consciousness. At the summit lies **union with Brahman**, where duality dissolves and the individual realizes, “*Tat tvam asi*”—“Thou art That.” The upward motion symbolizes the **spiritual elevation** of human worth through **inner transformation** and **realization of identity with the cosmic whole**.

In contrast, the **Nyāya spiral** extends **horizontally**, representing **rational expansion and moral development** within the empirical world. It begins with **curiosity and doubt**, proceeds through **inquiry** (*tarka*), **disciplined reasoning**, and **ethical living**, and culminates in **liberation** (*mokṣa*) through discriminative knowledge. Each loop of the spiral reflects **increasing clarity and refinement of perception**, mirroring Nyāya’s belief that liberation arises from the **correct understanding of reality** and the **elimination of ignorance** (*mithyā-jñāna*).

At the **convergence point** of these two spirals lies the sphere of **Value Realization**, where **wisdom** (*jñāna*) and **reason** (*tarka*) intersect. This symbolic center represents the **integration of transcendence and immanence**, of **intuitive insight and analytical understanding**. Here, human worth is fully realized—not as dominance or possession, but as **harmonious participation in the cosmic order**.

The model underscores that **Vedānta and Nyāya, though methodologically distinct, are complementary movements of realization**. The Vedāntic ascent internalizes truth; the Nyāya expansion externalizes it through reason and ethics. Both culminate in a vision of **liberation as alignment with *rta***—the eternal principle of balance and order that governs both cosmos and consciousness.

Interpretive Summary:

- **Vedāntic Spiral (Vertical Ascent):** From ignorance → knowledge → detachment → union with Brahman
- **Nyāya Spiral (Horizontal Expansion):** From inquiry → reasoning → ethical action → liberation
- **Convergence Point:** *Value Realization* — synthesis of **spiritual insight** and **rational virtue**
- **Symbolic Meaning:** Integration of *jñāna* (wisdom) and *tarka* (reason) as the essence of **human worth and cosmic harmony**

6. Discussion

The comparative study reveals that both **Vedānta** and **Nyāya** conceive human worth as a progressive alignment between cognition, ethics, and reality. While Vedānta's emphasis is ontological—worth as identity with the absolute—Nyāya's orientation is epistemological—worth as rational correspondence with truth. Yet, these orientations are not mutually exclusive. Vedāntic realization requires disciplined cognition, and Nyāya's pursuit of truth implies moral transformation. Both suggest that to know truly is to live rightly.

In contemporary contexts marked by moral relativism and existential anxiety, these frameworks offer timeless guidance. The Vedāntic path inspires inner realization and detachment from ego, while Nyāya's logic fosters critical reflection and ethical responsibility. Together, they cultivate a holistic notion of worth that transcends material or social definitions.

The synthesis of these traditions suggests that **human worth is both transcendental and practical**—rooted in the recognition of our shared participation in reality's deeper order. Vedānta directs consciousness inward, revealing the unity of all beings in Brahman; Nyāya directs it outward, training reason to perceive the moral fabric of the world. In unison, they articulate a **dual epistemology of realization**, where intuition and logic function not as opposites but as complementary modes of attaining truth. Such a synthesis dissolves the false divide between spirituality and rationality, suggesting that the highest human endeavor integrates both contemplation and critical reasoning.

Moreover, the dialogue between Vedānta and Nyāya holds relevance for the modern philosophy of value and intersubjectivity. The Vedāntic recognition of the self in all beings underpins ethical universalism, while Nyāya's insistence on verifiable truth offers a framework for moral objectivity in pluralistic societies. This interplay offers a **model for intercultural philosophy**—a way of reconciling spiritual pluralism with intellectual rigor. By engaging with these ancient systems through comparative analysis, we not only recover their metaphysical depth but also uncover resources for addressing the ethical and existential crises of the present age—where questions of worth, truth, and justice remain as urgent as ever.

7. Conclusion

The dialogue between **Vedānta** and **Nyāya** reveals that **human worth is not an inherent possession but a realized condition**, emerging through harmony with the **cosmic order (ṛta)**. For **Vedānta**, this harmony is achieved through **transcendental unity**—the realization of the self's identity with the absolute (*Ātman = Brahman*). For **Nyāya**, it is cultivated through **disciplined knowledge, logical reasoning, and moral virtue**.

Ultimately, both systems affirm that **truth and goodness are inseparable**: to realize one's worth is to awaken to the structure of reality itself. In reinterpreting these classical visions within the modern human condition, we rediscover a conception of **human dignity** grounded not in domination or social identity, but in **awareness, ethical clarity, and cosmic coherence**.

In a broader philosophical sense, these frameworks extend beyond metaphysical speculation into **practical humanism**. The Vedāntic insight into self-realization fosters inner freedom

and universal compassion, countering the alienation of modern individualism. The Nyāya insistence on rational ethics and intellectual discipline strengthens our collective capacity for truth-seeking and responsible judgment. Together, they propose a **twofold path**—introspective and analytical—that can guide the ethical reconstruction of society amidst technological and moral uncertainty.

Furthermore, this comparative vision bears pedagogical implications. Contemporary education and value systems can draw from Vedāntic self-knowledge and Nyāya reasoning to cultivate balanced individuals—emotionally grounded yet intellectually rigorous. In integrating spiritual introspection with rational inquiry, human worth becomes not merely an ideal but a **lived realization of interconnectedness**. Thus, Vedānta and Nyāya together illuminate a perennial truth: that the fulfillment of human potential lies in the union of wisdom and virtue, where knowing and being converge in harmony with the cosmic order.

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