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THE EXCELLENCE OF THE YOGIC PATH

Vijñānabhikṣu's *Yogavārttika*, a subcommentary on Patañjali's *Yogasūtras*, is currently his best-known work. But historical trends, not anything inherent in Vijñānabhikṣu's philosophy, have mostly determined which of his works was most popular in a given era. At the beginning of the twentieth century, his most well-known work was his commentary on Sāṃkhya, largely thanks to Richard Garbe's Sanskrit edition and German translation of that work. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, T. S. Rukmani has made the *Yogavārttika* available to practitioners of yoga in India, Europe, and North America thanks to her translation. Rukmani has strong opinions concerning the relationship between the Vedānta, Sāṃkhya, and Yoga strands of Vijñānabhikṣu's philosophy. She believes that in his heart of hearts, Vijñānabhikṣu was truly a Yogin:

Vijñānabhikṣu was active at a time when, on the one hand, in the philosophical field, Vedānta was at its height and on the other hand, in the religious field, bhakti was gaining supremacy. Vijñānabhikṣu himself was an uncompromising yogī, both by conviction and practice. In the *Yogavārttika* he argues for Yoga being the philosophy par excellence for attaining liberation. As such, in order to establish Yoga in a Vedāntic atmosphere, it was his first duty to write commentaries on the Prasthānatrayī as was the practice amongst the Vedāntācāryas. . . .

Coming to Vijñānabhikṣu's yogic beliefs it must be remarked that Vijñānabhikṣu is first and foremost a yogī. His interpretation of Vedānta