PAṆCAMĀṢRAMAVIDHI: RITE FOR BECOMING A NAKED ASCETIC

By Patrick Olivelle, Bloomington
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INTRODUCTION

It is well known that many ascetical sects of ancient India prescribed that their members go naked\(^1\). Jaina and Ājīvakā sects are possibly the two most important and widespread of such sects. Although both the Buddhist and the Brāhmaṇical traditions generally proscribe nudity among ascetics\(^2\), it is evident that nudity was not uncommon among Brāhmaṇical renouncers and that it was accepted as legitimate by at least some authorities. Āpastamba, for example, says: „Some declare that he shall go naked“ (Ap 2.21.12). The Brāhmaṇical rite of renunciation indicates that this was an old and established practice. As the concluding act of that rite the new renouncer takes off all his clothes and, naked, walks toward the north or the northeast. He is, however, recalled by the teacher, who invites him to wear his clothes and to take the insignia of a renouncer, such as staff, begging-bowl and water-pot\(^3\). In all likelihood the rite of disrobing is a ritual remnant of an earlier custom of total nudity on the part of a renouncer.

With the evolution of Brāhmaṇical renunciation, renouncers were classified into four types: Kūṭicaka, Bahūdaka, Hāṃsa and Paramahamsa. It is assumed that as one moves up this hierarchy one becomes progressively more free from rules and abandons practices obligatory at

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\(^1\) This was noticed even by the Greeks. Strabo speaks of Ἱππανὰς... γυμνὰς, "naked ἱππανάς" (Geography, 15.1.70). Clement of Alexandria says: "... those Indians who are called σειρινοὶ (saramanas) go naked all their lives" (Stromata, III.60).

\(^2\) "If, monks, a former member of another sect comes naked, a robe belonging to a preceptor should be looked about for." Mahāvagga, I.38.11. In the Brāhmaṇical tradition, both Gautama and Baṇḍhāyana forbid nakedness: "He shall wear a cloth to cover his nakedness" (Gau. Dh. S., 3.18; Bau. Dh. S., 2.6.11.19). Vaśīṣṭha (10.9—10) implies the same.

\(^3\) Cf. Ydhs, p. 17; Ypra, 18.2—5; Nīrātaparivājaka Up., (in SUS) p. 169.
the lower levels. Thus the gradual abandonment of a renouncer's insignia becomes the hallmark of the higher types of renouncers, especially of Paramahamsas. They cut the top-knot (śīkha) and discard the sacrificial thread (yajñopavīta). They may even abandon the begging-bowl and use the hand instead (pānipātrī) or eat from the ground like a cow (udarapātrī). Finally, they may even discard the staff, the water-pot and the loin-cloth and go about completely naked, without any insignes of their state (avaktaalināḥ: Jup 6) — except perhaps their very nakedness. The locus classicus of this view is the Paramahamsa Upaniṣad, 2: „A Paramahamsa lives without a staff, without a top-knot, without a sacrificial thread, without a garment.”

It is reasonable to presume that some ritual or ceremony must have accompanied the discarding of these important insignia. Unfortunately the sources are almost totally silent on this point. The Jābala Upaniṣad (6) contains a rare reference to such a rite. It says: „Having abandoned the triple staff, the water-pot and the sacrificial thread in water, saying: 'bhāh svāhā', let him seek after the Self.” A similar statement is made in the Turiyātītāvadhūta Upaniṣad (cf. above note 5). The rite alluded to in these documents is very simple and rudimentary. The items to be renounced are simply thrown in water. In all probability a more complex rite evolved over time, but until now we have had no evidence of one.

It was then a pleasant surprise in India in the Spring of 1978 to discover an important inscription of a renouncer, Rudradeva’s Saṃnyāsapadhati, in Bābīra, Madhya Pradesh. A further investigation showed that it is entitled Paṇcaṃāramavidhi, a minor work by M. Śaṅkara, in his ‘Notices of Sanskrit Literature’, Vol. X, No. 4238. That Ms. is now known to exist.

Description of the manuscripts:

The present edition of P is made from four manuscripts:

1. It is written at the end of a commentary on the Dādāvī śaktiśāstra. The Deccan College Press, Devanāgāri script. 43 folia, approximately 30 letters (akṣara).

2. The Ms. is dated samvat 1910 and has the following colophon:


It seems that the scribe of the Ms., who in 1855 A.D. transcribed Vāsū, was writing in the Ms. after the conclusion of the work (yatisamākārā upapujānīnāyāha), while also engaging in a Saṃnyāsapadhati, but before the conclusion of the rest of the Ms.

Siglum: D.
It was then a pleasant surprise for me to discover during my research in India in the Spring of 1978 a detailed procedure for discarding these important insignia of a renouncer. I found it buried in a manuscript of Rudradeva’s Śaṃnyāsapadādhiti. It is entitled Daṇḍatuyāgavidhi. Further investigation showed that it is substantially the same as a work entitled Pañcanāgaramavidhi, a manuscript of which was described by M. Schäffer in his ‘Notices of Sanskrit Manuscripts’ (Calcutta, 1892), Vol. X, No. 4238. That Ms. is now found in the Library of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta. No other manuscript of this work (henceforth P) is known to exist.

Description of the Manuscripts

The present edition of P is made on the basis of the following two manuscripts:

1. It is written at the end of a Ms. of Rudradeva’s Śaṃnyāsapadādhiti found in the Deccan College, Poona. Gorhe Collection, 63.

Paper. Devanāgarī script. 43 folia. 10.95 x 5.7 inches. 13 lines on a page, approximately 30 letters (aksara) on a line.

The Ms. is dated samvat 1910 and saka 1775 ( = 1853—54 A. D.). It has the following colophon:

śrīmanṛpravikramaśirasasamayātitsamaṇṇaḥ 1910 tathā ca śrīmanṛpravikramaśirasasamayātitsamaṇṇaḥ 1775 pramādinaśmaṃsatrasare δακσιάγγκανε
hemantartau mahāmāṅgalyapradamāsottame mārgaśirṣaṃśa
śuklaprātipadi prātār idam pustakam ārāhaya śrīgoddādakṣiṇa
tirasthakṣetrapunyastambhasthitaragopanāmakaḥbrahmagirisū
nunā lakṣmanā vā nānā gālavasyāsriramānasikasindhyākhya
rājasanānākṣerapeśu purvalikhitam āśārya śuklacaturdasyauṃ sūryastat
aṅgāhāsū na vaṇasu svahastenaīva likhitvā samāyitam prāptīmat
svārthātvaḥ parārthatvaḥ ca // śūkhaṃ bhavatu // kalyāṇadām
astūbhayor lekhakapāṭhakayoh // śīk (repeated 7 times).

It seems that the scribe of the Ms., Lakṣmaṇa Gorhe, is the same person who in 1855 A. D. transcribed Vāsudevaśrama’s Yatidharma-prakāśa. P is written in the Ms. after the chapter on the funeral of a renouncer (yatiseṃskāre upayoginirnayaḥ), which concludes Rudradeva’s Śaṃnyāsapadādhiti, but before the colophon. It is written by the same hand as the rest of the Ms.

Siglum: D.

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6 This is Ms. D used in my edition of the Ypra (cf. I, pp. 19—20).
Identity of the Text and its Author

In the epilogue D calls the work danḍatīyāpavidi (procedure of abandoning the staff): cf. note to 85. C, on the other hand, calls it paṇcamāśarmaṇvidhī in both the prologue (2) and the epilogue (85). It is difficult to determine which of these was the original title, or whether it had a title at all, for D presents the text as a portion of a larger work, while C assumes it to be an independent document. I have adopted the latter title, because it is less of a descriptive phrase than the former and because it is given as the title both at the beginning and the end of C.

C ascribes P to Śaṅkarācārya (cf. 85). It is, however, very improbable that it was composed by the great Advaita teacher. If his authorship of P was generally recognized, it is unlikely that the scribe of D would have failed to mention it.

In fact, Lakṣmīnāraṇya Gorhe, the scribe of D, seems to have believed that P was written by Rudradeva and that it was a portion of his Saṃnyāsapaddhatthi. This is indicated by the table of contents (ānukramaṇikā) that Gorhe has given at the beginning of D. The last entry in it reads: danḍavirajananapakāraḥ, ṣoḍasasamahāvākyādiḥ, iti danḍavisarjananādi samāptam. Immediately after that he writes: iti samnyāsapaddhatthyānukramaṇikā samāptā. Thus, according to Gorhe, P forms a part of the Saṃnyāsapaddhatthi. If he is right, then P was composed by Rudradeva, who wrote the Pratāpanārāśimha, of which the Saṃnyāsapaddhatthi is a section, in 1710–11 A. D.7 However, of the twenty-five or

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7 At the end of the Saṃskārapakāśa of his Pratāpanārāśimha, Torō Nārāyaṇa gives the date and place of its composition: śūka ḍrīṇaṇitaśatrudvēryāṇaśīrṣaṇaḥ addāvyānāsaṃnyāśaṣṭīkāpāppuṇā pūrveḥ (Ms. of the Oriental Institute, Baroda, Ser. No. 902, Acc. No. 1845 [Dharmāśāstra], folio 144; Bombay Univ. Ms. Catalogue, Book 3 [Vol. I—II], Ms. No. 1088, folio 223). Torō thus completed this section of his work, which section includes the Saṃnyāsapaddhatthi, in śūka 1632 (= 1710–11 A. D.) at Paithān in Maharashtra.
so Mss. of the Śāṁyāsapaddhati that I have collated in preparing a
critical edition of that text, none makes any mention of P. One must,
however, bear in mind that the Śāṁyāsapaddhati is but a small portion
of Rudrādeva’s voluminous legal treatise Pratāpanārasimha, sections of
which are scattered in numerous manuscript libraries of Maharashtra and
Gujarat. I have not been able to locate a single complete Ms. of the
Pratāpanārasimha. It is, therefore, possible that the present work may
be found elsewhere in the Pratāpanārasimha and that the manuscript
tradition followed by Gorhe has reproduced it with the Śāṁyāsapaddha-
ti because they deal with the same topic. I must, however, confess that
this is quite unlikely and that P probably was never a part of the
Pratāpanārasimha.

Whoever composed P, we are told, followed the description of the
rite given in a work called viśveśvaripaddhati (cf. 3 variant in D) or
viśveśvari (85). I have not been able to identify this work. Such a
description is not found either in Viśveśvara Sarasvatī’s Yatidharma-
sangrahā, often referred to as Viśveśvarapaddhati, or in Acyutāśra-
ma’s Śāṁyāsapaddhati, also called Viśveśvāryapaddhati. The auth-
orship of P cannot be determined without identifying this work.

With the scanty evidence we possess it is impossible to determine
the antiquity of the rite described in P. The rite has been transmitted in
the Advaita tradition; C, in fact, ascribes P to Śāmkara. As we have
noted above, it is the Advaita tradition that permits the abandonment
of the renounee’s insignia at the highest level of renunciation. Fur-
more, toward the conclusion homage is paid to Śāmkara (75) and to
several other Advaita teachers (76, 77, 81—83). If we accept that the
section 38—84, which is omitted in C, is an integral part of P, then the
mention of Vivaraṇācārya (83), i.e. Prakāśātman, indicates that it was
composed after the 11th century A.D. The rite described therein,
however, may antedate the composition of P.

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9 Cf. P. V. KANE, History of Dharmaśāstra (Poona, 1975), I, 2, pp. 1107,
1160. I have consulted the Ms. (Acc. No. 12548) of the Oriental Institute,
Baroda, which is entitled Viśveśvāryapaddhati and compared it with Acyutāśra-
ma’s Śāṁyāsapaddhati found in the same Institute (Acc. No. 1940). The two
differ on certain points, but are basically the same work. Other medieval works
may have been called Viśveśvari either because of the author’s name or because of
his devotion to Viśveśvara: cf. P. V. KANE, op. cit., I, 2, pp. 1106—07.
10 There is no consensus among scholars as to the date of Prakāśātman:
KARL POTTER (Bibliography of Indian Philosophies, Delhi, 1970, p. 147), 975
A.D.; S. DASGUPTA (A History of Indian Philosophy, Cambridge, 1922, II,
p. 103), 1200 A.D.; S. RADHAKRISHNAN (Indian Philosophy, London, 1929, II,
p. 451), 1200 A.D.
Description of the Rite

The rite of abandoning the insignia is performed on an auspicious day, e.g. during the last month before the summer solstice (4). It is performed probably in the morning, since reference is made only to the completion of morning duties (prātarāhānika) prior to the rite (4). The renouncer should first obtain the permission of his guru. This suggests that the guru would decide whether the candidate has reached the spiritual maturity necessary to undertake such a drastic form of renunciation.\(^{11}\)

Renouncers are not allowed to produce or to use fire. The rite, however, just as any Hindu ritual, requires a fire\(^{12}\). The candidate, therefore, has to obtain the services of a Brahmin to light a fire (4). No ritual formula is recited when the fire is lit, possibly because no formula besides the syllable om is permitted in the case of a Paramahamsa\(^{13}\).

The first item to be thrown in the fire is the Brahma-mudrā, which is a special way of tying a string around the staff to represent Brahmā. When a triple staff is carried, it is necessary to tie the three staffs together at different levels\(^{14}\). Probably under the influence of Tantrism, these knots came to be conceived of as mudrās symbolizing various deities or divine objects. The practice of tying mudrās was continued even by those renouncers, e.g. Paramahamsas, who carried only a single staff. Five such mudrās are mentioned: nāgamudrā, dhenumudrā, paraśumudrā, sākhamudrā and brahnamudrā, representing serpent, cow, axe, conch and Brahmā, respectively.\(^{15}\) The present account

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\(^{11}\) According to Mādhava-Vidyārānya, only an enlightened Paramahamsa (vidvatparamahamsa) is allowed to abandon the staff, whereas a seeker after knowledge (vidvidiparamahamsa) is required to carry one: cf. PaM, II, 2, p.175. A similar view is expressed in the Turīyāṭābhadhūta Up. (SUS, p.242), the Nārada-parivṛājaka Up. (SUS, pp.193—194), and the Śūtasamhitā, 3.5.14—45.

\(^{12}\) Both the Jābāla Up. (6) cited above and the Turīyāṭābhadhūta Up. (cf. above note 5) state that the items are thrown in water. It is probable that the fire was introduced into the rite at a later date. When a staff is damaged it is also thrown in water, saying: "Go to the sea, svāhā," samudram gaccha svāhete vināṣṭam prakṣepe jale (Medhātithi, cited in the Yatilīṅgasamathana, ed. cit., p.3). The Ypra cites the Vāyu Purāṇa: bhagnadandādikam caiva jale 'gūde kṣiped yatiḥ (Ypra, 68.78).

\(^{13}\) Cf. Ypra, 38.14; 40.11; Sūtasamhitā, 2.6.27—28.

\(^{14}\) Vāsudeva, who does not attach great importance to the mudrās, says: "... the three staffs ... are tied with a string of cow's hair to a width of three inches only in order to make it easier for one to carry them" (Ypra, 35.29). Cf. also Ypra, 68.88—93.

\(^{15}\) For an account of these mudrās see Ypra, 35.7—29.
mentions only brahmamudrā and parasāumudrā. Possibly in the tradition from which the present account is drawn only these two were in vogue\(^{16}\).

Next, the candidate unties the axe-mudrā and offers it in the fire. This mudrā symbolizes the axe carried by Paraśu-Rāma. It is normally tied almost at the top of the staff, just below the conch-mudrā.

After throwing the mudrās in the fire, the candidate begins the process of abandoning the staff. A Paramahamsa carries a single bamboo staff, while renouncers of lower orders carry a triple staff. The rite refers only to a single staff. The candidate first cuts his bamboo staff at each joint. The number of joints permitted range from a minimum of two to a maximum of eleven\(^{17}\). Each piece of the staff is then thrown in the fire separately, reciting the ritual formulae given at 13—18. The first verse of these formulae is reminiscent of the verse which the candidate recited when he took hold of the staff for the very first time at his initiation into renunciation:

As the discus in Viṣṇu’s hand,
As in Śiva’s hand the trident,
As the bolt in Indra’s hand,
So, O Staff, be in mine today.\(^{18}\)

The final verse (17—18) points to the allegorization that the insignia of a renouncer, in this case the staff, were subjected to\(^{19}\). Already in Manu (12.10) we find a similar allegory of the triple staff:

\(^{16}\) It is evident from Yṛṣa, 35.18—29, that various sections within the Advaita tradition disagreed as to both the number of mudrās one should have on the staff and their relative importance.

\(^{17}\) A text ascribed to Baudhāyana in the PaM (1, 2, pp. 157—159) states that the bamboo staff may have eleven, nine, seven, four, three or two joints. Cf. also Nṛnāyaṇaśīlha (ed. Gopala Shastri Nene; Chowkamba Sanskrit Series, 14; Benares, 1919—1930), p. 2139; Dharmasīlha (Kashi Sanskrit Series, 183; Benares, 1908), p. 982. The Śaṅkyaśīlaśīlamadhyatīṣati (cf. below note 22), however, speaks only of six-, eight-, ten-, twelve-, and fourteen-jointed staffs: "saddhiḥ sudarśanaṁ proktam nārāyanam athaṣṭakam | gopalāṁ dasābhik proktanvādāśāṁ vāsudevakam | caturdāśāṁ anantaṁ ca pareṇy etāni nānyathā || (folio 33b).

\(^{18}\) Cf. Yṛṣa, 17; Yṛṣa, 21.125—126.

\(^{19}\) In general, an internal quality either replaces or is symbolized by an external insign. For example, it is said in the case of a renouncer the top-knot consists of knowledge and the sacrificial thread consists of meditation on the Self. Cf. Kathāsruti Up., p. 34; Jābāla Up., 5; Brahma Up., pp. 85—87; Nārādparivṛjya Up., pp. 151—153 (all in Sūs).
That man is called a triple-staffed in whose mind these three are
firmly fixed: the control over his speech (vāgyāṇḍa), the control
over his thoughts (manodāṇḍa), and the control over his body
(kāyāṇḍa).\textsuperscript{20}

In the present instance the allegory has become the reality — the
renouncer discards the bamboo staff, for he possesses the superior staff of
wisdom, on which alone he will henceforth lean\textsuperscript{21}.

The next item to be discarded is the water-pot. It is broken and
thrown not in the fire but into a large river (mahānādi), possibly one that
flows into the sea. The theme of the ritual formula is similar to that
recited at the abandonment of the staff. The instrument of external
purification, namely the water-pot, is unnecessary, because the renoun-
cer has attained the internal purity caused by the knowledge of the
Ultimate.

A sentiment running through these formulae is melancholy, a feeling
of sadness like that felt at the parting of an old friend. One knows that
one must part, but the shared memories of a lifetime and the knowledge
that this parting is final make that moment sad. Notice the repeated
reference to the long time that the candidate has been associated with
these items: "O Brahma-mudrā ... who for so long hast remained on my
staff" (5—7), "(O Staff) ... in my hand hast thou remained throughout
this time" (15), "O Water-pot, thou ... didst purify me in the past" (21—
22). There is an interesting account of the formulae recited each time a
renouncer takes his staff in a work entitled Samnyāsāraraphaddhati\textsuperscript{22}.
The opening verse shows the intimate relationship existing between a
renouncer and his staff\textsuperscript{23}: mātrpitṛṣamo daṇḍo bhrātaro guravas tathā —
"The staff is like a father and a mother, like brothers and teachers."

\textsuperscript{20} vāgyāṇḍo 'tha manodāṇḍah kāyāṇḍah tathaiva ca | yasyaite nihita buddhau tridāṇḍī sa ucyate || Manu, 12.10.

\textsuperscript{21} The Paramahamsa Up. (SUS, p. 50) makes a similar statement regarding
the single-staffed renouncer: jñānaḍaḍa dṛrito yena ekadaṇḍa sa ucyate | kāśṭhaḍaṇḍa dṛrito yena sarvāsi jñānavarjitaḥ | sa ṣaṃti naraśaṁ ghorāṁ mahāavaram eva ca ||. For a discussion of this passage see Vidyāranya's JMV, pp. 111—112
and PaM, II, 2, pp. 177—178.

\textsuperscript{22} A manuscript of this work is found in the collection of the Prājña
52 folia. 10 lines on a page and 27 letters on a line. Not dated. This account is
found in folio 33b.

\textsuperscript{23} A renouncer is expected to carry the staff whenever he walks outside his
residence. A verse ascribed to Jambadagni, but also found in the Samnyās Up.
(SUS, p. 252), states: daṇḍatmanos tu samyojha sarvadaiśa vidhiyate | na daṇḍena
The last items to be discarded are the clothes, girdle and loincloth. The renouncer now returns to his condition at birth (26–28). He is naked both externally (without clothes) and internally (without possessions and desires). Henceforth he is expected to live alone (37) totally dedicated to the contemplation of the Self. His behaviour is so totally different from the ‘normal’ required of a man in society, it so contradicts the norms of social conduct, that he is considered by the world as a fool, a lunatic or a demon (37).

The essential part of the rite has now ended. In conclusion the naked renouncer recites the sixteen Great Sayings and recalls their import. Then he pays homage to Brahmā, Viśnu and Śiva and to twenty-two former saints and teachers who traversed the path that he has just undertaken.

**On the Pañcamāśrama**

The title of our text according to C is *pañcamāśramavidhi* — ‘the procedure for entering the fifth order of life (āśrama)’. Brāhmānicism, however, generally recognizes only four āśramas, those of the student, the householder, the hermit and the renouncer. The validity of a fifth āśrama has been the subject of controversy in Brāhmānic thought.

As early as Baudhāyana we observe a trend to subdivide the life-styles encompassed by the four āśramas. The classical formulation of these subdivisions is found in the Vaikhānasa-dharma-sūtra, 1.3–9, which passage is substantially the same as the Āśrama Upaniṣad (SUS, pp. 95–103). In it each of the four āśramas is said to encompass four types of life-style.

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21 vinā gacchād isukṣpapatrayam budhab || “It is enjoined that one should always carry a staff; without a staff a wise man should not travel the distance of three bow-shots.” Cf. Ydhs, p. 18; Ypra, 35.31–32; Jmv, p. 106.

22 Not all Advaita authorities agree that even the loincloth has to be discarded. Vāsudeva interprets the above mentioned passage of the Paramahamsa Up. (2) to show that, while clothes are discarded, the renouncer continues to wear a loincloth: “It is understood, however, that while the staff, the patched garment and the like are abandoned, the loincloth is not, because it is specifically mentioned in the first sentence while deliberately left out of the last, and because it is not excessively distracting” (Ypra, 4.112).

23 anumattatā unmattinoṣah — “Let him, though not mad, appear like one out of his mind” (Vasiṣṭha Dh. S., 10.19). Cf. Āśrama Up., 4; Jup, 6. amūdho mudhārāpyena cored dharmam adāśayam | yathānām avamanyerai pare sāradam eva hi || Mahābhārata, 14.46.50.

24 Cf. Baudhāyana Dh. S., 3.2.1–19; 3.3.1–14.

25 A similar division is found in the Mahābhārata, 12.235—236. The Kūrma Purāṇa (1.2.74—81) divides each āśrama into two.
renunciation, are classified into Kṣītikara, Bahūdaka, Haṁsa and Paramahamsa. None of these subdivisions, however, was considered an independent āśrama.

There was, nevertheless, a tendency from a very early date to consider some types of renouncers, especially Paramahamsas who had achieved the liberating knowledge (vidvatparamahamsa or jīvanmukta), as being in a state beyond the āśramas. They were hence called atyāśāramin. The earliest occurrence of this term is in the Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad (6.21) where Śvetāsvatara is said to have declared Brahman to "those beyond āśrama" (atyāśāraminibhyah). The meaning of the term in that context, however, is not altogether certain. The Nāradaparivrājaka Upaniṣad, on the other hand, clearly defines an ativarṇāśramin ("one beyond varṇa and āśrama") as a renouncer who has perceived the illusory nature of all phenomenal reality and has awakened to the absolute Truth. The Turīyātītavādāṇa Upaniṣad (SUS, pp. 242—44) is even more explicit. According to it, an avadhūta renouncer is 'beyond the fourth' (turīyātītā), i.e. beyond the state of a Paramahamsa, the fourth class of renouncer. When a Paramahamsa comes to realize the liberating Truth, he gives up all the symbols of the fourth āśrama, i.e. staff, water-pot, girdle and loin-cloth, and the conduct appropriate to the varṇas and āśramas (tyaktavarṇāśramācārah). The ativarṇāśramin is described also in the Śūtasthamhitā (3.5.14—45) of the Skanda Purāṇa, where he is identified with the guru.

In none of these sources, however, is this highest state of renunciation referred to as the fifth āśrama. Nevertheless, once a life-style had been recognized as transcending the four āśramas it would have been an easy passage to considering it as the fifth āśrama — the āśrama beyond the āśramas. I have not been able to find this view expressed in ancient documents, but the existence of such a view is demonstrated by its strong

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28 yaḥ sarveśvāryāpadeḥ vihinaṁ sarvasūktiṇaṁ | pāram ārthikavijñānaṁ sukhātmānaṁ svayamprabham | paratatvaṁ vijñāṇī so 'tivarṇāśrami bhavet || varnāśramādayo dehe māyāya parikalpitaṁ nātmavo bodharūpasya māma te sati sarvadā | tīśo yo veda vedantāḥ so 'tivarṇāśrami bhavat || yasya varṇāśramācāri gatiṁ svātmārthaṁ vā | svāmnā āśramān sarvān atitya svātmānī sīhitah || ye 'tītya te āśramān varuṇān ātmān eva sīhitah pumān | so 'tivarṇāśrami praktaḥ sarveśvāryāpadevēbhīḥ || tasmād anyagataḥ varuṇā āśramā api nārada || ātmānā ooripāh sarve bhavāntaṁ te nātmavedinaṁ || na vidhīr na pījakṣaṇa na varṣāvarṣajyakalpanā || brahmavijñānīnāṁ asti tathā sāṅyac ca nārada || Nāradaparivrājaka Up., SUS pp. 193—194. These verses are reproduced in the Śūtasthamhitā, 3.5.16—17, 19—20, 31—32, 36—37. It should be noted that the term ativarṇāśramin replaces the older atyāśramin.

29 This section of the Śūtasthamhitā is reproduced by Vidyārānya in his discussion of the ativarṇāśramin: cf. Jnv, pp. 22—24.
condemnation in the Kūrma Purāṇa (1.2.72—85). While recognizing that a yogi is beyond the āśramas (cf. 1.2.71, 83), the Kūrma denies that he constitutes a separate āśrama:

catvāro hy āśramāh proktā yoginām eka ucyate || 1.2.72
sarvakarmāni saṁnyasya saṁādhīm acalaṁ śrītaḥ |
yāste niścālo yogī sa saṁnyāśi na pañcamaḥ || 1.2.73

At the end of the discussion the author returns to this theme and again denies the validity of a fifth āśrama:

tasmād etad viṣṭāṇīdhvam āśramānāṃ caucṣṭayam |
sarveṣu vedaśāstraśu pañcamo nopaṇapadyate || 1.2.85

If not the author of P, at least the author of P’s title supported the view, so vigorously condemned by the Kūrma Purāṇa, that this final and highest state of renunciation constitutes the fifth āśrama.

Whether it is considered as the fifth āśrama or simply as beyond all āśramas, a life-style of total freedom — freedom from rules and customs, from duties and insignia — was recognized by a broad spectrum of Brāhmaṇical thinkers. P gives us precious information on the rite by which one adopts that life-style.

TEXT

1śrī gaṇeśāya namah |

2atha pañcamāśramavidhiṁ vyākhyāyāmāḥ | 3atra dandaśivarja

4ākramam āха | 4udagayanaḥ tamamāśādiśubhadine prātāruṇkādi sam-

5pādya guror vandalapirevaṁ tadajñayā brāhmaṇadvārā tūṣṇaṁ aṇaṁ 

6prājñyābhīṣyastraḥ brahmaṇudrām śīktiktya jhūvyaḥ |

7brahmaṇudre namas tubhyam gaccha tvam pārake dhuṇā |

8etāvatākālāpyantam mama daṁde vyavasthitā |

9pārakaṁ sarvadevaṁ nivāsaṣṭhānam ucyate |

8iṁ saṃprārthya | 9tataḥ paraśramudrām sadarākāṁ jhūvyaḥ |
12 tato: C atha; -parvaŋi: C parvani; jñānyāt: D jñati; 13 śūlaṃ; C śūlaṃ
14 daṇḍa: C daṇḍaṃ 16 gacchāda: D gacchāsu 17 daṇḍo vāk: CD daṇḍavāk
18 santi: C svastim; brue: D dhruvaṃ 19 prati- ...-vṛtyaḥ: C om. 21 kamandalo: C kamandalo (tu in margin first hand) 22 lam aśaṃ: D hy amale 26 ca: D om; 
visṛjot: D visarjot 27 nagnas . . . kṛtaṃ: D nagnas vatraṃ nāsti tathā mama
28 -devakāḥ: C devatāḥ 29 evam: D iti 31 yāṃ: C 'ham; -dhīyāsataparaḥ: C dhīyāsataparaḥ 32 nitya-: D dhāmya; -śaktiśāraṃ: ca bhūvah; D -śaktiśāraṃ: ca bhūvah; 33 -ādyagukah: C ādyagukah 36 -dārum: C dārum 37 ekāki: C ekākiṃ 38 39 C omits this entire section. 39 32 34 tatamam: D tatam
Translation

1Homage to Blessed Ganeśa!

2Now, we shall describe the procedure for entering the fifth order of life. 3Thereof he has given the manner in which the staff etc. are discarded.

4On an auspicious day, e.g. during the last month of the sun's northward passage, having performed the morning duties and the like, (the candidate) should worship his guru and, with his permission, get a Brahmin to silently kindle a fire. He should then worship that fire, untie the Brahama-mudrā, and offer it in the fire, 5entreating:
5-7 O Brahma-mudrā, homage to thee, who for so long hast remained on my staff. Go now to the fire; they call it the resting place of all the gods.

9-10 Next, he should offer the Paraśu-mudrā along with the string in the fire, saying:

10-11 O mudrā of Viṣṇu, homage to thee, who hast always remained in the hand of Paraśu-Rāma to protect me. Go now to the fire.

13 Thereupon he should cut the staff at each joint and offer (the pieces) in the fire saying:

13-15 As the discus in Viṣṇu’s hand and in Śiva’s the trident, as the staff in Brahmā’s hand and in Indra’s the bolt, so in my hand hast thou remained throughout this time. 16 Homage to thee, O wooden Staff! Go to the fire today. 17-18 I possess the staff of knowledge, as also the staffs that control the mind, speech and body. Of thee I have no need at all, yea I say, I have no need.

19 These ritual formulae are to be recited while offering each section of the staff.

20 Next, having filled the water-pot at a lake, he should break it and throw it into a large river, saying:

21-22 O water-pot, thou, who art the great tīrtha, didst purify me in the past. Away with thee! Henceforth I shall remain plunged in the tīrtha of knowledge. 23-24 I have obtained inner purity. What use have I then of external purification? Vain, O vain indeed, is external purification for one who lacks inner purity.

25 Finally, he should throw away his loin-cloth and girdle, as well as his clothes etc., at the village boundary, saying:

26-28 Clothless am I, naked! Without shame am I, day and night! Naked as at birth have I now become, clothless as were Śiva, Śuka and Vāmadeva.

29-30 Having thus abandoned everything, let the renouncer be unattached and spotless, without love, hatred and the like. Let him turn

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21-22 *tīrtha*: literally, a sacred bathing place. Here the water-pot is addressed as *tīrtha* because it performs the same sacred function of purification.

26-28 A very similar group of verses is found in the Maitreya Up., 3.1—24 (SUS, pp. 119—126). Verse 19 reads: *deśakālāvimuktō 'ṛtī dīgambarāsaṅkho 'ṣyā aham | nāsti nāśitāvimuktō 'ṛtī naṅkārāraṅkoh 'ṣyā aham ||.*
away from sensual objects. \(^{31-32}\) Devoting himself constantly to meditation and contemplation, let him ever engage in directly perceiving the import of the regular Vedāntas dealing with the Supreme Self. \(^{32}\) Let him cultivate virtues, such as humility, and show compassion to all creatures. \(^{34-35}\) Intent on any type of bathing, samādhyā etc., and on silent recitation, meditation and the like, let him concern himself about food and water only to assure his hunger and thirst. \(^{36}\) Let him avoid wives and property of others as well as touching precious metals. \(^{37}\) Thus let him wander alone on earth, as if he were a fool, a lunatic or a goblin.

\(^{38}\) Immediately thereafter he should recall the meaning of the sixteen Great Sayings:

A) \(^{39}\) The Rg-vedic saying of the Bhrāyasūra: "He perceived this very person as the all-pervading Brahman." (Aitūp 1.3.13)

\(^{40}\) The Yajur-vedic saying: "I am Brahman." (Bup 1.4.10)

\(^{41}\) The Śāma-vedic saying: "That art thou." (Chup 6.8.7; 6.9.4; 6.14.3)

\(^{42}\) The saying of the Atharvānas: "Know him alone as the one Self. Discard all other talk." (Mādūp 2.2.5)

\(^{43}\) All the sayings, it should be noted, follow this sequence.

B) \(^{44}\) "That yonder person is I myself. I am that yonder person." (Aitā 2.2.4.6)

\(^{46}\) "He who is here in the person and he who is yonder in the sun — he is one." (Tup 2.8.1; 3.10.4)

\(^{47}\) "That art thou." (Chup 6.8.7 etc.)

\(^{48}\) "I am the breathing spirit, the intelligent Self." (Kṣūp 3.2)

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\(^{34-35}\) Any type: The meaning is unclear. Perhaps it means that an advanced renouncer is not required to perform any definite type of bathing or samādhyā. He may perform them as he pleases.

\(^{36}\) Touching precious metals: I have taken dhātu to mean 'precious metal', e.g. gold and silver. There may be, however, other ways of interpreting this passage. Renouncers are forbidden to accept or even touch gold: cf. Ypāra, 68.20—21, 62—63, 107—112.

\(^{38}\) These sixteen Great Sayings constitute an artificial list. There is an attempt to find four Great Sayings in each of the four Vedas and thus to arrive at the symbolic number 4 × 4. Vāsudeva is quite frank about it. He says that these sayings are listed only to get four sets of four, for if they were truly distinct sayings the repetition of many of them in the list would involve the defect of tautology: ete vasiṁ soḍaśatvaṁ ca ekaṁyānaṁ catuṣṭāṁshāṁ tāṁ kurudhiśya, anyathā tu prāṇam-viṣṇu-vāyukti-pātak (Ypāra, 48.46—47).

\(^{43}\) The meaning is that in the following groups of four, the first belongs to the Rg-veda, the second to the Yajur-veda, the third to the Śāma-veda and the fourth to the Atharvā-veda.
C) 48."Brahman is intelligence." (Aitup 3.3)
49."I am Brahman." (Bup 1.4.10)
50."That art thou." (Chup 6.8.7 etc.)
51."This Self is Brahman." (Māṇup 2)

D) 52."He perceived this very person as the all-pervading Brahman." (Aitup 1.3.13)
53."He is your self, the inner controller, the immortal." (Bup 3.7.3)
54."He perceived ether as the all-pervading Brahman." (cf. Chup 4.10.4)
55."This, your self, is Brahman." (?)

56 These are the sixteen Great Sayings. 57."I am Brahman — he who knows this, on departing from this world . . ." Thus one meditates on the sayings of the four Vedas. "He has led to the region beyond the dust."

50OM Homage to Brahmā! 60Homage to Viṣṇu! 61Homage to Śiva! 62Homage to Vasiṣṭha! 63Homage to Parāśara! 64Homage to Veda-Vyāsa! 65Homage to Vaiśampāyana! 66Homage to Sanvartaka! 67Homage to Śvetaketu! 68Homage to Durvāsas! 69Homage to Jaḍabhāratā! 70Homage to Raivata! 71Homage to Vāmdeva! 72Homage to Sumantu! 73Homage to Jaimini! 74Homage to Pālal! 75Homage to Ācārya Śāmkara! 76Homage to Ācārya Hastāmalaka! 77Homage to Ācārya Troṭakā! 78Ho-

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57–58 This is an obscure passage. I favour taking sa evam etām lokāt pretya as a pratiṣkata. The complete text reads: sa ya evam etām lokāt pretya | etam annamayam atmānam upasamkrāmati | . . . "He who knows this, on departing from this world, proceeds on to that self which consists of food . . ." (Taittirīya Up., 2.8.1; 3.10.5). In its original context in the Taittirīya Upaniṣad, it refers to one who has grasped the Great Saying: "He who is here in the person . . ." (above 45).

iti caturāṇam vedānām: I have taken this to be an elliptic expression intended to show that the above consideration should be applied not only to the Great Saying: "I am Brahman" but also to all the Great Sayings of the four Vedas.

para rajase saivad om: This expression is found in Tripādiḥbhūtimahānārāyaṇa Up., 7.11; Tripurārājapīṇi Up., 1.1.9; Pārāyaṇa Up., 1.1. Cf. Upaniṣadārāmaḥ, p. 363. This, however, seems to be a derivative expression whose original we find in the Bup, 5.14.7: namas te tirīṣyāya darāṣṭāya padāya pararajaise [aśārd ado mā prāpad iti] — "Adoration to your fourth, sightly foot, the one above-the-darksome! Let not so-and-so obtain such-and-such!" The reference is to the fourth and invisible foot of the gāyatrī. The passage is an imprecation against a foe. In the variant, the expression is truncated and I am not sure whether the meaning also has undergone change. In the translation I have assumed such a change, namely that the negative imprecation is changed into a positive assertion regarding the liberated man.
Homage to Ācārya Dattātreya! 
Homage to Ācārya Śuka!
Homage to Nārada! Homage to Ācārya Dravīḍa! Homage to Ācārya Gaṇḍapāda! Homage to Ācārya Vivaraṇa!
Homage to all the teachers who have promoted Knowledge!

Thus ends the procedure for entering the fifth order of life contained in the Viśveśvara and composed by Ācārya Śaṅkara.

ABBREVIATIONS

Aitā Aitareya-āranyaka.
Aitup Aitareya-upaniṣad.
Āp Āpastamba-dharma-sūtra.
Bau. Dh. S. Baudhāyaṇa-dharma-sūtra.
Bup Brhadārāyana-upaniṣad.
C Ms. of P at Asiatic Society, Calcutta.
Chup Chāndogya-upaniṣad.
D Ms. of P at Deccan College, Poona.
Gau. Dh. S. Gautama-dharma-sūtra.
Jup Jābaḷa-upaniṣad.
Kṣup Kauṭikai-upaniṣad.
Māṇup Māṇḍūkya-upaniṣad.
Māṇup Māṇḍūkya-upaniṣad.
Ms(s) Manuscript(s).
P Pañcamāramavidhi.
Tup Taittirīya-upaniṣad.

81 Dravidācārya: This is probably a corrupt reading of Draimācārya. He was an early Vedānta teacher, who probably held some form of the Bhedābhedavinā.
82 Vivaraṇācārya: i.e. Prakāśatman, the author of the Pañcapādkāvivaraṇa.