dodecagonal base 100 metres long on each side. This was to be faced with brick, the centre to be filled with earth and stone. During construction the central mass of material sank eighteen metres into the alluvial subsoil. As subsidence continued the project was abandoned for a number of years. King Rama IV (1851-1868) authorized Pya Sri Vivadana to resume work on the shapeless mass and to make of it an artificial hill. It was completed early in the following reign and was so covered with brick and grey stucco as to resemble a steep Stone Mountain adorned with numerous shrines, small cetiyas, alcoves containing images, and memorials to the honoured dead. Its official name is Paramapavata. Two stairways wind about it to the top. One starts at the base on the south side, the other on the north side. For many decades the platform at the top afforded the best view obtainable of Bangkok and environs. During the Wat Fair held each November the two stairways are thronged with climbers who come to venerate the sacred relic in the cetiya at the summit.

The sacred ashes came from a ruined stūpa at Piprāwā, near the border of Nepal and also the site of ancient Kapilavatthu. During the partial excavation by Peppe in January 1898 (Revealing India’s Past, p. 119) was discovered a sandstone box which contained jewels, ornaments, and small urns was discovered. There was an ancient early Brāhmī inscription which has been translated:

“These relics of the Lord Buddha have been presented by the supreme Sakya Lord together with his grandchildren, son and wife.” (Sir Charles Eliott, Hinduism and Buddhism, III, 23)

The British government presented the relics to King Chulalongkorn, who sent Cao Pya Yomarāja to receive them. Portions of the relics were also given to representatives from Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Japan, and Siberia. The rest was enshrined in the cetiya on the Golden Mount, Bangkok, 23 May 1899.

Tropical rain and vegetation continually attack the surface of the Golden Mount and after a period of years cover it with green shrubbery. In 1954 it was again restored and the cracks cemented up. It is a royal Wat, second grade. The height of the Golden Mount is 77 metres. More recently a two-storey school building for monks and novices has been erected near the uposatha hall (bōi).

Bibliography:

1. History of Wat Saket by R. Lingat, JSS. XXIII, part 3 (April 1930).

K.E. Wells.

WAXING SYLLABLES is a principle that determines the sequence of terms in oral Pāli literature (See also VĀCA). According to this principle, words with fewer syllables in a series of terms are followed by words with an equal or greater number of syllables.

An example for a string of synonyms arranged according to the principle of “waxing syllables” is bhūṣa sappāggo lohaḥathajāī (D. II.240), where the three terms used to express the same basic meaning of “fear” follow each other with a syllable count of 2+3+4. Other examples are, dāḥiko assako anājihiko (M. I, 450), where the three terms used to describe the theme “poor” have a syllable count of 3+3+4; or aṣṭūṣa mahadhīnayo mahābhago (S. III, 112), three terms that refer to the opposite quality of being “wealthy”, and which have a syllable count of 2+4+4. Such strings can be quite long at times, as for example when the theme “old” is treated with altogether five synonyms, aṣṭu vuddho mahallato addhaugato vayo-anupatto (D. II, 100), resulting in a syllable count of 2+2+4+4+6.

The same principle can also be applied to verbs, such as when the practice of meditating is criticized, jñāvantā pajjihāvantā nijjñāvantā apajjñāvantā (M. I, 334), where the syllable count is 3+4+4+5; or when the Saṅgha is described as worthy of worship bhīṣoṇī pīhaṇī adoption dakkhiṇhī aṇḍiṣṭhakārapeto (D. III, 5), following a syllable count of 4+4+4+7. If a particular list of terms becomes too long, however, the principle of waxing syllables is applied to subunits within the listing. An example in case is the description of various types of talks that are unbecoming and should better be avoided (e.g. M. I, 513). This description covers talking about “king, robbers, ministers”, rājakaṭṭhaṃ, corakakaṭṭhaṃ, mahānattacakattham (4+4+6); “armies, dangers, battles, food, drink, clothing, beds”, senaskattham, bhayaṃkaraṃ, yuddhaṃkaraṃ, annakakattham, pānakakattham, vatthakattham, sayanaṃkakattham (4+4+4+4+4+5); “garlands, perfumes, relatives, vehicles, villages, towns, cities,
counties”, mālākathā, gandhakathā, nārakathā, yānakathā, gānakathā, nigamakathā, nagarakathā, Janapadakathā (4+4+4+4+5+5+6); and “women, heroes, streets, wells, the dead”, itthikathā, sārikathā, visadhikathā, kumhratthānakathā, pubbapetakathā (4+4+5+6+6).1

The crescendo effect that results from the application of the principle of waxing syllables is a typical feature of the early discourses. The function of this principle is predominantly to facilitate recall of the passage in question, as “it is surely easier to remember a sequence of words arranged in this manner according to syllable length”. Though the principle of waxing syllables has had a considerable influence on the present shape of early Pāli literature, it is not implemented invariably, especially when doctrinal reasons militate against it. This is the case, for example, when the seven factors of awakening, bhotjaṅga, are listed, or the factors of the noble eightfold path. Here the doctrinal significance of listing the respective terms in a particular order is of more importance than concern about arranging them according to syllable count. Thus the awakening factors are listed as sati, Dhammacetiya, viriya, piti, passaddhi, samādhi, and upākkī, resulting in a rather irregular syllable count of 2+5+3+2+3+3+3. Since according to the Aṅgāpaññatasī Sutta each factor of awakening arises in dependence on its predecessor(s) (M. III, 85), the order of terms is doctrinally important and could therefore not accommodate the principle of waxing syllables. Similarly in the case of the noble eightfold path, where according to the exposition in the Mahācattārīsaka Sutta a comparable dependence of each factor on its predecessor(s) obtains (M. III, 76). The actual listing of sammā-dīṭṭhi, sammā-sankappa, sammā-vācā, sammā-vāyūna, sammā-sati, and sammā-samādhi then indeed results in an irregular syllable count of 4+5+5+4+5+4+5.

Nevertheless, the principle of waxing syllables appears to be responsible for the order of terms found in a number of listings, standard expressions and compounds. An example in case would be Dhammavinaya (e.g. M. I, 284), where the reason for Vinaya to stand in second position may well be the fact that Vinaya has three syllables, and thus according to the principle of waxing syllables should stand after the two-syllable term Dhamma. Another such case would be a pācītīyita regulation according to which a monk should not teach more than “six or five” words in particular circumstances, cha-pāīca, where the sequence of the numerals seems to follow the principle of waxing syllables against their natural order (Vin. IV, 21). Yet another example is itthi vā puriso vā (M. I, 32), also found in the compound form itthi-purisa (Ja. V, 461), where for the “woman” come before the “man” stands in contrast to the subordinate position of women in ancient Indian patriarchal society. In fact, once the syllable count is the same, the male usually precedes the female, cf. e.g. devo vā devi vā (D. II, 26); yakkha-potako vā yakkha-potikā vā gandhabbo vā gandhabbīvā (D. III, 203); kamākā vā kamārikā vā (M. I, 234); upāsakā ca... upāsikā ca (M. I, 493).3 Hence in the case of listing itthi vā puriso vā, the reason for adopting this sequence would be the respective syllable count, itthi having 2 and purisa 3 syllables.

The same principle occurs also in Jain scriptures, where the series napecam, ghām, vāditam (e.g. D. I, 6) has its counterpart in nattā gītā, vātīya.4 In fact, to arrange words in an increasing syllable count appears already in Vedic texts, and is recognized by Pāṇini as a rule of dvanda compounds.5

Analayo

References
3 An exception to this pattern is mātā vā pitā vā (e.g. D. II, 26). The Saddhārū (Burm. Ed. I, 73) explains that in this case the sequence is due to euphonic reasons.
5 Caland: “ A rhythmic law in language” Acta Orientalia, 9, 1931:59-68, quotes Pāṇini 2.2.34 and then provides a series of examples where due to following the law of waxing syllables the compound members in a dvanda come in a sequence that is in opposition to their natural order (cf. esp. p. 62 the examples stripumāṃsu and Kanyākumārau).