

阿僧祇究竟是多大？

How Large is One Asamkhyeya?

比丘 近永 文/譯

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阿僧祇是佛教經典中經常出現的梵文名詞，譬如：釋迦牟尼佛是經過三大阿僧祇劫的修行才成佛的。阿僧祇意譯不可算計，然而，它是否真的大到無法計算嗎？丁福保、佛光及Soothill/Hodous^[1]等佛學字典皆說一阿僧祇等於一千萬萬萬萬萬萬萬兆（ 10^{47} ），而Buddhism A to Z^[2]則說一阿僧祇等於10的59次方（ 10^{59} ）。Thomas Cleary將八十華嚴由中文翻譯為英文的Flower Ornament Scripture^[3]，他計算出一阿僧祇等於10的 2.03×10^{32} 次方（ $10^{202,986,585,220,637,305,510,651,276,820,480}$ ）。究竟誰是誰非呢？

世親菩薩著、玄奘大師中譯的『阿毘達磨俱舍論』^[4]第三分別世品論及六十數：『有一無餘數始為一，一十為十，十十為百，十百為千，十千為萬，十萬為洛叉，十洛叉為度洛叉，十度洛叉為俱胝…十大跋邏攙為阿僧企耶。於此數中忘失餘八。』此六十數為十進位，十萬為洛叉，阿僧祇是所列的五十二數中的最大數，故一阿僧祇為 10^{51} 。根據此論，忘失的八數都比阿僧祇大，翻譯名義大集^[7]更列出此八數的名稱（見佛光佛學辭典【五十二數】條）。如忘失的八數都比阿僧祇小^{[5],[8]}，則一阿僧祇為 10^{59} 。換言之，一阿僧祇介於 10^{51} 及 10^{59} 之間，視忘失八數的大小而定。

然而，般若法師（西元768年）翻譯的四十華嚴^[9]第十卷列有144個數字，阿僧祇是第125大數。經文節錄如下：『所謂：百千為一洛叉；一百洛叉為一俱胝；俱胝俱胝為一阿庾多；阿庾多阿庾多為一那由他……』由此可計算出一洛叉等於 10^5 ，一俱

Asamkhyeya is a Sanskrit word that appears often in the Buddhist texts. For example, Shakyamuni Buddha is said to have practiced for three great *asamkhyeya kalpas* before becoming a Buddha. *Asamkhyeya* means ‘incalculable’; however, is it really too large to calculate? Ding Fubao (丁福保), Foguang (佛光), and Soothill/Hodous’^[1] Buddhist Dictionaries all state that one *asamkhyeya* is equal to 10 to the power of 47 (10^{47}), while *Buddhism A to Z*^[2], among others, states 10 to the power of 59 (10^{59}). The *Flower Ornament Scripture*^[3] (*Avatamsaka Sutra*) translated from Chinese into English by Thomas Cleary states an *incalculable (asamkhyeya)* is equal to 10 to the power of 2.03×10^{32} ($10^{202,986,585,220,637,305,510,651,276,820,480}$). Which one is correct then?

Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakosha*^{[4],[5]*} talks about 60 numbers from 1 up, with 10-fold consecutive increases; however, eight numbers are missing from the list. The Chinese version translated by the Venerable Xuan Zang makes it very clear that *asamkhyeya* is the largest one in the list of 52 numbers^[6], one *asamkhyeya* is thus equal to 10^{51} . Mahavyutpatti^[7] further lists these eight missing numbers (also see 五十二數 in Foguang Dictionary). However, one *asamkhyeya* may be equal to 10^{59} , if all eight missing numbers are smaller than it^{[5],[8]}. Or one *asamkhyeya* may be somewhere between 10^{51} and 10^{59} , depending on where the eight missing numbers are located.

On the other hand, Roll 10 of the *Gandavyuha*^[9] translated from Sanskrit into Chinese by Prajna (768 C.E.) lists 144 numbers and *asamkhyeya* is the 125th one. It states: “100,000 makes one *laksha*, 100 *lakshas* makes one *koti*. A *koti* of *kotis* makes one *ayuta*. An *ayuta* of *ayutas* makes one *nayuta*...” Hence 1 *laksha* equals to 10^5 , 1 *koti* equals to 10^7 , 1 *ayuta* equals to 10^{14} , 1 *nayuta* equals to 10^{28} ..., and 1

Table 1. Comparisons of Some Numbers from *Kosha* and Various *Avatamsaka Sutras* (numbers listed are powers of 10)
 表一、華嚴經三種譯本及俱舍論中常見數值之比較 (表列值為10的次方)

	俱舍論 Kosha	四十華嚴 Gandavyuha	六十華嚴 60 Rolls Avat.	八十華嚴 80 Rolls Avat.
洛叉 Laksha	5	5	5 [^]	5 [*]
俱胝 Koti	7	7	10	7
那由他 Nayuta	11 ^{^^}	28	40	28
阿僧祇 Asamkhyeya	51-59	7.44 x 10 ³⁷	5.07 x 10 ³¹	7.10 x 10 ³¹
不可說 Ineffable	--	4.88 x 10 ⁴²	3.32 x 10 ³⁶	4.65 x 10 ³⁶
不可說不可說 Ineffable Ineffable	--	1.95 x 10 ⁴³	1.33 x 10 ³⁷ **	1.86 x 10 ³⁷

[^] Called 百千; 稱爲『百千』

^{*} Assumed value; 設定值

^{^^} Called 那庾多; 稱爲『那庾多』

^{**} Called 不可說轉轉; 稱爲『不可說轉轉』

References 參考資料:

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5. *Abhidharmakoshabhasyam of Vasubandhu*, vol. 2, Chap. 3, English translation by Leo M. Pruden, Berkeley, CA: Asian Humanities Press, 1991.
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8. *Buddhist Cosmology* by W.R. Kloetzli, p.117, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983.
9. *Gandavyuha*, Roll 10, translated by Prajna. 《大方廣佛華嚴經》(四十華嚴) 卷10 〈入不思議解脫境界普賢行願品〉. CBETA, T10, no. 293, p. 704, c28-p. 706, a12.
10. *Avatamsaka Sutra*, Roll 45 (Chapter 30), translated by Shikshananda. 《大方廣佛華嚴經》(八十華嚴) 卷45 〈阿僧祇品第三十〉. CBETA, T10, no. 279, p. 237, b15-p. 238, b6.
11. *Avatamsaka Sutra*, Roll 29 (Chapter 25), translated by Buddhadhara. 《大方廣佛華嚴經》(六十華嚴) 卷29 〈心王菩薩問阿僧祇品第二十五〉. CBETA, T09, no. 278, p. 586, a13-c15.