


ARTICLE

## “Gift” in Gāndhārī epigraphical sources. A comparative analysis of *G. dana-*, *danamuha-* and *deyadhaṃma-*

Alessandro Giudice 

Department of Literature, Languages and Cultural Heritage, University of Cagliari, Cagliari, Italy  
Email: [alessandro.giudice@unica.it](mailto:alessandro.giudice@unica.it)

### Abstract

This article examines the lexicon for “gift” in the Gāndhārī epigraphical corpus, focusing on three key word-forms: *G. dana-*, *danamuha-* and *deyadhaṃma-*. These terms, which denote the meaning of “gift”, appear 36, 111 and 14 times respectively (both as single words and as compound constituents) in Gāndhārī inscriptions currently recorded in the CKI. Despite their frequent appearance, existing scholarship has primarily restricted itself to identifying their synonymous functions or analysing their grammatical construction in the case of the two compounds. No comprehensive study has yet catalogued all occurrences of these word-forms, traced their semantic development or examined the reasons behind their changing usage over time. This article addresses this gap by providing a complete inventory of the occurrences of these word-forms in the Gāndhārī epigraphical corpus and examining their use in non-Gāndhārī sources. It also presents a semantic analysis, exploring their synchronic and diachronic relationships within Gāndhārī inscriptions.

**Keywords:** Gāndhārī; Gāndhārī epigraphy; Middle Indo-Aryan languages; Gandhāra; gift; Buddhism

### 1. Introduction: an examination of the Gāndhārī lexicon for “gift” in the epigraphical corpus

The gift (*dāna*) – in its two facets of gift-giving and gift-receiving – holds a central position within South Asian cultures, in which, from an anthropological point of view, it is characterized in ways that differ from other civilizations. Compared to Mauss’s general theory (cf. Mauss 1923), gifts are expected to be non-reciprocal in Indian society (see Parry 1986: 459–63; Michaels 1997). From the last centuries before the Common Era, which constituted the post-Vedic period, the gift has undoubtedly been one of the issues on which Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina religious traditions have focused in systematizing their own rules of conduct. As Heim (2004) demonstrated, reflection on knowing how to give found its highest expression during the medieval period (particularly between the tenth and thirteenth centuries) when Brahmanical *Dharmanibandhas*, Jain *Śrāvakācāras* and Buddhist *Saṅgahas* were composed. However, as for earlier periods, there is a lack of normative texts, and there is consequently the risk of superimposing chronologically subsequent rules about gifts on the earlier Vedic periods. In this regard, Candotti and Pontillo (2019a: 25–8) stated that the methodology to be employed has to mix philological and linguistic research, considering the diachronic, diatopic and diastratic features stratified in the Vedic corpus. Following this methodology, the scholars conducted a survey of Vedic

© The Author(s), 2026. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of SOAS University of London. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives licence (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0>), which permits re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided that no alterations are made and the original article is properly cited.

sources resulting in different attitudes towards gift-accepting (based on the analysis of Ved. verbal base *prati-grah-/grabh-* and its derivatives) which may reflect at least two specific Indo-Aryan cultural matrices most likely coexisting in different geographical areas (see Candotti and Pontillo 2019a). An analogous work was devoted to investigating the association between gift and merit after the donation of *dakṣiṇā* in the Vedic *Samhitās* and *Suttapīṭaka* (based on the analysis of Ved. *dakṣiṇīya-* and P. *dakkhiṇeyya-*), and a reappraisal of the original meaning of *dakṣiṇā* as “magnificence” (based on the analysis of Ved. *dākṣiṇā-* and P. *dakkhiṇā*) (see Candotti, Neri and Pontillo 2020; 2021).

In this framework, the article aims to explore a South Asian culture that has not been previously analysed, namely the Gandhāra culture. Within the Gāndhārī gift lexicon found in epigraphical sources, the focus is on a triad conveying the meaning of “gift”: *G. dana-* (which can also mean “giving”), *danamuha-* and *deyadhamma-* (in the version in which they are recorded in Baums and Glass 2002b), which, in the actual corpus of Gāndhārī inscriptions,<sup>1</sup> occur 36, 111 and 14 times respectively, both as a single word and as a compound constituent. This triad has only partially interested scholars, who have limited themselves to recording their synonymous use or commenting on their grammatical construction in the case of the two compounds. Apart from some significant reflections by Damsteegt (1978), there is a lack of scholarship that collects all the occurrences of these three word-forms, analyses them semantically and then questions whether a rationale can be established for their use over time in Gāndhārī inscriptions. This article seeks to address this gap. To commence, I present a comprehensive inventory of occurrences of *G. dana-*, *danamuha-* and *deyadhamma-* within the Gāndhārī epigraphical corpus, hitherto unavailable. The findings are supplemented by a reference to their attestation in sources beyond the Gāndhārī context, encompassing both epigraphical and literary references (see section 2). Subsequently, I examine the data collected from the semantic point of view, focusing on the synchronic and diachronic relationship among the three word-forms denoting “gift” in Gāndhārī inscriptions (see section 3).

## 2. The occurrences of *G. dana-*, *danamuha-* and *deyadhamma-* in the Gāndhārī epigraphical corpus and their attestation in extra-Gāndhārī sources

### 2.1. *G. dana-*

The *G.* word-form *dana-* (< OIA *dāna-*) is attested as a single word in the corpus of Gāndhārī inscriptions in 27 occurrences. For completeness, I report that it is also attested in manuscripts in 19 occurrences and documents in 4 occurrences, but it does not occur in coins. In all three corpora, the word-form maintains the semantic ambivalence with which it is endowed in the Vedic corpus: it can denote “gift” per se (i.e. *nomen rei actae*) and “giving” (i.e. *nomen actionis*). Sticking to inscriptions, *G. dana-* is also attested as a compound constituent in the following instances:

- The left-hand constituent of *danamuha-* (see section 2.2) and *danasaṃyuta-* (< OIA *dānasaṃyukta-*, “connected with giving”, attested twice in Aśoka’s inscriptions: CKI 5, 19).
- The right-hand constituent of *aśogadana-* (presumably “an Aśoka gift (?)”, attested once in CKI 211), *dhammadana-* (“giving/gift of the *dharma*”, attested five times in CKI 11, 25 and 48) and *ṣadhadana-* (“gift from faith”, attested once in CKI 53) (see Table 1).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> At the time this article was written, the Gāndhārī epigraphical corpus (CKI) contained 1,258 inscriptions (see CKD, CKI, CKM *Catalog of Gāndhārī Texts*, Baums and Glass 2002a).

<sup>2</sup> Outside the corpus of inscriptions, *G. dana-* also occurs as a compound constituent in Gāndhārī manuscripts and Niya documents. As for Gāndhārī manuscripts, it occurs as the right-hand constituent of *amiṣadana-* (“gift

**Table 1.** Comprehensive inventory of the 36 occurrences of *G. dana-* as a single word and as a compound constituent in the Gāndhārī epigraphical corpus (CKI)

Inscription	Date	Findspot	Form	Collocation
RE III Shāhbāzgarhi (CKI 3)	250 BCE approx. <sup>3</sup>	Shahbazgarhi, Mardan District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	D: ( <i>dano</i> )	Agreeing with ( <i>*sadhu</i> ) ("good")
RE V Shāhbāzgarhi (CKI 5)	=	=	N: <i>danas[a]yute</i> "concerned with giving" [compound constituent]	Agreeing with <i>ayam</i> ("this one")
RE VII Shāhbāzgarhi (CKI 7)	=	=	E: <i>dane</i>	∅
RE VIII Shāhbāzgarhi (CKI 8)	=	=	E: <i>danam</i>	∅
RE IX Shāhbāzgarhi (CKI 9)	=	=	G: <i>dana</i>	∅
RE XI Shāhbāzgarhi (CKI 11)	=	=	B: <i>danam</i> B: <i>dhramadana</i> [compound constituent] C: <i>dana</i> E: <i>dhra-</i> <i>madanena</i> [compound constituent]	(B): Agreeing with <i>ed[i]sam</i> ("such") (B): Agreeing with <i>yadiśam</i> ("like which") (C): ∅ E: Agreeing with <i>[te]na</i> ("by this")
RE XII Shāhbāzgarhi (CKI 12)	=	=	A: <i>danena</i> B: <i>[da]na</i> L: <i>[da]na[m]</i>	∅

(Continued)

of food", attested once in CKM 274), *dharmmadana-* ("giving/gift of the *dharmā*", attested once in CKM 274), *dharmmadanada-* ("state of giving the *dharmā*", attested once in CKM 128) and *pracayadana-* ("giving/gift of support", attested three times in CKM 264). As for Niya documents, it occurs as the left-hand constituent of *danagrahana-* (lit. "giving and taking", attested 20 times only in the Niya documents as "commercial transaction" or "claim for payment") and *danayidava-* (presumably meaning "to be made to give", according to Burrow [1937: 113], attested once in CKD 164) and as a right-hand constituent of *aḥhadana* ("gift of property", attested twice in CKD 58, 149) and *pumnadana-* (personal name, presumably meaning "having a full gift", attested once in CKD 318).

<sup>3</sup> According to Olivelle (2023: 60–84, 277–320), the period of composition of Aśoka's Edicts was between 257 and 241 BCE.

Table 1. (Continued.)

RE III Mānsehrā (CKI 17)	=		Mardan District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	D: <i>dane</i>	Agreeing with <i>sadhu</i> (“good”)
RE V Mānsehrā (CKI 19)	=	=		N: <i>danasamyute</i> “concerned with giving” [ <u>compound constituent</u> ]	Agreeing with <i>iyam</i> (“this one”)
RE VII Mānsehrā (CKI 21)	=	=		E: <i>dane</i>	∅
RE VIII Mānsehrā (CKI 22)	=	=		E: <i>dane</i>	∅
RE IX Mānsehrā (CKI 23)	=	=		G: [ <i>dane</i> ]	∅
RE XI Mānsehrā (CKI 25)	=	=		B: <i>dane</i> B: <i>dhramadane</i> [ <u>compound constituent</u> ] C: <i>dan[e]</i> E: [ <i>dhra</i> ]mada- nena [ <u>compound constituent</u> ]	(B): Agreeing with <i>ediše</i> (“such”) (B): Agreeing with [ <i>a</i> ]diše (“like which”) (C): ∅ (E): Agreeing with <i>te[na]</i> (“by this”)
RE XII Mānsehrā (CKI 26)	=	=		A: <i>danena</i> B: <i>dana</i> L: <i>danam</i>	∅
Plate of Vasa-Abdagases (CKI 459)	Year 9 of Azes = 39 BCE		Buner, Buner District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan (uncertain)	<i>dana</i>	∅
Relic Inscription of Naganamda (CKI 454)	Year 50 (of Azes? = 3 CE)		Samarbagh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	C2: [ <i>dana</i> ]	∅
So-called Takht-i-Bahi Inscription of the Year 103 (CKI 53)	Year 103 (of Azes? = 56 CE)		Takht-i- Bahi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	4: [ <i>sa</i> ]dhadana “gift from faith” [ <u>compound constituent</u> ]	Agreeing with <i>par[i]vara</i> (“retinue”)

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued.)

Reliquary Inscriptions of Yasi Kamui and Śuḍasa (CKI 48)	Undated – dated to the first century CE due to internal elements (see Falk 2011: 133–5)	Mathura, Mathura District, Uttar Pradesh, India	H': <i>dhamadana</i> [compound constituent]	∅
Zeda Inscription of the Year 11 (CKI 148)	Year 11 of Kaniṣka = 137 CE	Zeda, Swabi District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	5: <i>dana</i>	∅
Bedadi Copper Ladle (CKI 67)	Undated – datable starting from the third century CE approx. due to linguistic factors (cf. Majumdar 1923: 345–6)	Bedadi, Mansehra District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	[ <i>da</i> ]na	∅
Peshawar Museum Inscription No. 21 (CKI 154)	Undated – datable starting from the third century CE approx. due to linguistic factors (cf. Konow 1929: 156)	Unknown	4: <i>daṇas[ya]</i>	∅
Shaikhān Dherī Pottery Graffiti (CKI 211)	Undated	Shaikhān Dherī, Charsadda District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>aśoadana</i> “Aśoka gift (?)” [compound constituent]	∅
Rosette (CKI 504)	Undated	Ranigat, Buner District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>daṇa</i>	∅
Qoratepa Potsherd (CKI 649)	Undated	Termez, Surxondaryo, Uzbekistan	<i>da[na]</i>	∅
Qoratepa Potsherd (CKI 759)	Undated	=	<i>dana</i>	∅
Bronze door (CKI 1113)	Undated	Mingora, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	A: <i>daṇa</i>	∅

Key: = equal to what is found above; ∅ no collocation available.

## 2.2. G. *danamuha-*

The G. compound *danamuha-* (mainly attested with the spelling *danamukha-* or *daṇamukha-*, more rarely with the spelling *daṇamuha-*) is only attested in the Gāndhārī epigraphical corpus – it is not attested in Gāndhārī manuscripts, documents and coins. Of the three word-forms under analysis, this one appears most frequently in the inscriptions, with a total of 111 occurrences (see Table 2). Its OIA equivalent (presumably *\*dānamukha-* or *\*dānamukhya-*) does not occur in Vedic and Sanskrit sources, and, as Damsteegt (1978: 170–1) suggests for one of its rare extra-Gāndhārī occurrences, an influence from Gandhāra can reasonably be assumed.<sup>4</sup> For the current state of discoveries, the compound *danamuha-* with its variant spellings has to be considered a Gāndhārī coinage. The scholarship generally translates the compound *danamuha-* as “gift”/“donation” (therefore, as a synonym of G. *dana-* in the sense of “gift”; cf., for example, Baums 2018: 68) or “pious gift”/“pious donation” (cf., for example, Falk 2009: 27).<sup>5</sup>

**Table 2.** Comprehensive inventory of the 111 occurrences of G. *danamuha-* in the Gāndhārī epigraphical corpus (CKI)

Inscription	Date	Findspot	Form	Collocation
Fatehjang Stone Inscription of the Year 68 (CKI 45)	Year 68 (of Maues? = 13 BCE)	Maira, Chakwal District, Punjab, Pakistan	<i>daṇamukho</i>	∅
Mount Banj Inscription (CKI 52)	Year 102 (of Maues? = 22 CE)	Kabal Tehsil, Swat District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	1: <i>daṇam[u]kho</i>	Agreeing with <i>kuo</i> (“well”) as the predicate nominative
Dewai Inscription of the Year 200 (CKI 110)	Year 200 (of Yona? = 25 CE)	Dewai, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	2–3: <i>[da]ṇamu[ho]</i>	Agreeing with <i>toyam[da]</i> (“water-giver”) as the predicate nominative
Relic Inscription of Ramaka and Uḍita (CKI 243)	Undated – datable to the first century CE as found in association with CKI 251 (dated to 27 CE) (see Baums 2012: 215, fn. 32)	Unknown	1: <i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅

(Continued)

<sup>4</sup> To my knowledge, as for non-Gāndhārī epigraphical sources, the MIA word-form *dānamukha-* is attested only in the following cases: a) one Jain inscription of Mathurā (cf. Nagar 1942: 120); b) inscription no. 8 in the Karle caves (cf. Senart 1902–03: 54; Tsukamoto 1996–2003: I, 458); c) inscription no. 1 in Bāmiyān (cf. Tsukamoto 1996–2003: III, 483). As for literary sources, there are some late occurrences of P. *dānamukha-* in Pāli commentaries and other non-canonical works: corpus research on the *Online Pāli Tipiṭaka* reveals that P. *dānamukha-* has 44 occurrences.

<sup>5</sup> A recent exception to this general trend is Falk (2023: 18), who, in his comment on G. *arogadaḥṣina-* (= Skt. *ārogyadaḥṣiṇā-*), meaning “gift of health”—a reward given for donations to the order—interprets G. *danamuha-* as referring to the “start of the donation”. In this interpretation, in the specific context of *arogadaḥṣina*, the G. word-form *danamuha-* denotes a triggering donation explicitly given to receive *daḥṣiṇā* in return as a reward.

Table 2. (Continued.)

Relic Inscription of Śivarakṣida (CKI 50)	Undated – datable to 20–50 CE approx. due to numis- matic and palaeographical factors (see Fussman 1987: 70)	Bimaran, Nangarhar, Afghanistan	<i>daṇamuhe</i> (lid) <i>daṇamuhe</i> (base)	∅
Inscribed Stone Bowl (CKI 404)	Undated – datable to the first half of the first cen- tury CE (see Salomon 2000: 60)	Unknown	<i>daṇamuhe</i>	∅
Silver Goblet A (CKI 1182)	Undated – datable to the Indo-Parthian period, perhaps around the earlier part of the first century CE, due to palaeographical factors (see Salomon 2022: 256–7)	Unknown	<i>daṇamu[khe]</i>	∅
Silver Goblet B (CKI 1183)	=	=	2: <i>[daṇa]mukhe</i>	∅
Silver Goblet C (CKI 1184)	=	=	(* <i>da</i> ) <i>ṇamu[khe]</i>	∅
Silver Cup (CKI 1185)	=	=	<i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Silver Bowl (CKI 1186)	=	=	<i>da[ṇa]mu[khe]</i>	∅
Copper Ladle A (CKI 1187)	=	=	<i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Copper Ladle B (CKI 1188)	=	=	<i>daṇamukha</i>	∅
Relic Inscription of Ariyaśrava (CKI 358)	Year 98 of Azes = 51 CE	Dir District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	3: <i>daṇamukho</i>	∅
Peshawar Museum Inscription No. 1160 from Takht-i-Bahi (CKI 54)	Undated – if linked with CKI 53 (around 56 CE), dat- able to the second half of the first century CE (cf. Konow 1929: 63)	Takht-i- Bahi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	2: <i>da[namukhe]</i>	∅
Relic Inscription of Priyavaṃśa (CKI 331)	Year 126 of Azes = 79 CE	Unknown	C14: <i>daṇamuhe</i>	∅
Inscription of Year 265 (CKI 1180)	Year 265 of Yona = 90 CE	Unknown	2: <i>daṇamukho</i>	∅

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued.)

Kham Zargar Sieve (CKI 233)	Undated – datable to the first century CE for palaeographical factors (see Falk 2000–01: 33)	Bagram, Bagram District, Parwan, Afghanistan	<i>danamukho</i>	∅
Dharmarajika Lamp Inscription (No. 1) (CKI 68)	Undated – found in a structure of around the end of the first century CE (see Konow 1929: 89)	Dharmarajika, Taxila, Rawalpindi District, Punjab, Pakistan	2: <i>dana-mukh[e]</i>	∅
Relic Inscription of the Son of Ganavhryaka (CKI 150)	Undated – palaeographically written in comparatively early Kharoṣṭhī (see Baums 2012: 249, fn. 108)	Mansehra, Mansehra District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>daṇamukho</i>	∅
British Library Pot C (CKI 371)	Undated – probably datable to the period between the early first century and mid-second century CE due to palaeographical and linguistic factors (see Salomon 1999: 154)	Unknown	<i>[da]ṇamukh[o]</i>	Agreeing with <i>panighaḍa</i> (“water jar”) as the predicate nominative
Reliquary Inscription (CKI 536)	Year 147 (of Azes? = 100 CE)	Unknown	3: <i>daṇamuho</i>	∅
Peshawar Museum Inscription of the Year 168 (CKI 61)	Year 168 (of Azes? = 121 CE) (?) (see Falk 2009: 25)	Unknown	2–3: <i>daṇamukhe</i>	Agreeing with <i>kue</i> (“well”) as the predicate nominative
Relic Inscription of Trami (CKI 177)	Undated – palaeographically identical with CKI 178 (dated to 128 CE) (see Majumdar 1937–38: 10)	Charsadda, Charsadda District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>daṇamu(*khe)</i>	Agreeing with <i>ime śarira</i> (“these relics”) and <i>presthevida</i> (“established”) as the subject complement
Zeda Inscription of the Year 11 (CKI 148)	Year 11 of Kaṇiṣka = 137 CE	Zeda, Swabi District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	3: <i>danamukho</i>	Agreeing with <i>[toyam]da [...]</i> <i>kuo</i> (“water-giving well”) and the inferred <i>khade</i> (“dug”) as the subject complement

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued.)

Well Inscription (CKI 832)	Year 16 (of Kaniṣka? = 142 CE)	Unknown	2: <i>danamukhe</i>	∅
Loriyan Tangai Pedestal of the Year 318 (CKI 111)	Year 318 (of Yona? = 143 CE)	Loriyan Tangai, Malakand District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	1: <i>daṇamu[khe]</i>	∅
Loriyan Tangai Inscription No. 4860 (CKI 112)	Undated – found in a <i>stūpa</i> of the second century CE, together with CKI 111 (dated to 143 CE) (see Konow 1929: 106–10)	Loriyan Tangai, Malakand District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	1: <i>daṇamukh[e]</i>	∅
Loriyan Tangai Inscription No. 4871 (CKI 113)	=	=	2: <i>daṇa[mukhe]</i>	∅
Loriyan Tangai Inscription No. 4995 (CKI 114)	=	=	<i>danamukhe</i>	∅
Loriyan Tangai Inscription No. 5095 (CKI 115)	=	=	<i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Shakardarra Inscription of the Year 40 (CKI 156)	Year 40 (of Kaniṣka? = 166 CE)	Shakardara, Attock District, Punjab, Pakistan	4: <i>daṇamukho</i>	Agreeing with <i>k[u]vo</i> (“well”) as the subject complement
Chalagram Stone Bowl (CKI 367)	Year 51 (of Kaniṣka? = 177 CE)	Chalagram, Charsadda District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Jamalgarhi Pedestal Inscription (CKI 117)	Undated – datable to the late second century CE as found in association with CKI 116 (dated to 184 CE) (see Konow 1929: 110–15)	Jamal Garhi, Mardan District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	1: <i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Jamalgarhi Image Halo Inscription (CKI 118)	=	=	<i>daṇamukha</i>	∅

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued.)

Jamalgarhi Pilaster Base Inscription (CKI 119)	=	Mārguz, Swabi District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	(* <i>daṇamukhe</i> )	∅
Bagram Bas-Relief (CKI 174)	Undated – palaeographi- cally datable after CKI 155 (dated to 154 CE) and before CKI 161 (dated to 215 CE) for palaeographical factors (see Konow 1933–34: 12)	Bagram, Bagram District, Parwan, Afghanistan	<i>danamuhe</i>	∅
Inscription on a Bas-relief (CKI 192)	Undated – datable to Kuṣāna period due to palaeographical factors (see Fussman 1980: 55)	Unknown	<i>danamukhe</i>	∅
Inscribed Bodhisattva (CKI 252)	Undated – datable to Kuṣāna period due to palaeographical factors (see Fussman 1980: 55)	Unknown	<i>daṇamuye</i>	∅
Aśoraya Inscribed Buddha (CKI 256)	Undated – variously dat- able between the first and third century CE due to palaeographical and archaeological factors and internal references (see Salomon 2007: 281)	Unknown	2: <i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Slab from Malakand (CKI 458)	Undated – datable to the second century CE due to palaeographical factors (see Falk 2003: 79)	Mamane Dheri, Charsadda District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	2: <i>daṇamukhe</i>	Agreeing with <i>duyaaḍi</i> ("water- dam") <sup>6</sup> as the predicate nominative
Avalokeśvara Inscription (CKI 222)	Undated – datable to the second century CE approx. for palaeographical factors (see Brough 1982: 70)	Unknown	<i>danamukhe</i>	∅
Relic Inscription (CKI 135)	Undated – second half of the second century CE approx. due to palaeo- graphical factors (similar to CKI 116, dated to 184 CE) (see Konow 1929: 128)	Swat District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	2: <i>[daṇamu]kh[o]</i>	∅

(Continued)

<sup>6</sup> Regarding the interpretation of G. *duyaaḍi*, see Falk (2003: 79).

Table 2. (Continued.)

Buddha Statue (CKI 559)	Undated – datable to the second or third century CE due to paelaeographical factors (see Strauch 2009: 215)	Badbair, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Oil Lamp from Dir (CKI 731)	Undated – datable to the second or third century CE for palaeographical factors (see Nasim Khan 2007: 133)	Dir District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>daṇa[mukhe]</i>	Agreeing with <i>divathalika</i> (“lamp”) as the predicate nominative
Kham Zarkar Panel (CKI 557)	Year 74 (of Kaniṣka? = 200 CE)	Bagram, Bagram District, Parwan, Afghanistan	2: <i>dana[mu]kh[e]</i>	∅
Well Stone (CKI 461)	Year 85 (of Kaniṣka? = 211 CE)	Unknown	3: <i>danamukho</i>	Agreeing with [k](*ue) (“well”) as the object complement
Inscription of Year 85 (CKI 1181)	Year 85 (of Kaniṣka? = 211 CE)	Unknown	3: <i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Oil Lamp (CKI 550)	Undated – palaeographically similar to CKI 161 (dated to 215 CE) (see Falk 2010: 96)	Unknown	<i>da(*ṇa)mukho</i>	∅
Year Five Buddha Triad (CKI 232)	Year 5 (of Kaniṣka II? = 231 CE)	Unknown	<i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Headless Buddha Image (CKI 441)	Undated – found on a headless Buddha statue dated from the second to the fourth century CE <sup>7</sup>	Unknown	<i>danamukhe</i>	∅
Jaulian Inscription 1 (CKI 74)	Undated – variously datable between the second and fiftieth century CE (see Konow 1929: 92)	Jaulian, Haripur District, Punjab, Pakistan	(* <i>dana-mukho</i> )	∅
Jaulian Inscription 2 (CKI 75)	=	=	<i>danamukho</i>	∅

(Continued)

<sup>7</sup> See <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/93135> [accessed 1 December 2025].

Table 2. (Continued.)

Jaulian Inscription 4 (CKI 77)	=	=	<i>da[namu]kho</i>	∅
Jaulian Inscription 5 (CKI 78)	=	=	<i>danamukho</i>	∅
Jaulian Inscription 6 (CKI 79)	=	=	<i>(*danamu)kho</i>	∅
Jaulian Inscription 7 (CKI 80)	=	=	<i>daṇamukho</i>	∅
Jaulian Inscription 8 (CKI 81)	=	=	<i>daṇa[mu]kho</i>	∅
Jaulian Inscription 10 (CKI 83)	=	=	<i>[da]ṇamu[kho]</i>	∅
Jaulian Inscription 12 (CKI 85)	=	=	<i>[daṇamukho]</i>	∅
Lahore Museum Halo Inscription (CKI 120)	Undated	Unknown	<i>da(*ṇamukhe)</i>	∅
Lahore Pedestal Inscription (CKI 121)	Undated	Unknown	<i>(*daṇamukhe)</i>	∅
Jamalgarhi Pavement Stone Inscription (CKI 123)	Undated	Mārguz, Swabi District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>tanam(*ukhe)</i>	∅
Palatu Dheri Pedestal (CKI 125)	Undated	Palatu Dheri, Charsadda District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>danamukhe</i>	∅
Palatu Dheri Jar A (CKI 126)	=	=	<i>dana- mukh(*e)</i>	∅

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued.)

Ghaz Dheri Pedestal (CKI 130)	Undated	Ghaz Dheri, Rajjar, Charsadda District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	[dana- mukhe]	∅
Shahr-i-Napursan Pedestal (CKI 131)	Undated	Shahr-i- Napursan, Rajjar, Charsadda District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	1: da[ṇa]mukhe	∅
Yaqubi Image Inscription (CKI 139)	Undated	Yaqubi, Swabi District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	1: danamukhe	∅
Utmanzai Lamp (CKI 175)	Undated	Dargai, Malakand District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	danamukhe (attested twice)	∅
Shaikhān Dherī Pottery Graffiti (CKI 211)	Undated	Shaikhān Dheri, Charsadda District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	danamukhe	∅
Vase from Butkara I (Swat) (CKI 218)	Undated	Butkara, Swat District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	da(*namukhe)	∅
Buddha Statue (CKI 451)	Undated	Taxila, Rawalpindi District, Punjab, Pakistan	danamukha	∅

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued.)

Inscribed Brick (CKI 452)	Undated	Unknown	<i>dhanamukhe</i>	Agreeing with <i>varabhiko tubha</i> (“ <i>stūpa</i> with a parasol shaft (?)”) <sup>8</sup> as the predicate nominative
Swāt Garland Holder (CKI 453)	Undated	Swabi District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Brass bowls from Swat (CKI 456)	Undated	Unknown	<i>taṇemukhe</i>	∅
Lamp (CKI 505)	Undated	Ranigat, Buner District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>danamukhe</i>	∅
Chingiztepa Potsherds (CKI 506)	Undated	Termez, Surxondaryo, Uzbekistan	<i>danamukhe</i>	Agreeing with <i>iyo gaḍa</i> (“this vase”) as the predicate nominative
Stūpa Relief Inscription (CKI 507)	Undated	Buner, Buner District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>danamue</i>	∅
Pedestal (CKI 537)	Undated	Unknown	<i>daṇamu(*khe)</i>	∅
Large Bowl (CKI 545)	Undated	Takht-i-Bahi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>vavamukhe</i>	Agreeing with <i>[n]i[gaḍaka]</i> (“vessel for health”) as the predicate nominative
Bowl (CKI 556)	Undated	Charsadda, Charsadda District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>da(*ṇamukhe)</i>	Agreeing with <i>idi kuḍadhare</i> (“this water vessel”) as the predicate nominative

(Continued)

<sup>8</sup> Regarding the interpretation of G. *varabhiko*, see Sadakata (1992: 2–4).

Table 2. (Continued.)

Sirkap Copper Ladle (CKI 66)	Undated	Taxila, Rawalpindi District, Punjab, Pakistan	<i>daṇamukho</i>	∅
Seven Buddhas Panel (CKI 566)	Undated	Hoti, Mardan District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	« <i>daṇamukh[o]</i> »	∅
Qoratepa Potsherd (CKI 653)	Undated	Termez, Surxondaryo, Uzbekistan	<i>danamukha</i>	∅
Qoratepa Potsherd (CKI 655)	=	=	<i>danamukhe</i>	∅
Fayoztepa Potsherd (CKI 685)	=	=	<i>daṇnamuha</i>	∅
Fayoztepa Potsherd (CKI 687)	=	=	<i>danamukha</i>	∅
Thana Lamp Statue (CKI 735)	Undated	Thana Valley, Swat District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	3: <i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Bodhisattva Statue (CKI 737)	Undated	Unknown	1: <i>[da]ṇamukhe</i>	∅
Qoratepa Potsherds (CKI 758)	Undated	Termez, Surxondaryo, Uzbekistan	a: <i>[dana-mukha]</i>	∅
Qoratepa Potsherds (CKI 760)	=	=	<i>danamukhe</i>	∅
Qoratepa Potsherd (CKI 761)	=	=	<i>danam[u]</i>	∅
Qoratepa Potsherds (CKI 764)	=	=	<i>dha[ṇamukha]</i>	∅

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued.)

Fayoztepa Potsherd (CKI 831)	=	=	<i>dhanamukha</i>	∅
Well Inscription (CKI 833)	Undated	Pakistan	<i>danamukhe</i>	Agreeing with <i>papa</i> (“water fountain”) as the predicate nominative
Inscribed Bodhisattva (CKI 835)	Undated	Landi Kotal, Khyber Agency, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	1: <i>danamukhe</i>	∅
Fayoztepa Potsherd (CKI 836)	Undated	Termez, Surxondaryo, Uzbekistan	b: <i>dhamma- muka</i>	∅
Fayoztepa Potsherds (CKI 848)	=	=	a: <i>danamuka</i>	∅
Peshawar Potsherd (CKI 1107)	Undated	Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>danamu[khe]</i>	∅
Bronze Door (CKI 1113)	Undated	Mingora, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	A: <i>danamukhe</i> B: <i>danamokhe</i>	∅ ∅
Earthenware Fragment (CKI 1149)	Undated	Ranigat, Buner District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>danamuhe</i>	∅
Earthenware Fragment (CKI 1160)	=	=	<i>danamusa</i>	∅
Pitcher (CKI 1161)	Undated	Dir District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>danamue</i>	∅
Halo (CKI 1165)	Undated	Unknown	<i>dana- mukh[a]</i>	∅

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued.)

Oil Lamp (CKI 1166)	Undated	Kharkai, Malakand District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>daṇamukh[e]</i>	∅
Pedestal Inscription (CKI 1176)	Undated	Kashmir Smast, Mardan District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	<i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Buddha Statue (CKI 1252)	Undated	Unknown	<i>daṇamukhe</i>	∅
Stone Box (CKI 1255)	Undated	Unknown	<i>danamu[kha]</i>	∅

### 2.3. G. *deyadhama-*

The compound *deyadhama-* (mainly attested with the spelling *deyadhama-*, more rarely with the spellings *deyadhama-* and *deyasama-*) is attested only in the Gāndhārī inscriptions in 13 occurrences – it does not occur in Gāndhārī manuscripts, documents and coins. Like the previous case, its OIA equivalent (presumably *\*deyadhama-*) does not occur in Vedic and Sanskrit sources. However, unlike G. *danamuha-*, it is extensively attested in other non-Gāndhārī MIA literary and epigraphical sources.<sup>9</sup> Regarding the interpretation of G. *deyadhama-* in Gāndhārī inscriptions, scholars generally translate it as “gift”/“donation” (cf., for example, Baums 2018: 68) or, based on the parallel *danamuha-* (see section 2.2), as “pious gift”/“pious donation” (cf. Salomon 1999: 218).<sup>10</sup> Unlike G. *danamuha-* (see sections 2.2, 3.1), a Gāndhārī coinage cannot be assumed for G. *deyadhama-*, given its wide occurrence in other MIA sources.

Furthermore, G. *deyadhama-* also occurs as a member of the compound *deyadhama-paricaga-* (lit. “leaving a gift” > “giving of a gift”) once in inscriptions: CKI 60 (see Table 3).<sup>11</sup> I note that, as in the case of G. *deyadhama-* itself, this compound is also attested in extra-Gāndhārī Buddhist sources.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> As for its literary attestation, I report the instance of P. *deyyadhamma-* which has more than 500 occurrences (excluding its occurrences as a compound constituent) in Pāli canonical and non-canonical works according to corpus research on the *Online Pāli Tipitaka*. Furthermore, it is also attested as BHS *deyadhama-* in Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit literature (see Edgerton 1953: s.v. *deyadhama-*). Regarding its epigraphical attestation, this compound also appears in early Buddhist donative inscriptions in Brāhmī script (see Damsteegt 1978: 163, 176–7, 182, 184–5, 201, 245; Bhattacharya 1987). It is the most widely used term in Buddhist donative inscriptions, even in later periods, as evidenced, for instance, by the frequent occurrence of *deyadhama-* (and the alternative form *devadhama-*) in the inscriptions of the Palola Śāhi dynasty of the kingdom of Gilgit, dating from the sixth to the eighth centuries CE (see von Hinüber 2004).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. also Bailey (1980: 22, 24, 25), who interpreted the G. compound *deyadhama-* as “dharma-gift”.

<sup>11</sup> Damsteegt (1978: 163) mentions another compound occurrence of G. *deyadhama-*, namely *deyadhama-paṅṛityaga-*, which Lüders (1940: 23–5) proposed as the correct reading for *ṣamaparityagato* in CKI 165. However, this proposal has not been accepted in the CKI’s version.

<sup>12</sup> As for its literary attestation, P. *deyyadhammapariccāga-* has 14 occurrences as a single word and 5 occurrences as a compound constituent according to corpus research on the *Online Pāli Tipitaka*. Furthermore, it occurs as BHS *deyadhama-parityāga-* in Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit literature (see Edgerton 1953: s.v. *deyadhama-*).

**Table 3.** Comprehensive inventory of the 14 occurrences of *G. deyadhamma-* as a single word and as a compound constituent in the Gāndhārī epigraphical corpus (CKI)

Inscription	Date	Findspot	Form	Collocation
British Library Pot A (CKI 369)	Undated – probably datable to the period between the early first century and mid-second century CE due to palaeographical and linguistic factors, more specifically to the first half of the first century CE due to internal references (see Salomon 1999: 153–4)	Unknown	2: <i>deyamd-harme</i>	Agreeing with <i>[a]yaṃ pāṇayaghade</i> (“this water jar”) as the predicative nominative
British Library Pot E (CKI 373)	Undated – probably datable to the period between the early first century and mid-second century CE due to palaeographical and linguistic factors (see Salomon 1999: 154)	Unknown	<i>deyadharma</i>	Agreeing with <i>aya pa[ni]yaghade</i> (“this water jar”) as the predicative nominative
British Library Potsherd 2 (CKI 375)	Undated – presumably datable to the same period of CKI 369 due to internal references (cf. Salomon 1999: 215)	Unknown	<i>teryadharma</i>	∅
Relic Inscription of Urasaka (CKI 60)	Year 136 of Azes = 89 CE	Taxila, Rawalpindi District, Punjab, Pakistan	5: <i>desama-paricago</i> <sup>13</sup> “giving of a gift” [compound constituent]	Agreeing with <i>a[ya]</i> (“this”) as the subject
Relic Inscription of Senavamma (CKI 249)	Year 14 (referred to Kujula Kadphises’s reign, placed between 40 and 90/95 CE; see Errington and Curtis 2007: 54)	Unknown	1: <i>deyasame</i> 11: <i>devasame</i>	∅
Relic Inscription of Mahasena and Saṃgharakṣida (CKI 145)	Undated – datable to the second half of the second century CE based on numismatic, art-historical and archaeological factors (see Errington and Falk 2002: 101–10)	Shahbazgarhi, Mardan District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	3: <i>deyadharme</i>	Agreeing with <i>gaṃdha[ka]raṃḍe</i> (“incense box”) as the predicative nominative

(Continued)

<sup>13</sup> I point out that this looks like a misspelling of *deyasamapicago*.

Table 3. (Continued.)

Copper Vase (CKI 182)	Undated – datable to the first or second century CE due to palaeographical and archaeological factors (see Fussman 1974: 61)	Afghanistan	<i>deyad-hamma</i>	∅
Mamane Dheri Stele (CKI 161)	Year 89 (of Kanīṣka? = 215 CE)	Mankiala, Rawalpindi District, Punjab, Pakistan	<i>deyad-har[me]</i>	Agreeing with <i>ime</i> (“these”) and <i>niryāide</i> (“handed over”) as the subject
Tor Dherai Potsherds (CKI 165)	Undated – datable to starting from the third century CE approx. due to palaeographical and linguistic factors (see Konow 1929: 174)	Dabarkot, Loralai District, Balochistan, Pakistan	<i>dey[adh]armo</i>	Agreeing with <i>yam prapa</i> (“this water fountain”) as the predicative nominative
Haḍḍa Pot (CKI 223)	Undated – datable to the second or third century CE due to palaeographical and archaeological factors (see Fussman 1969: 9)	Haḍḍa, Bihsud District, Nangarhar, Afghanistan	<i>deyadharme</i>	∅
Qoratepa Potsherds (CKI 602)	Undated	Termez, Surxondaryo, Uzbekistan	(* <i>deyad-harmo</i> )	∅
Qoratepa Potsherd (CKI 623)	=	=	<i>deyad-ham[/](/*me)</i>	∅
Qoratepa Potsherd (CKI 647)	=	=	(* <i>deyad-harmo</i> )	∅

### 3. Semantic analysis of *G. dana-*, *danamuha-* and *deyadhamma-* in the Gāndhārī epigraphical corpus

This section analyses the collected data regarding the three Gāndhārī word-forms denoting “gift”. Its final part proposes a hypothesis on the origin of the *G.* compound *danamuha-* (see section 3.1).

Starting with *G. dana-*, it has 36 occurrences in Gāndhārī inscriptions, 27 as a single word and 9 as a compound constituent. As far as I could ascertain for its attestation as a single word, in the early occurrences of *G. dana-* in Aśoka’s Edicts (18 out of 27),<sup>14</sup> the ambivalence between “gift” and “giving” (shared with OIA sources) is undoubtedly maintained. In the other occurrences (9 out of 27), attested in later sources (approximately between the first century BCE and the third century CE), *G. dana-* is used in the donative formulas with the meaning of “gift”.

<sup>14</sup> For accuracy, the first Shāhbāzgarhī occurrence (CKI 3) is reconstructed due to the parallel of the Māhsehrā version (CKI 17), as the text is illegible. However, it is possible to include it in the list because the integration is more than plausible, given the nature of the text.

Turning to G. *danamuha-*, it has attracted the attention of scholarship since the earliest studies of Gāndhārī inscriptions, perhaps because it is attested almost only and so massively in such a corpus, numbering 111 occurrences. Scholars have focused on the relationship between G. *danamuha-* and *dana-* and the relationship between G. *danamuha* and *deyadhama-*. As for the first, I refer to Damsteegt (1978: 306, fn. 1), according to whom “[the word-form *dāna-*] is in the North-west generally replaced by the expression *danamukha-* or *danamuha-*” (cf. also Senart 1890: 130–4; Thomas 1915: 97–9; Majumdar 1922: 62–3). As for the second, I refer to Salomon (1999: 241), according to whom the two G. compounds *danamuha-* and *deyadhama-* are used as synonymous expressions denoting “pious gift” in Gāndhārī Buddhist donative inscriptions, regardless of their etymological difference (cf. also Senart 1902–03: 55; Sircar 1966: 79, 90, 205). The employment of G. *danamuha-* and *deyadhama-* in donative formulas (about the synonymous use of which there is little to dispute) has caused scholarship to neglect a structured reflection on their etymology (and, being two compounds, about their interpretation). A few attempts were still made. Pargiter (1913–14: 300; 1921–22: 98–100) interpreted G. *danamuha-* as a *karmadhāraya* compound, translating it as “choice gift”. A similar conclusion is reached by Damsteegt (1978: 246, 334, fn. 36), who interpreted it as a *karmadhāraya* compound meaning “excellent gift”, albeit he reports that *-mukha* is only attested in *bahuvrīhi* compounds with the meaning of “having...as best”. The most complete reflection on the etymology of G. *danamuha-* and also of G. *deyadhama-* is by Bopearachchi and Salomon (2022–23: 53, fn. 8), which I cite integrally as a basis for the discussion that will follow:

The widely attested (in inscriptions) but grammatically peculiar term *dānamukha* (Sanskrit and Pali; Gāndhārī *daṇamukha*), conventionally translated as “pious gift,” is perhaps best interpreted as a compound with the component members in reversed order, as is not uncommon in Sanskrit and various Middle Indo-Aryan languages [...]; thus, *dānamukha* = *\*mukh(y)adāna*, “principal/outstanding gift”. The same may be true of the more or less synonymous and even more common (both in inscriptions and Buddhist literature) *deyadhama*  $\stackrel{z}{=}$  *dharmadeya* “to be given by/according to/for the Dharma”.

Analysing the hypothetical original OIA form *\*dānamukha-* or *\*dānamukhya-* with Pāṇini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, there is, however, no need to assume an inversion of the constituents. Indeed, this compound could be interpreted either as a *bahuvrīhi* or a *karmadhāraya*:

- If interpreted as a *bahuvrīhi* compound (explained by the general rule A 2.2.24),<sup>15</sup> the order of the constituents follows A 2.2.35,<sup>16</sup> according to which the qualifying word (in this case: *dāna-*) occurs as the left-hand constituent. In this case, the meaning would be “having (the act of) giving as the principal feature/origin/purpose”, thus “gift”.
- If interpreted as a *karmadhāraya* compound (explained by the general rule A 1.2.42),<sup>17</sup> the order of the constituents would, in fact, break rule A 2.2.30,<sup>18</sup> according to which

<sup>15</sup> A 2.2.24: *anekam anyapadārthe [samāsaḥ 2.1.3 saha supā 2.1.4 sup 2.1.9 vā 2.1.18 bahuvrīhiḥ 23]* “Two or more inflected nouns [preferably combine] in the meaning of another inflected noun (i.e. the meaning of an inflected noun different from the constituents) [to form a *bahuvrīhi* compound].” For a general definition of the *bahuvrīhi* compound, see Mocchi (2022: 4–9). For an explanation of Pāṇini’s model of *bahuvrīhi*, see Candotti and Pontillo (2019b; 2022) and Pontillo (2021).

<sup>16</sup> A 2.2.35: *saptamīviśeṣane bahuvrīhau [pūrvam 30]* “(An inflected word) ending in the locative or denoting a qualifier occurs [as the left-hand constituent] in a *bahuvrīhi* compound”.

<sup>17</sup> A 1.2.42: *tatpuruṣaḥ samānādhikaraṇaḥ karmadhārayaḥ* “A *tatpuruṣa* (compound) the members of which have the same substratum is a *karmadhāraya*”. Regarding the interpretation of this rule, see Mocchi (2023: 294–306).

<sup>18</sup> A 2.2.30: *upasarjanam pūrvam* “The non-head member occurs as the left-hand constituent (in a compound)”.

the non-head member (*upasarjana*, the notion of which is introduced in A 1.2.43)<sup>19</sup> occurs in the left-hand slot; however, this impasse is overcome by recourse to A 1.2.44,<sup>20</sup> which allows considering even a constituent that does not occupy the left-hand slot as the non-head member (see Pontillo 2003; Mocci and Pontillo 2019: 5–7; Candotti and Pontillo 2022: 12–15; Mocci 2023: 291–4). In this other case, the meaning would be “chief/ eminent gift”.

Pāṇini’s rules may support both interpretations. Nonetheless, interpreting it as a *kar-madhāraya* is undoubtedly more cumbersome than its more straightforward explanation as a *bahuvrīhi*, which I lean towards thanks to the analysis of this compound’s collocations (see Table 2). Excluding cases where it is attested not in co-occurrence with another word, the following groups of collocations are identified:

- a) The G. compound *danamuha-* mainly occurs as the predicate nominative (CKI 52, 61, 110, 371, 452, 458, 506, 545, 556, 731, 833). Here is an example (CKI 371): *[a]ya paṇighaḍa [da]ṇamukh[o] Viratae [Srv]hiamabharyae [...]* “This water jar is the gift (following its analysis as a *bahuvrīhi*: ‘originated from the act of giving’) for Virata, wife of Srvaḥiama”. In these occurrences (particularly those in which the demonstrative adjective is missing), the compound can also be read not as the predicate nominative in nominal sentences but as a simple apposition.
- b) In other cases, it occurs as the subject complement (CKI 148, 156, 177). Here is an example (CKI 177): *Tramisa daṇamu (\*khe) ime śarira presthavidā budhaṇa puyae* “These relics are established as the gift (following its analysis as a *bahuvrīhi*: ‘originated from the act of giving’) of Trami in worship of the Buddha”.
- c) In one case, it occurs as the object complement (CKI 461, at least based on the reconstructed reading of its final part): *saṃ 20 20 20 4 1 Arsamiāsa masasa di 1 Nribhratriśamaṇa danamukho ekha [k](\*ue)* “In year 85 (of Kaniṣka? = 211 CE), month Artemisios, day 1, Nribhratriśama’s son had the well dug as a gift (following its analysis as a *bahuvrīhi*: ‘originated from the act of giving’)”.

The reading of G. *danamuha-* as a *bahuvrīhi* is reinforced by the fact that, in the occurrences mentioned above, a linguistic element agrees with the compound and serves as the headword of the syntagma. It is conceivable that in all the other cases in which G. *danamuha-* is not attested in co-occurrence with another word, zero (Skt. *lopa*, according to Pāṇinian authors) of a noun used as the head of the syntagma has become widespread, admitting the use of G. *danamuha-* as a single word with the sense of “gift”. The semantic change hypothesized here is as the following made-up example: *\*danamuhō kuvo* “the well (headword of the syntagma) originated from the act of giving (subordinate word of the syntagma)” > *\*danamuhō* “gift”.<sup>21</sup> Despite the *vigraha* of the compound (the coinage of which is further explored in section 3.1), it is hardly debatable that, based on the evidence gathered (see section 2.2),

<sup>19</sup> A 1.2.43: *prathamānirdiṣṭaṃ samāsa upasarjanam* “What occurs in the nominative ending in a compound(-rule) is a non-head member”.

<sup>20</sup> A 1.2.44: *ekavibhakti cāpūrvanipāte [upasarjanam 1.2.43]* “What has a single ending [is] also [a non-head member], even when it does not occur as the left-hand constituent (in a compound)”. I remark that the translation of *apūrvanipāte* differs from that usually found in scholarly tradition, e.g. Katre’s (1987: 42) “except with respect to being placed in the prior position”, while following the interpretation of the scholars referenced in the textual corpus, particularly Mocci and Pontillo (2019: 5–7), Candotti and Pontillo (2022: 12–15) and Mocci (2023: 291–4).

<sup>21</sup> A comparable instance is the well-known case of the Latin syntagma *formaticus caseus* “cheese [put] in a mould” (where *caseus* “cheese” is the headword) which, for a semantic change by synecdoche, becomes *formaggio* “cheese” in Italian and *fromage* “cheese” in French as single words, in fact losing the head of the original syntagma and changing the meaning of the former subordinate noun (Lat. *formaticus* “[put] in a mould” > It. *formaggio*, Fr. *fromage* “cheese”).

*G. danamuha-* is pragmatically used only in donative formulas with the meaning of “gift” in a ritual context, regardless of the conventional translation as “pious gift” that often appears in scholarship.

In the case of *G. deyadhamma-*, attested in the Gāndhārī epigraphical sources from around the first century CE onwards in a much smaller number (13 occurrences as a single word and 1 as a compound constituent), the grammatical analysis slightly changes. Analysing the hypothetical original OIA form \**deyadharmā-* with Pāṇini’s rules, the same rules mentioned above apply, with the difference that this compound could be analysed either as a *bahuvrīhi* or a *tatpuruṣa*:

- If interpreted as a *bahuvrīhi* compound (regularly following A 2.2.35), the meaning would be “having the feature of having to be given”, thus “gift (to be given)”.
- If interpreted as a *tatpuruṣa* compound (with the non-head member in the right-hand position according to A 1.2.44), the meaning would be “to be given for the sake of the *dharma*” (analysed with M 1.458 l. 16 Vt. 6 ad A 2.3.36).<sup>22</sup>

Again, Pāṇini’s rules would support both interpretations, but the one as *bahuvrīhi* is also preferable based on the analysis of this compound’s collocations (see Table 3). In this case, excluding its attestations as a single word, it only occurs as a predicative nominative (CKI 145, 165, 369, 373). Here is an example (CKI 373): *aya pa[ni]yaghaḍae Hastadatae Teyavarmabharyae deyadharmā saghe caturdiśe atmanasa arogadaḥsine [...]* “This water jar is the gift (following its analysis as a *bahuvrīhi*: ‘featured by having to be given’) of Hastadata, wife of Teyavarman, to the community of the four directions for the benefit of her own health”. The same reasoning as above also applies here. As in the case of *G. danamuha-*, based on the evidence gathered (see section 2.3), *G. deyadhamma-* pragmatically means “gift” in the ritual context.

Regarding the relationship between the two compounds, the data at our disposal point to a synonymous use of the two word-forms, both denoting a ritual gift in the donative formulas regardless of etymological differences (for which there would be a nuance of duty in *G. deyadhamma-* which is then lost). Likewise, there is no pragmatic distinction between these two and the few late records of *G. dana-*, also referring to a ritual gift in donative formulas. There are no significant data to assume a distinction of period, place, material, (types of) donors or Buddhist schools. The only significant element is the difference in occurrences between *G. danamuha-*, which is extensively used, and *G. deyadhamma-*, which is seldom used (along with the later attestations of *G. dana-*). This disparity may be explained by the fact that *G. danamuha-*, which is most likely a Gāndhārī coinage and appears almost exclusively in the Gāndhārī epigraphical sources, is predominantly used in Gāndhārī donative formulas. Indeed, *G. deyadhamma-*, which is probably a loanword from another MIA language and appears extensively in MIA literary sources, is the least used term overall in Gāndhārī inscriptions.

### 3.1. A hypothesis on the origin of *G. danamuha-*

As discussed above (see sections 2.2 and 3), it may be concluded that *G. danamuha-* is a Gāndhārī coinage (unlike *G. deyadhamma-*) and that it gradually replaced the earlier *G. dana-*

<sup>22</sup> M M 1.458 l. 16 Vt. 6 ad A 2.3.36: *nimittāt karmasamyoge* “After [a nominal stem denoting] a cause, there is a connection with the object”. Some traditional examples are included in Patañjali’s comment on this *vārttika* (M 1.458 ll. 17–19 ad Vt. 6 ad A 2.3.36): *nimittāt karmasamyoge saptamī vaktavyā | carmaṇi dvīpinaṇṇ hanti dantayor hanti kuñjaram | keśeṣu camarīṇ hanti simni puṣkalako hataḥ ||* “When, after [a nominal stem denoting] a cause, there is a connection with the object, the locative case should be taught: ‘He kills the leopard for the sake of [its] skin’; ‘he kills the elephant for the sake of [its] tusks’; ‘he kills the yak for the sake of [its tail] hair (pl.)’; ‘the musk-deer is killed for the sake of [its] scrotum’.”

(see Damsteegt 1978: 306, fn. 1). However, the origin of this compound has not been further explored by scholarship.

For the sake of readability, let me summarize the available data. From the mid-third century BCE to the end of the first century BCE, the meaning “gift” (*nomen rei actae*) was denoted only by the word-form G. *dana-*. However, this fluctuates between the meaning of “giving” (*nomen actionis*) and that of “gift” (*nomen rei actae*) in Aśoka’s inscriptions, just like the OIA corresponding word-form *dāna-*. From around the end of the first century BCE onwards, the G. compound *danamuha-* is attested in Gāndhārī inscriptions with the sole meaning of “gift” (*nomen rei actae*). After the first attestations of G. *danamuha-*, the denotatum “gift” (*nomen rei actae*) was predominantly meant by the latter word-form in epigraphical donative formulas (111 occurrences) at the expense of G. *dana-* (9 occurrences as a single word) and *deyadhamma-* (13 occurrences as a single word), which pragmatically mean “gift” as well.

In relation to these data, I propose that a phenomenon of semantic change has occurred: specifically, a new compound was coined from an etymon with an ambiguous meaning to disambiguate its meaning in the formulas used in inscriptions.<sup>23</sup> The G. compound *danamuha-*, correctly interpreted as a *bahuvrīhi* “having (the act of) giving as its principal feature/origin”, thus “gift”, was coined from G. *dana-*, both meaning “giving” and “gift” (like OIA *dāna-*), to convey unambiguously the sole meaning of “gift” as *nomen rei actae*. The need to disambiguate the meaning of the etymon G. *dana-* is in line with the religious context of the inscriptions in which these word-forms occur, as they are attested in Buddhist donative objects. After the coinage of G. *danamuha-*, this is indeed by far the most used term denoting “gift” in the Gāndhārī inscriptions, although the other two word-forms G. *dana-* and *deyadhamma-* are also rarely attested with the same meaning.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this article, I investigated the gift lexicon in the Gāndhārī epigraphical corpus, focusing on the triad formed by G. *dana-*, *danamuha-* and *deyadhamma-* (see section 1). These are attested 36, 111 and 14 times respectively (both as single words and compound constituents) in the Gāndhārī inscriptions, and a complete repertoire of their occurrences has been provided (see Tables 1–3). Among the three terms, only G. *dana-* has a counterpart in the Vedic and Sanskrit works, i.e. OIA *dāna-*. While G. *deyadhamma-* is frequently attested in other non-Gāndhārī MIA sources (e.g. P. *deyyadhamma-*; BHS *deyadharma-*) and can be considered a loanword from another MIA language, G. *danamuha-* can be regarded as a Gāndhārī coinage, as it appears almost exclusively in Gāndhārī inscriptions, except for a few very late occurrences in Pāli works (see section 2). When analysing the data collected, G. *dana-* is the earliest attested term. In the earliest attestations in Aśoka’s Edicts (dated to the mid-third century BCE), its meaning oscillates between “giving” (*nomen actionis*) and “gift” (*nomen rei actae*). From around the end of the first century BCE, G. *dana-* was gradually replaced by G. *danamuha-*, exclusively meaning “gift” (*nomen rei actae*). It has a far greater attestation (111 occurrences) than G. *dana-* (9 late occurrences as a single word) and *deyadhamma-* (13 occurrences as a single word), also with the sole meaning of “gift”. The interpretation of the two compounds as “gift” is supported by the *vigraha* of the compounds, which, from a grammatical perspective, have to be more consistently considered as *bahuvrīhis* (see section 3). In the final section, I propose analysing the coinage of G. *danamuha-* as a phenomenon of

<sup>23</sup> According to Ullmann’s definition (1957: 171), “a semantic change will occur whenever a new name becomes attached to a sense and/or a new sense to a name”. Briefly, the semantic change can be caused by linguistic, historical and social, even psychological, factors; it can also be due to foreign influence and the coinage of new words (see Lazzeroni 1989: 24–8). Among the factors influencing new coinages is the need to disambiguate a word’s meaning in specific domains, such as law and religion, where ambiguity must be avoided (see also Grzegza 2004).

semantic change with respect to the earlier G. *dana-*. The new compound G. *danamuha-* was preferred to disambiguate the meaning of the earlier G. *dana-*, oscillating between “giving” and “gift”, and to restrict its meaning solely to that of a *nomen rei actae*. Indeed, this need for disambiguation is justified by the religious context in which such word-forms are attested, specifically Buddhist donative inscriptions (see [section 3.1](#)).

## Abbreviations

BHS	Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit
G.	Gāndhārī
MIA	Middle Indo-Aryan
OIA	Old Indo-Aryan
P.	Pāli
Skt.	Sanskrit
Ved.	Vedic

**Acknowledgements.** All translations from Gāndhārī and Sanskrit are my own unless otherwise stated. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Mark Allon, Maria Piera Candotti, Beatrice Grieco, Davide Mocci, Leonardo Montesi, Chiara Neri, Tiziana Pontillo and Ingo Strauch for their valuable suggestions and corrections throughout this research or for reviewing a provisional draft of this article. I would also like to acknowledge the anonymous reviewers of this journal whose insightful feedback strengthened my argument and provided invaluable insights. Any remaining errors or omissions are, of course, entirely my responsibility.

## Bibliography

### Primary literature

- A *The Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini*. 1987–2003. R. Nath Sharma (ed. and trans); Katre (ed. and trans, 1987), 6 vols. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.
- CKD, CKI, CKM *Catalog of Gāndhārī Texts*. 2002a. Stefan Baums and Andrew Glass (eds). <https://gandhari.org/catalog> [accessed 2 December 2025].
- M *The Vyākaraṇa Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali*. 1970. Franz Kielhorn (ed.), 3 vols. Osnabrück: Zeller [Bombay 1880–1885]. Vt. Kātyāyana’s *vārttikas* quoted in M.

### Secondary literature

- Bailey, H.W. 1980. “A Kharoṣṭrī inscription of Seṇavarma, King of Oḍi”, *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 1, 21–9.
- Bhattacharya, Gouriswar. 1987. “Dāna – deyadharmā: donation in early Buddhist records (in Brāhmī)”, in Marianne Yaldiz and Wibke Lobo (eds), *Investigating Indian Art: Proceedings of a Symposium on the Development of Early Buddhist and Hindu Iconography Held at the Museum of Indian Art Berlin in May 1986*. (Veröffentlichungen des Museums für Indische Kunst, 8.), 213–47. Berlin: Museum für Indische Kunst.
- Baums, Stefan. 2012. “Catalog and revised texts and translations of Gandharan reliquary inscriptions”, in David Jongeward, Elizabeth Errington, Richard Salomon and Stefan Baums (eds), *Gandharan Buddhist Reliquaries*. (Gandharan Studies, 1.), 200–51. Seattle: Early Buddhist Manuscripts Project.
- Baums, Stefan. 2018. “A framework for Gandhāran chronology based on relic inscriptions”, in Wannaporn Rienjang and Peter Stewart (eds), *Problems of Chronology in Gandhāran Art: Proceedings of the First International Workshop of the Gandhāra Connections Project, University of Oxford, 23rd–24th March, 2017*, 53–70. Oxford: Archaeopress.
- Baums, Stefan and Andrew Glass. 2002b. *A Dictionary of Gāndhārī*, <https://gandhari.org/dictionary> [accessed 2 December 2025].
- Bopearachchi, Osmund and Richard Salomon. 2022–23. “Two Gandharan seated Buddha images”, *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 31, 49–54.
- Brough, John. 1982. “Amitābha and Avalokiteśvara in an inscribed Gandhāran sculpture”, *Indologica Taurinensia* 10, 65–70.
- Burrow, Thomas. 1937. *The Language of the Kharoṣṭhī Documents from Chinese Turkestan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Candotti, Maria Piera, Chiara Neri and Tiziana Pontillo. 2020. "Reconsideration of a plausible relationship between gift and merit in the earliest Vedic and Pāli sources (1): a comparison between the usages of Pā. *dakṣiṇeya* and Ved. *dakṣiṇīya*", *Rivista di Studi Orientali* 93/1–2, 137–63.
- Candotti, Maria Piera, Chiara Neri and Tiziana Pontillo. 2021. "Vedic *dakṣiṇā*/Pāli *dakṣhiṇā*. Recovering an original notion behind the later institutional gift", in Elisabetta Poddighe and Tiziana Pontillo (eds), *Resisting and Justifying Changes. How to Make the New Acceptable in the Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern World*. (Nuova Biblioteca di Studi Classici e Orientali. Supplementi alla rivista *Studi Classici e Orientali*, 5.), 21–108. Pisa: Pisa University Press.
- Candotti, Maria Piera and Tiziana Pontillo. 2019a. "The lexicon of the 'act of accepting (*pratigraha*): an approach to the multilayered Vedic culture", *Lingua Posnaniensis* 61/2, 27–56.
- Candotti, Maria Piera and Tiziana Pontillo. 2019b. "Lexical subordination in derivation and compounding: Pāṇini's focusing on the non-head", *Studi e Saggi Linguistici* 58/2, 155–75.
- Candotti, Maria Piera and Tiziana Pontillo. 2022. "Dispensing with zero in the analysis of Sanskrit bahuvrīhi: resurfacing, testing and assessing Pāṇini's model", *Journal of South Asian Linguistics* 12/1, 1–22.
- Damsteegt, Theo. 1978. *Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit: Its Rise, Spread, Characteristics and Relationship to Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit*. (Orientalia Rheno-Traiectina, volumen vicesimum tertium.) Leiden: Brill.
- Egerton, Franklin. 1953. *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*. (William Dwight Whitney Linguistic Series.) New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Errington, Elizabeth and Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis. 2007. *From Persepolis to the Punjab: Exploring Ancient Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan*. London: British Museum Press.
- Errington, Elizabeth and Harry Falk. 2002. "Numismatic evidence for dating the "Kanishka" reliquary", *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 8, 127–46.
- Falk, Harry. 2000–01. "A copper sieve from Taxila", *Indo-Asiatische Zeitschrift* 4/5, 28–34.
- Falk, Harry. 2003. "Five new Kharoṣṭhī donation records from Gandhāra", *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 9, 71–86.
- Falk, Harry. 2009. "The pious donation of wells in Gandhāra", in Gerd Mevissen and Arundhati Banerj (eds), *Prajñādharma: Essays on Asian, History, Epigraphy and Culture in Honour of Gouriswar Bhattacharya*, 23–36. New Delhi: Kaveri Books.
- Falk, Harry. 2010. "Named sanctuaries and another fire hall in Gandhāra", *Pakistan Heritage* 2, 93–8.
- Falk, Harry. 2011. "Ten thoughts on the Mathura lion capital reliquary", in Shailendra Bhandare and Sanjay Garg (eds), *Felicitas: Essays in Numismatics, Epigraphy and History in Honour of Joe Cribb*, 121–41. Mumbai: Reesha.
- Falk, Harry. 2023. "Ārogyadakṣiṇā and two periods of epidemics in Ancient India", *Sōka daigaku kokusai bukkyōgaku kōtō kenkyūjo nenpō 創価大学国際仏教学高等研究所年報* 26, 15–39.
- Fussman, Gérard. 1969. "Une inscription kharoṣṭhī à Haḍḍa", *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 56, 5–9.
- Fussman, Gérard. 1974. "Documents épigraphiques kouchans", *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 61, 1–66.
- Fussman, Gérard. 1980. "Documents épigraphiques kouchans (II)", *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 67, 45–58.
- Fussman, Gérard. 1987. "Numismatic and epigraphic evidence for the chronology of early Gandharan art", in Marianne Yaldiz and Wibke Lobo (eds), *Investigating Indian Art: Proceedings of a Symposium on the Development of Early Buddhist and Hindu Iconography Held at the Museum of Indian Art Berlin in May 1986*. (Veröffentlichungen des Museums für Indische Kunst, 8.), 67–88. Berlin: Museum für Indische Kunst.
- Grzega, Joachim. 2004. *Bezeichnungswandel: Wie, Warum, Wozu? Ein Beitrag zur englischen und allgemeinen Onomasiologie*. Heidelberg: Winter.
- Heim, Maria. 2004. *Theories of the Gift in South Asia: Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain Reflections on Dāna*. New York: Routledge.
- Katre, Sumitra M. (ed. and trans). 1987. *Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Konow, Sten. 1929. *Kharoṣṭhī Inscriptions with the Exception of Those of Aśoka*. (Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. II, Part I.) Calcutta: Government of India Central Publication Branch.
- Konow, Sten. 1933–34. "Kharoṣṭhī inscription on a Begram bas-relief", *Epigraphia Indica* 22, 11–15.
- Lazzeroni, Romano. 1989. "Il mutamento linguistico", in Romano Lazzeroni (ed), *Linguistica storica*, 13–54, Roma: La Nuova Italia Scientifica.
- Lüders, Heinrich. 1940. "Zu und aus den Kharoṣṭhī-Urkunden", *Acta Orientalia* 18, 15–49.
- Majumdar, N.G. 1922. "Notes on Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions", *Journal & Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 18, 61–7.
- Majumdar, N.G. 1923. "An inscribed copper ladle from Hazara", *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 19, 345–47.
- Majumdar, N.G. 1937–38. "Inscriptions on two relic-caskets from Charsadda", *Epigraphia Indica* 24, 8–10.
- Mauss, Marcel. 1923. "Essai Sur le Don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques in Sociologie et Anthropologie", *L'Année Sociologique (1896/1897–1924/1925)* 1, 30–186.
- Michaels, Axel. 1997. "Gift and return gift: greeting and return greeting in India. On a consequential footnote by Marcel Mauss", *Numen* 44, 242–69.

- Mocci, Davide. 2022. "The possessive relation in Sanskrit *bahuvrīhi* compounds: ellipsis or movement", *Journal of South Asian Linguistics* 12/2, 1–30.
- Mocci, Davide. 2023. "Pāṇini and the non-head (*upasarjana*) of attributive endocentric compounds", *Bhāṣā. Journal of South Asian Linguistics, Philology and Grammatical Traditions* 2/2, 279–315.
- Mocci, Davide and Tiziana Pontillo. 2019. "Predication in *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 2.1.56. Syntactic analysis of a *karmadhāraya* compound", *Aevum* 93/1, 3–38.
- Nagar, M.M. 1942. "Mathura Museum notes", *Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society* 15, 115–21.
- Nasim Khan, M. 2007. "Inscribed oil lamps and other Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions from Gandhāra", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, series 3, 17/2, 131–8.
- Olivelle, Patrick. 2023. *Ashoka: Portrait of a Philosopher King*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Pargiter, F.E. 1913–14. "Four early inscriptions from Manikiala, Hashtnagar, and Sanchi", *Epigraphia Indica* 12, 298–303.
- Pargiter, F.E. 1921–22. "The inscriptions on the Bimaran vase", *Epigraphia Indica* 16, 97–100.
- Parry, Jonathan. 1986. "The gift, the Indian gift and the 'Indian Gift'", *Man* 21/3, 453–73.
- Pontillo, Tiziana. 2003. "La definizione di *upasarjana*- in Pāṇini", in Rosa Ronzitti and Guido Borghi (eds), *Atti del Primo Incontro Genovese di Studi Vedici e Pāṇiniani (Genova, 16 luglio 2002)*, 21–35. Recco: Le Mani.
- Pontillo, Tiziana. 2021. "Did the Sanskrit model bring 'true enlightenment to European scholars' when they analysed and classified the *bahuvrīhi* compounds?", *Studi Classici e Orientali* 67, 497–514.
- Sadakata, Akira (定方 晟). 1992. "Gandāra no kishin fumi ガンダーラの寄進文", *Bukkyō gaku 仏教学* 33, 1–8.
- Salomon, Richard. 1999. *Ancient Buddhist Scrolls from Gandhāra: The British Library Kharoṣṭhī Fragments*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Salomon, Richard. 2000. "Two new Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions", *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 14, 55–68.
- Salomon, Richard. 2007. "Dynastic and institutional connections in the pre- and early Kuṣāṇa period: new manuscript and epigraphic evidence", in Doris Meth Srinivasan (ed.), *On the Cusp of an Era: Art in the Pre-Kuṣāṇa World*. (Brill's Inner Asian Library, 18.), 267–86. Leiden: Brill.
- Salomon, Richard. 2022. "A hoard of inscribed Gandharan metalware", *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 45, 253–90.
- Senart, Émile. 1890. "Notes D'Épigraphie Indienne", *Journal Asiatique (Huitième Série)* 15, 113–63.
- Senart, Émile. 1902–03. "The inscriptions in the caves at Karle", *Epigraphia Indica* 7, 47–74.
- Sircar, D.C. 1966. *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Strauch, Ingo. 2009. "Inscribed objects from greater Gandhāra", *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 23, 209–19.
- Thomas, F.W. 1915. "Notes on the edicts of Asoka", *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 1915, 97–112.
- Tsukamoto, Keishō. 1996–2003. *A Comprehensive Study of Indian Buddhist Inscriptions*, 3 vols. Kyoto: Heirakuji-Shoten.
- Ullmann, Stephen. 1957. *The Principles of Semantics*. Oxford: Blackwell [1951].
- Von Hinüber, Oskar. 2004. *Die Palola Ṣāhis: Ihre Steininschriften, Inschriften auf Bronzen, Handschriftenkolophone und Schutzzauber: Materialien zur Geschichte von Gilgit und Chilas*. (Antiquities of Northern Pakistan Reports and Studies, 5.) Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern.

---

**Cite this article:** Giudice, Alessandro. 2026. "'Gift' in Gāndhārī epigraphical sources. A comparative analysis of G. *dana*-, *danamuha*- and *deyadhamma*-", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X25101018>