

Ancient Gandhara Then and Now

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Gandhara is mentioned in the *Rigveda* in the context of producing quality wool. It is further mentioned in the *Atharvaveda*, *Sutra* literature and many of the Sanskrit and Pali texts of later times. It was one of the Sixteen Great States mentioned in the *Anguttara Nikaya*. Tradition records that the name of Gandhara was derived from the name of Druhyu King Gandhara, the son of Angara.¹

The core area of Gandhara seems to be the region with Lamghan and Jalalabad to the west, the hills of Swat and Buner to the north, the Indus to the east and the hills of Kala Bagh to the south.² Pushkalavati (Charsadda) and Takshasila (Taxila) were the capitals of Gandhara, in its western and eastern parts respectively.

Pali literature often mentions Gandhara together with Kassamira (Kashmir) although amongst the Sixteen Great States, Gandhara is mentioned along with Kamboja and Madra. Madra (ka), Sindhu, Sauvira and Mahishaka seem to have covered the greater Gandhara region beyond its core area

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