

## IMAGES OF ANCIENT IRAN: SASANIAN DYNASTY (224-651 CE) BANDIAN

### Historical Background and Geographical Position of the Site:

The town of Daregaz is situated 1150 km from Tehran and 255 km from the center of Khorasan province. It is bound by Turkmenistan from the north, Mashhad from the east and southeast, Chanaran from the south, and Qoochan from the west. The town's geographical co-ordinates are 37°36' N and 59°6' E. The center of Daregaz township is Daregaz, which was previously known as Mohammadabad, an area which can doubtless be placed among the most ancient centers of Iranian culture. Excavations in this mountainous site have revealed artifacts dating back as far as the Parthian and Sasanian periods, and pre-historic times.

Numerous mounds and other ancient sites have also yielded much evidence of the site's rich historical and cultural inheritance. Throughout its history, the site has been known by a variety of names: Dara, Daragyard, Pavart in pre-Islamic Iran, and Bavard, Abivard after the Islamic expansion. With its rich bazaar and access to fertile lands, the city was considerably more prosperous than neighboring Nesa and was widely known as one of the largest and most affluent cities of the Big Khorasan area. From its ideal location on the northern foothills of the Khorasan mountains, it was the first defense zone to sight an approaching enemy and was a vitally important political and military center. It also played an important role as a significant economic center on the Silk Road.

The historic area of Bandiyan covers almost 1.000 sq- m. and can be divided into three main parts:

- 1) The remains of the Sasanid temple (excavated some years ago)
- 2) Yarim Tepe (yet to be excavated)
- 3) Another mound (presently being excavated).





Source:

[http://www.cais-soas.com/CAIS/virtual\\_museum/sasanian/Sites/bandian.htm](http://www.cais-soas.com/CAIS/virtual_museum/sasanian/Sites/bandian.htm)