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## Continuity of Saljuq Architecture in Iran, the Friday Mosque of Firdaus

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### Article Info

### Abstract

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This paper examines in detail the little-known Friday Mosque (masjid-i jāmi‘) of Firdaus, located southwest of the Khurasan, which has had a key role in developing Saljuq architecture in the area. The original scheme of the mosque was unclear. The lofty iwān and two flanking dome chambers on the west (qibla) side of the courtyard are the central core of the mosque. The main aim of the article is to analyse the architecture of the mosque and demonstrate its association with the architectural style of the Saljuq mosque in the Khurasan area. During the conservation and restoration measures in 2006, some fresh materials were unearthed. The new findings shed light on the original features of the mosque and revealed its formation. The paper describes the city's history, defines its architectural characteristics, and then analyses the present information for replying to the research questions. Owing to the outcomes of the archaeological investigation, the study suggests the general scheme of the mosque as a further example of the two- iwān mosque, which may be dated to the late years of the 6th /12th century. Despite the importance of the mosque, no lengthy study has been published about the building. The accurate drawing of the plan and sections of this monument, with the proposal scheme for the reconstruction of the mosque, are being published in this paper for the first time.

#### Keywords:

Khurasan, Firdaus, Friday mosque, Saljuq architecture, Ghurid.

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## 1. Introduction

A Friday or Congregational mosque (masjid-i Jami‘) is the most well-known monument in Islamic architecture history. The building typically presents architectural innovation in every period. To outline the conceptional formation and understanding the characteristic attributes provides sufficient material to determine the history of Iranian Islamic architecture. The building was erected in various styles, and classifying it in all areas is essential.

Khurasan is the name of a vast region in the northeast of modern Iran. This region was originally part of a far greater area with the exact name being equivalent in modern times to the present Khurasan of Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and north and northwest Afghanistan. The area has a significant cultural position in medieval Iran. It is not surprising that Khurasan can be seen as an innovative center of distinctive architecture schools, such as Saljuq, Ghaznavid and Ghurid, in the Iranian world from 1000-1250. Hitherto, two multiple types of mosques from this period have been recognised in Khurasan:

1. The two-*īwān* mosque - e.g Farūmad, Gunābād, and Zūzan.
2. The dome square mosque - e.g. Gunābād-i Sangān-i Pa’iyn <sup>(1)</sup>

In 2003, the Iranian Khurasan province was divided into three parts: Khurasan-i Shumalī (Northern Khurasan), Khurasan-i Razavī, and Khurasan-i Junūbī (Southern Khurasan). The city of Firdaus, formerly known as Tūn, <sup>(2)</sup> is located in the northwest of Khurasan-i Junūbī.

The city of Firdaus, despite its small size, has a valuable architectural heritage. Due to its remote location from the main roads, little attention has been drawn to its appreciated monuments. The city was destroyed by a fatal earthquake on 1<sup>st</sup> of September 1968, and then after, the new city was reconstructed to the north and northeast of the old one by local inhabitants. Despite this massive devastation, several significant monuments such as the Friday mosque (Masjid-i Jami‘), Masjid-i Kūshk (2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century), <sup>(3)</sup> two neighbouring madrasas, Ḥabībiya (1505), and ‘Uliyā (2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century) <sup>(4)</sup> have still survived near the Friday mosque, in the old part of the city.

This paper aims to discuss in detail the little-known Masjid-i Jami‘, the eminent surviving monument in Firdaus and the southwest Khurasan area. The study seeks to answer two main questions:

1. What are the main characteristics of the mosque and its construction date?
2. Architecturally, is there any link between the building and its neighbouring area?

The structure has been briefly noticed by a few scholars just as a historic building. However, there is no lengthy publication to examine the architectural history of the mosque. The present building was erected initially in the pre-Mongol first phase and developed in the Safavid and Qajar periods.

It is noteworthy that the accurate drawing of this monument, which was recently prepared by the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organisation (ICHHTO) local office in 2016, is being published in this paper for the first time. <sup>(5)</sup> In addition, the proposal for reconstruction of the mosque is produced in the paper (see below).

### Description of the Building

The Masjid-i Jami' of Firdaus, 34°00'24.42" N 58° 09' 31.92" E, is located to the southwest of the city, adjacent to Imām Khomeinī Street. The remains of the ruined citadel (*ārg*) of the city are to be found on the west side of the mosque. Firdaus had five districts before the earthquake: Sadat, Anbarī, Sardashat, Talār, and Miydān (Yāhaqī and Būzarjumihri 1996: 43). The Friday mosque and other surviving monuments were located in the latter area. The earliest aerial photo of the city, dated 1956, shows that the mosque was originally surrounded by several buildings that were destroyed by the earthquake. The shrine complex of Imamzadh Muhammad and Ibrahim, which dates from the Timurid and Safavid periods (Yāhaqī and Būzarjumihri 1996: 71-72), is to be seen to the southwest out of the mosque (Fig.1).

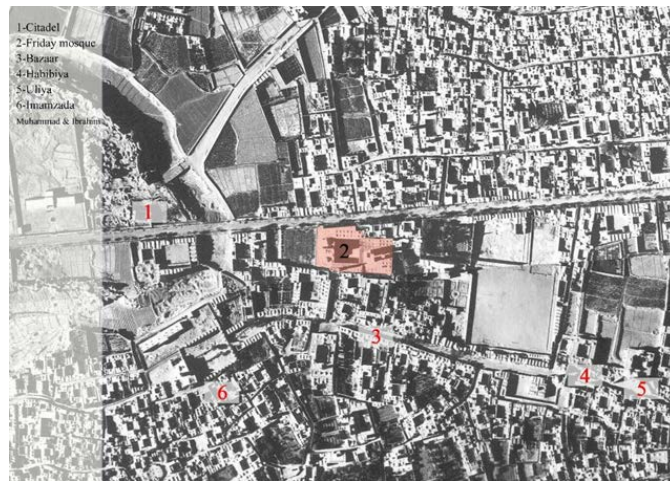


Fig. 1. Aerial photo of the mosque, 1956

Owing to the lack of archaeological investigation, the erection of the mosque over an earlier religious site such as a Zoroastrian structure, is uncertain. However, it seems that due to the orientation of the building, the present site was originally chosen for the mosque. The current mosque contains a huge *īwān* and some covered areas around a central courtyard (*ṣahn*) measuring 28.46 x 28.18 m. This vast size of the mosque, especially its courtyard, shows the mosque's key role in accommodating a large number of prayers (Fig.2).

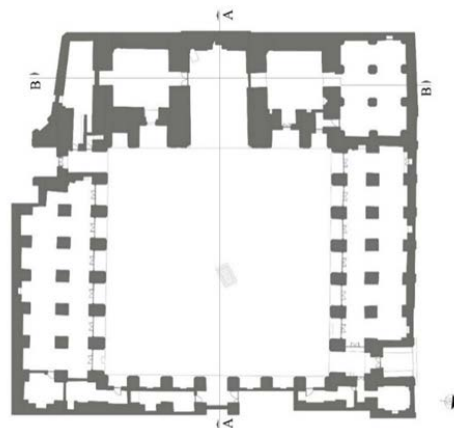


Fig. 2. Ground plan of the building, after ICHHTO.

A lofty *īwān* dominant on the west side, thanks to the *qibla* direction behind it, serves as the *qibla īwān* (Fig.3). It measures 12.15 deep, 7.39 wide, and 15.70 m high. Each wall of this *īwān* is 2.73 m wide. From the structural standpoint, this extraordinary thickness was intended to support the extra weight of the cover of the *īwān*.

It is flanked by two square dome chambers, each measuring 7.1 x 7.4 m. these dome chambers were planned to control the lateral thrusts of the *īwān*, and owing to the similar type of construction and decoration; they are simultaneous. The dome's profile to the north side is of the pointed arch of the *qibla īwān*, while that of the south side is semicircular (Fig.4).

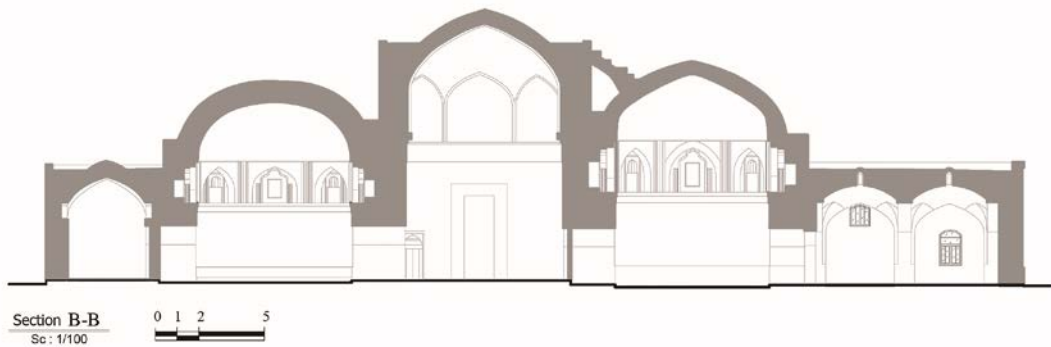


Fig. 4. Cross section of the *qibla* area, after ICHHTO

In addition, the height of the transition zone of the second dome is lower than that of the first one. These differentiations between the two dome chambers may probably refer to the later repair or reconstruction of the northwest dome.

Inside, each squinch of the dome is decorated with three adjacent rectangular frames. Each of them contains a trilobed arch in plaster that has been slightly executed in a rough way (Fig.5a). In the distance between each squinch a blind pointed arch is placed. Inside the arch is a decorated form containing a broken-headed keel arch. Each spring of the latter sits on an ornamented engaged semi-column of plaster (Fig.5b). This type of arch is rare in Iranian Islamic architecture and is possibly a local sample. The closest parallel is to be seen over the entrance of the Qal'a Huḏābad (locally known as Qal'a Rustam) near Zābul in the Sistan area.<sup>(6)</sup> The exact function of the dome chambers is unclear; however, due to their decoration, they likely served as private praying rooms or teaching spaces. Due to the education of traditional Islamic sciences in the mosque, the latter function is more likely. A similar scheme is to be found in the Madrasa Shah-i Mashad (1176) in Afghanistan.<sup>(7)</sup> At present, there is no inscription inside the dome chambers.



Fig. 5 a,b. Decoration of the transitional zone

A series of harmonised arcades, except the west or *qibla* side, are around the courtyard (Fig.6). The façade of the *qibla* *īwān* is flanked by two *īwān*-like entrances. Each entrance provides access to the rear dome chamber. Over each entrance is a stilted pointed arch. Each base of this arch sets over a slim engaged column in brick. This figure is to be seen in the other Saljuq monuments, such as the Masjid-i Malik in Kirman (1084-98)<sup>(8)</sup> and the caravanserai at Ribāt-i Sharaf (1114-54), north of Khurasan.<sup>(9)</sup> A large *shabistān* measuring 26.1 m x 8.7 m is north of the courtyard. This *shabistān* is covered by 12 domical vaults of baked bricks. A further *shabistān* measuring 24.2 m x 6.3 m, with the same construction style, can be seen to the south of the courtyard. Similar intercolumniation styles of vaulting and courtyard façade suggest that these two *shabistāns* were built at the same time.

A smaller *shabistān* is to be found in the northwest of the courtyard. The *shabistān* measures 12.4 m x 8.4 m, and it is covered by six domical vaults. This *shabistān* has only access from the adjacent dome chamber, so it seems it was added later to the building. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase, a further *shabistān*, measuring 30 m x 30 m that was locally known as *Shabistān-i Šad Sitūn* (100 columns sanctuary) was added to the mosque behind the east part of the courtyard. According to the date of the foundation stone<sup>(10)</sup> of the *shabistān*, which is still placed on a wall to the east part of the courtyard, the *shabistān* was added to the mosque in 1822-23. The *shabistān* was destroyed by the earthquake. However, its reconstruction is now in progress under the supervision of the border trustee of the mosque and is near completion.<sup>(11)</sup>

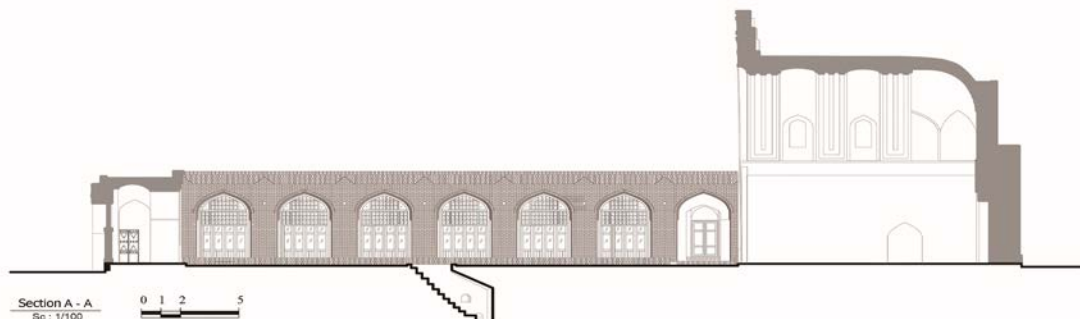


Fig. 6. Longitudinal section of the mosque, facing the south side, after ICHHTO

The height of each entry is about half of the *qibla īwān*. A blind niche arcade, at the height of the south and north *shabistān*, is to be seen at both ends of the *qibla* façade of the courtyard. This combination creates a hierarchy of size on the west façade to stress the *qibla īwān* as the mosque element.

As mentioned above, a lofty *īwān* of baked brick is to the west side of the mosque. The arch of the *qibla īwān* is four-centred and placed over two outset impostes. Above the arch is a rectangular frame measuring 8.05 m x 0.5 m. It is likely that an inscription band, which has vanished now, was placed inside this frame.<sup>(12)</sup> Two decorative motifs in the form of *muqarnas*, are set below the impostes of its arch façade, marking the inner northwest and southwest corners of the *qibla īwān*. These two motifs likely replaced two original engaged columns in baked brick later. A herringbone pattern in baked brick covers the spandrel of the arch of the *qibla īwān*. Similar to the surviving parts of the façade decoration of the *īwān*, it is more likely that the spandrel was initially decorated with stars and carved arabesques of baked terracotta, which have vanished now.

A large *mihrāb* of plaster consisting of a very shallow rectangular frame, measuring 4.45 m x 2.57 m, is on the *qibla* wall of the *īwān*. A niche measuring 1.90 m x 0.07 m., with a pointed arch hood, is in the centre of the rectangular frame. A further smaller *mihrāb* of plaster that was built later to show the exact direction of the *qibla* is in the southwest corner of the *qibla* wall of the *īwān*. It is noteworthy that in the eastern lands of Iran, because of the difficult calculation of the *qibla* direction, the mosque was traditionally oriented toward the West, the general direction of Mecca. The *mihrābs* are simple and not adorned. Two doorways opposite each other in the *qibla īwān* provide access to the flanking dome chambers. Each lateral wall of the *īwān* was likely pierced by one opening, which provides the present accesses to the dome chambers.

The *īwān* is constructed of baked brick and decorated with terra cotta. These materials are also widely applied in the Ghurid monuments in Afghanistan (Ball 2008: 135). A succession of panels linked by knotted frames runs around the façade of the *qibla īwān*. These panels are of baked brick and are filled with geometric lines that form an interlaced strapwork of carved baked terracotta (Fig.7). The remains of light blue (turquoise) glazed tiles are to be seen on two exterior surfaces of each knot. Between these two panels is decorated with a broader band of a moulded geometrical pattern of baked terracotta,<sup>(13)</sup> containing a series of ten-sided stars beside each other. This type of design includes an elaborate strap work, locally known as *hizārbāf* (thousand-weave). Each part of the decoration is usually created on the ground and installed in its place according to its pre-designed scheme. This star design is also to be seen in the spandrel of the *qibla īwān* in the mosque of Farūmad<sup>(14)</sup> and the soffit of the arch at Bust, both datable to the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Inside, each star was decorated with cut light blue glazed tiles.



Fig. 7. Decoration of the qiblah *īwān*

This decoration is also to be seen on the nearby monuments: the mosque-madrassa at Zūzan (1219) and <sup>(15)</sup> Masjid-i Sangān Paī'n in Khāf (ca. 1150).<sup>(16)</sup> The decoration is also visible in Ghurid monuments such as the minaret of Jam (ca. 1190),<sup>(17)</sup> the madrasa of Shāh-Mashad (1176),<sup>(18)</sup> and the mausoleum of Ghiyāth al-Dīn (late 12<sup>th</sup> and early 13<sup>th</sup> century) (Hillenbrand 2002: 123-143) in Herat, Shāhzadih Sarbāz at Bust (c. 1203), and in the south palace at Lashgarī Bāzār (Hillenbrand 2002: 195). This association may suggest the influence of Ghaznavid and Ghurid architecture in the South Khurasan area. There is no decorative epigraphy in the Firdaus mosque, so it was originally less decorated than those mentioned above. The shortage of ornamentation in the main *īwān*, as the old part of the mosque, is unclear. It is possible that the *īwān* was embellished originally; however, it was later destroyed and was not restored. In addition, it is likely the mosque was built by order of a local and not a royal patron, so the financial support was insufficient.

The vast application of light blue glazed tiles shows the continuation of the Ghurid style and its popularity in Khurasan. It is noteworthy that the upper part of the original decoration on the portal *īwān* in Firdaus was destroyed by the earthquake in 1968.<sup>(19)</sup> However, according to old photos, it was reconstructed as its present form by the ICHHTO in 2014.

The remains of a delicate floral pattern of baked terracotta, set in a light reddish-plaster ground, can be seen on the facade of the *qibla* *īwān*. It appears that this decorative band originally runs on the extrados of the arch. The closest parallel of the decoration is to be found on the northeast exterior façade of the mausoleum of Ghiyāth al-Dīn in Herāt.<sup>(20)</sup> The rectangular area of the *īwān* is roofed by a series of crossing vaults that are typically applied to cover a vast rectangular space. The roofing type is known as *tāq-i kajāwh* (*kajāwh* vault) in Iran.<sup>(21)</sup> By contrast, in the barrel vault type of construction in

the Sasanian period, there is no need for the back wall of the *īwān* to be constructed up to its full height to support the construction of the roof of the *īwān*. In addition, a barrel vault typically makes lateral thrust forces; however, in this type of construction, the vault load is beared by the cross arches and leads it directly to the ground (Mi'māriyān 2012, 225). This vault, generally known as the developed form of a barrel vault, is comprised of a series of transverse pointed arches. A further barrel vault of the suggested arch profile fills the interval space between each cross arch. The closest parallel is to be seen in the Masjid-i Jami' Gunābād.<sup>(22)</sup> *Tāq-i kajāwh* was developed and widely used as an innovative type in the Ilkhānīd monuments, such as the Masjid-i Jami' at Yazd (Wilber 1969: 58, 160).

In the case of Firdaus, owing to stress on the *mihrāb* in the *qibla īwān*, the end part of *tāq-i kajāwh* is covered by a semi-domical vault with a pair of the squinch (Fig.8). So, the vaulting type of south *īwān* in Firdaus is a rare example of this style in Iranian land in the pre-Mongol invasion. It is noticeable that the idea of vaulting was developed and applied in later monuments such as the Friday mosque in Qā'n (d.1393) in the South Khurasan province.<sup>(23)</sup>

The mosque has two entrances. The main entrance is to the northeast side of the courtyard, which opens to the present Imam Khomeini Street. The *īwān*-like portal, decorated with a series of crossing ribs of plaster,<sup>(24)</sup> likely dates from the Qajar or early Pahlavi period. A further entrance, without any specific decoration, is to the southwest side of the mosque. The earliest aerial photo of the city (d. 1956) shows a minaret whose size is unclear – besides the latter entrance. This minaret was destroyed by the earthquake in 1968. It is notable that there is no evidence of a portal with an adjacent minaret in Khurasan in the 12 century. So, it seems the minaret was probably a later addition.



Fig. 8. Vaulting of the qibla īwān

Except for the Ghurid portal in the Friday mosque of Herat,<sup>(25)</sup> which was intentionally decorated for political purposes (see below), the mosque at Firdaus, similar to the other contemporary surviving mosques in Khurasan, namely Farūmad and Gunābād, are disadvantaged from an elaborated entrance.



During the restoration in 2006, the remains of the original pavement of the mosque courtyard were discovered (Fig.9). Consequently, an archaeological investigation was started to find other pieces of evidence from the ICHHTO local office in Firdaus.<sup>(26)</sup> This excavation discovered the remains of two lateral walls of a *īwān* to the east side of the courtyard, precisely opposite the *qibla īwān*. The discovered *īwān* was 2.11 m deep and 7.1 m wide, and each wall was 2.63 m wide.

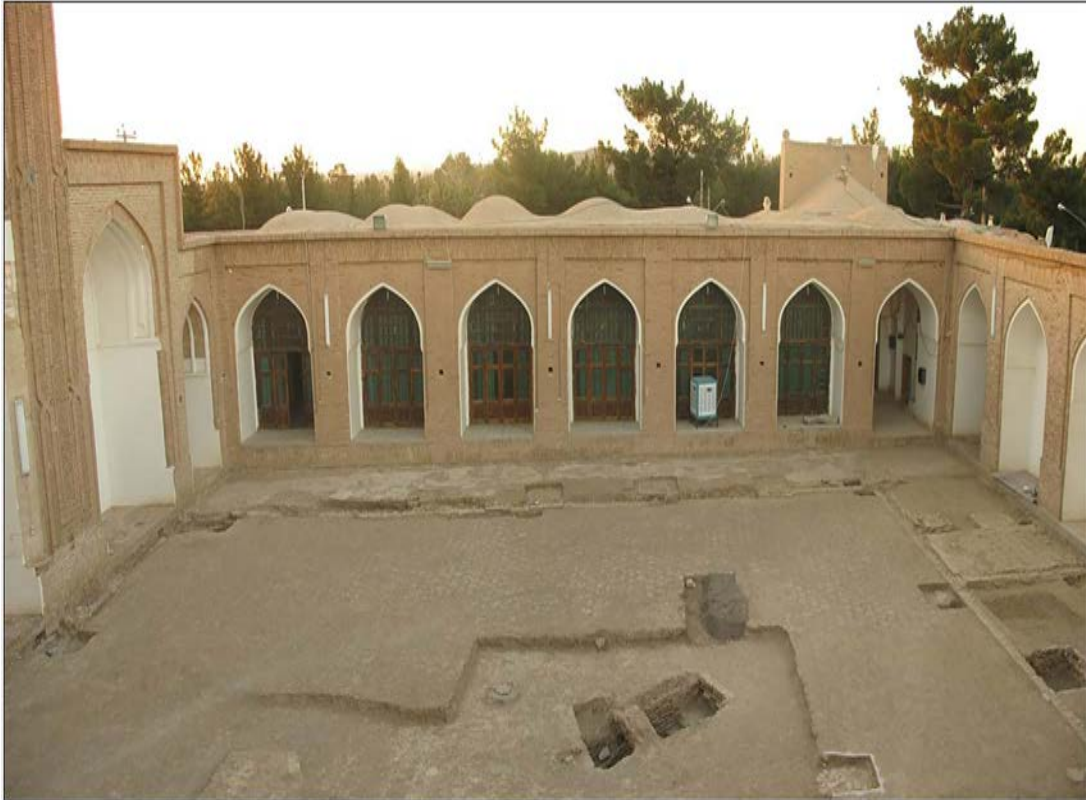


Fig. 9. View of new discovery in the courtyard, after ICHHTO

The width of this *īwān* and each lateral wall of it are equal to those of the *qibla īwān*. It shows that the destroyed *īwān* was possibly as tall as the *qibla īwān* or had a close height to it. This discovery clarifies that the Friday mosque at Firdaus was initially constructed according to the two-axial *īwān* scheme.<sup>(27)</sup> The closest parallel of this type of design is to be found in the Masjid-i Jāmi' in Farūmad (12<sup>th</sup> century),<sup>(28)</sup> Gunābād (1212),<sup>(29)</sup> and the well-known mosque-madrassa at Zūzan (1219).<sup>(30)</sup> It is noteworthy that the ratio of the depth of *qibla īwān* to its opposite *īwān* in the Friday mosque at Gunābād corresponds to the same proportion at the Firdaus mosque. This similarity suggests that these two mosques were built in the same scheme and perhaps at the same time in neighbouring areas.

This excavation also unearthed the original peripheral of the courtyard (Fig.10). It shows that the courtyard was developed on all sides except the west (*qibla*) side. Hence, the north and south existing *shabistāns* are a result of this expansion (Fig.11).



Fig .10. Discovery of the Original Peripheral of the Courtyard to the North Side, after ICHHTO

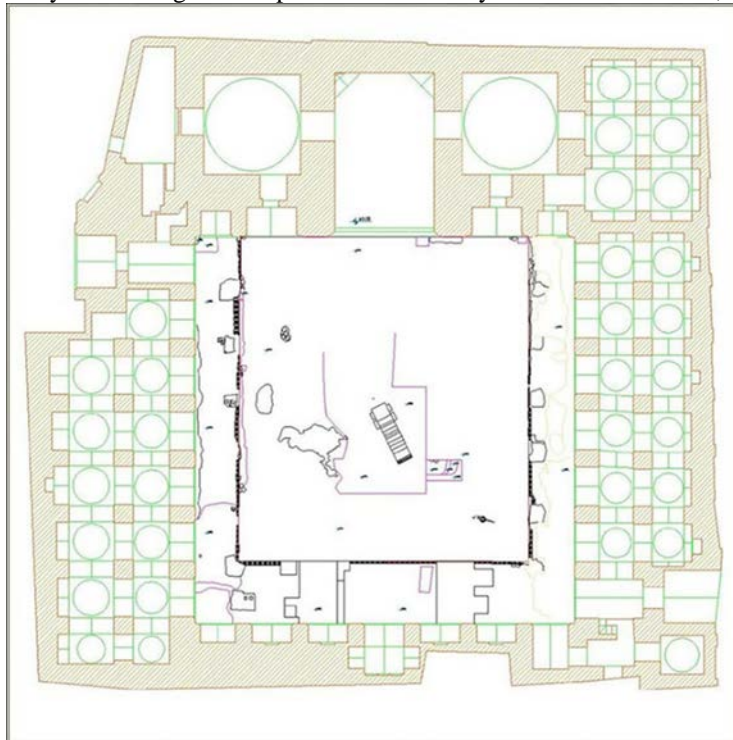


Fig .11. Plan of the Architectural Remains, after ICHHTO

In addition, the excavation also revealed a stairway (*pāyāb*), which is comprised of ten stairs - each stair measures 1.12 m wide and 34 cm high – in the middle of the courtyard. The stairway led to the remains of an underground waterway, which is 3.40 m under the existing level of the courtyard. It suggests that the site of the mosque was

carefully designed for benefiting the water of a *qanāt* for ablution.<sup>(31)</sup> It is worth mentioning that the city of Firdaus benefits from sufficient historic *qanāts*.<sup>(32)</sup>

The new discovery shed light on the original scheme of the mosque. Based on the latest findings, a proposed reconstruction plan, as of the first period, comprising of two opposing *īwāns* and a *riwāq* (arcade) around the central courtyard) shows the three sequences of formation of the mosque (Fig.12).

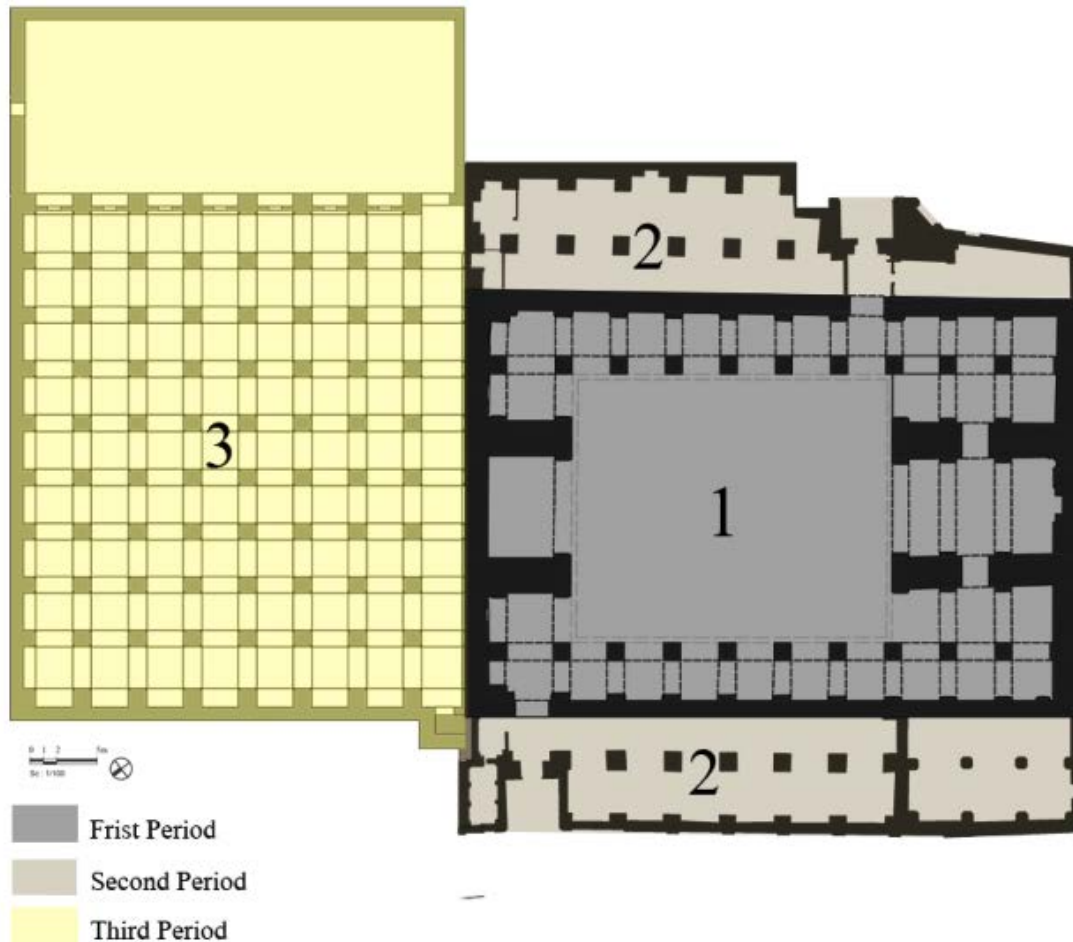


Fig. 12. Proposed Reconstruction of the Early Mosque and Sequence of its Development

### Dating of the Building

Firdaus, known as Tūn in the early Islamic geographic sources, was an important city in the Khurasan area in the pre-Mongol period. The Arabs entered Khurasan through Ṭabas around 648 (Yaḥyaqqī and Buzarjumihri 1996: 23). Considering the closeness of the Tūn area to Ṭabas, it seems likely that this area was conquered at the same time or a date close to this period.

*Ashkāl al- 'Ālam*, by Aḥmād Jaīyhanī (2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century), names Tūn as a large and prosperous city (Jaīyhanī 1990: 170). The anonymous author of *Hudūd al- 'Ālam* (982) mentions Tūn as a prosperous city (Anonymous 1983: 283). Muqaddasī, in his *Aḥsan al-Taḳāṣīm* (985), gives a good description of the city. He writes that the city is well-populated with many weavers. He mentions that over the town stands a fortress, and its *jāmi'* (Friday mosque) is in the middle of the city, and the drinking-water of the inhabitants is from a *qanāt* (underground water channel), which has been found in the Friday mosque (Muqaddasī 1994: 283).

His description corresponds to the present situation of the mosque. The current mosque may be in the exact location of the original *jāmi'* of the city. However, its structure was modified and expanded later.

Nāsir-i Khusraw visited Tūn in 1052 when it was in decline. However, he describes Tūn as a large city with a strong fort. He also notices the existence of many gardens in the eastern suburbs of the city and describes its good economic condition at that time (Nāsir-i Khusraw 1956, 126-27).

By 1091-92, Ismā'ilis appeared in the Quhistān region, which, thanks to its impassable mountains were an apt place for placing their strongholds. Soon after, they conquered all the area's cities, including Tūn, in 494/1100. Then, this city became a key center for their activities (Yāḥaqqī and Budharjumihri 1996: 51). Khurasan underwent instability after the death of Aḥmad Sanjar in 1157. The area was basically under the attacks of Ghuzz Turks (Bosworth 2001: 587).

The 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 6<sup>th</sup> /12<sup>th</sup> century coincides with the zenith time of the short-lived Ghurid Sultānate (c.1126 -1215), which was based in Ghur, in Afghanistan. Muḥammad, also known as Ghīyāth al-Dīn Ghūr (r. 1163-1203), with the assistance of his brother Mu'izz al-Din Muḥammad b. Sām or Muḥammad-i Ghur (r. 1173-1206) occupied the Khurasan. By 1200, Ghīyāth al-Dīn was able to take over most of the towns of Khurasan as far west as Bastām in Qūmis (Bosworth 2001: 588).

He defeated the Ghuzz Turks and retrieved the city of Ghazni in 1173 and, soon after, Herat in 1175 (Jūzjānī 2012: 371). After seizing power in Khurasan, he ordered that the earlier Friday Mosque of Herat, which was destroyed by a fire as a symbol of architectural patronage and political power, be rebuilt and expanded in 1175. The building was reconstructed according to a typical form in the Khurasan region, namely the two-*īwān* scheme without a domed sanctuary, open to an arcade around a central courtyard, and finished according to an inscription band in 1200-201 (Hansen et al. 2010: 35, 57).

It seems that the above idea in Herat, as a pattern, was repeated in Tūn, so a new Friday mosque of a larger size was constructed and replaced the earlier one in the city. Considering the similar scheme and the decoration of the *qibla īwān*, similar to the Ghurid type, the Friday Mosque of Firdaus can be dated to the late years of the 6<sup>th</sup> / 12<sup>th</sup> century.

The city was conquered, and Mongols massacred its inhabitants in 1255 (Yāḥaqqī and Budharjumihri 1996: 53-54). Despite this disaster, due to its crucial geographical location and natural potential, the city recovered soon and flourished in the Ilkhānīd period. By 1339, Mustūfī Qazvīnī, in his book *Nuzhat al-Qulūb*, describes it as a prosperous city (Mustufi Qazvīnī 1999: 207). It became the center of Safavids in the south of Khurasan and prospered during this period (Turkamān 1972: 140). The eastern *īwān* and two *riwāqs* were demolished in the second phase, and the mosque was expanded. A large *shabistān* was externally added to the mosque in the third stage.

### Conclusion

The Friday Mosque of Firdaus is important on many counts. The structure represents a further instance of a two - *īwān* mosque scheme without a dome chamber on the *qibla* side. Owing to other surviving parallels in Khurasan, this type of plan can be recognised as the Khurasnai style of mosque architecture. The building was probably built in the late years of the 6<sup>th</sup> / 12<sup>th</sup> century, a period that is stylistically known as the continuation of the Saljuq style of architecture in Iran.

The baked brick as the primary construction medium and carved moulded terracotta for external decoration indicate the influences of its neighbouring Ghaznavid and Ghurid architecture. Applying the vast light blue glazed tiles in various forms on the *qibla īwān* façade of the mosque illustrates the popularity and development of this type of ornament in Khurasan in the pre-Mongol period. In addition, the technique of vaulting in the *qibla īwān* is one of the earliest examples of this type of construction in the same period.

The enlargement of the mosque in the Safavid time shows the growing number of inhabitants and attests to the city's position as a major base of Shi'ism in this period. Adding a large *shabistān* in the reign of Fath 'Alī Shāh Qajar shows the significance and popularity of the Friday mosque in the city.

### Acknowledgement

I am grateful to Mr. Hamid Halaj Muqadam and Mr. Kazim Shabnamzadh for providing me with information about the mosque.

### Footnotes

1. For a recent and detailed study on the building see Korn 2010: 81- 104.
2. The name of city was converted from Tūn (a very hot place or hell) into Firdūas (heaven) by the approval of the Iranian government in 1929.
3. For a detail description of this mosque see Anisi 2008: 234-240. The date of the mosque is mentioned as the 1st half of the 4th/10th century in the dissertation, however with more survey by the present writer, the new dating for the building that is mentioned in this paper is more likely.
4. For this building see Anisi 2016: 3-20.
5. I am grateful to the ICHHTO local office in Southern Khurasan Province for this information.
6. For the photo of the entrance Lacoste 1909:190.
7. For the plan of the madrasa see Najimi 2015:153.
8. For a detailed discussion on this building see: Anisi 2004, 137-157.
9. For a photo of the building see Hillenbrand 2000: 345, fig. 6.20.
10. The foundation plaque in stone starts with a Quranic verse (Quran 9:18). Beneath it, is the second band contains a *hadith* from the prophet of Islam and at the end, the date 1238 H/ 1822-23 CE, is inscribed. Below the latter, several bands of poems are on the foundation stone.
11. It is notable that the reconstruction plan of the vanished *shabistān* has been designed by the present writer in 2013.
12. It is notable that the uppermost part of the *īwān* was reconstructed in 2014 according to its photos before the earthquake.
12. Godard describes the construction of same type of decoration, which has been applied in the Masjid-i Jam' of Farūmad. See Godard, 1949: 91-95.
13. For a photo of the decoration see Godard 1949: 94.
14. For Zūzan see: Blair 1985: 75-91; Adle 1990: 231-48.
15. For this monument see: Pickett 1997: 24, fig. 19. It is noteworthy that the east part of the mosque was destroyed some time ago and now is replaced by a new *shabistān*. Owing to similarities between the Friday Mosque of Firdaus and this building, it is very likely that a further *īwān* originally stood opposite its *qibla īwān* and its remains can be found later.
16. For a recent discussion on this minaret see, Pinder-Wilson 2001: 166-171.
17. Casimir and Glatzer 1971: 53-68; for a recent discussion on this monument see also Najīmī, 2015:143-170.
18. For a photograph of the damaged *qibla īwān* of the mosque see Hutt and Harrow 1977: 134, pl.78.
19. For the photo of the building see; Hillenbrand 2002: 133, pl.12.13
20. For this type of vault see Mi'māriyān 2012, 226-240.
21. For the longitudinal section of the mosque see: Hajqāsīmī 2004: 96.
22. For the floor plan and section of the mosque see Hajqāsīmī 2004:147
23. This type of decoration because of creating a geometric pattern is generally classified as *kārbandī*.
24. For a new and complete study on the monument see Hansen *et al* 2015.

25. I am grateful to Mr. Kazim Shabnamzada, archaeologist in the ICHTTO local office in Firdaus, for providing me with this information.

26. Robert Hillenbrand has classified the mosque at Firdaus as a mosque with a single *īwān* on the *qibla* side in the Saljuq architecture. See Hillenbrand 1976:93.

27. For the mosque see Godard 1949: 110, fig. 59.

28. For the ground plan of the building see Ḥajqāsimī 2004: 96- 97.

29. For the plan of the building see Godard 1949, fig. 20.

30. This form is to be seen in the Friday mosque of Naṭanz and used to in the Masjid-i Malik in Kirman.

31. The Qanāt-i Qaṣabh near the city was inscribed in the World Heritage List as Persian Qanāts.

32. For a brief history of the dynasty see Bosworth 1996: 298-99.

33. For a brief classification of Saljuq mosques in this period see: Hillenbrand 1976: 93-94; and Korn, 2000.

34. The building was built in the reign of Khwarazm Shahs (1172-1231) in Khurasan and so, it is chronologically to be distinguished as Khwarazm Shah's mosques (Akbari 1998: 162), however, architecturally this period still is known as the continuous of the Saljuq style in Iran. There is no any general agreement on the supremacy of Saljuq Architecture style but the era of 1055-1250 is more plausible.

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### چکیده

این مقاله به بررسی دقیق مسجد جامع فردوس در جنوب غربی خراسان که نقشی کلیدی در توسعه معماری سلجوقی در این منطقه داشته است، می پردازد. طرح اولیه مسجد و گسترش آن نامشخص است. ایوان رفیع و دو گنبدخانه در طرفین آن در ضلع غربی (قبله) حیاط، هسته مرکزی مسجد را تشکیل می دهند. هدف اصلی مقاله، تحلیل معماری مسجد و نشان دادن ارتباط آن با سبک معماری مسجد سلجوقی در منطقه خراسان است. در طول اقدامات حفاظتی و بازسازی در سال ۲۰۰۶، برخی از مواد تازه کشف شد. یافته های جدید ویژگی های اولیه مسجد ر و شکل گیری آن را آشکار می کند. این مقاله در ابتدا تاریخ شهر را توصیف و ویژگی های معماری آن را تعریف و سپس اطلاعات موجود را برای پاسخ به سؤالات پژوهش بررسی و تحلیل می کند. با توجه به نتایج بررسی های باستان شناسی، این مطالعه طرح کلی مسجد را به عنوان نمونه ای دیگر از مسجد دو ایوانی نشان می دهد که ممکن است قدمت آن به سال های پایانی قرن ششم / دوازدهم باشد. علیرغم اهمیت مسجد، هیچ مطالعه تفصیلی در مورد این بنا منتشر نشده است. نقشه دقیق پلان و مقاطع این بنا با طرح پیشنهادی بازسازی مسجد برای اولین بار در این مقاله منتشر می شوند.

**واژه های کلیدی:** خراسان، فردوس، مسجد، سلجوقی، غوری.