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## **The Study and Analysis of The Prevailing Elements and Patterns in The Background of The Works of Mirzababa, A Qajar Painter\***

**Reyhaneh Keshtgar Ghasemi<sup>1</sup>**

**Morteza Asadi<sup>2</sup>**

### **Abstract**

The Qajar period is the beginning of many important and long-lasting developments in Iran's contemporary era. Among these developments, we should mention the changes in Iranian arts and the aspects that these arts had with them. Planning and backgrounding were among the aspects that entered Iranian painting with the entrance of Western art elements. Mirzababa was one of the most important painters of the first Qajar period, and the way he used these elements became an unwritten and frequently used pattern among artists. The purpose of the present article is to analyze the background of his works and to understand his backgrounding. The research is a theoretical and a descriptive-analytical research. The statistical population of the research consists of the works of Mirzababa and because the number of works that have reached us is limited, the sample size is all of his works. The research data show that Mirzababa had been backgrounding according to the type of art or used medium. Backgrounds have a general pattern or contractual elements that have an interior, exterior, or a combination of both spaces rather than the used medium.

**Keywords:** Qajar Art, Mirzababa, Backgrounding, Iconography, Book Decoration.

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<sup>1</sup> Postgraduate student of painting, Faculty of Art, Shahed University, Iran. E-mail: Reihanehart13795@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Morteza Asadi, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Arts, Shahed University. Iran. E-mail: asadi@shahed.ac.ir

## **Introduction and problem statement**

One of the most important periods in the history of Iran is the Qajar period because this period is the beginning of political and social events. Since these events are considered the beginning of many contemporary developments in Iran, they have been noticed by many researchers and experts. The improvement and expansion of Iranians' relations with Europe during this period caused the Europeans commuting and extensive interactions with Iranians. One of the consequences of these interactions was the entrance of European paintings that were brought to the court as gifts. Gradually, these paintings aroused the interest of kings, courtiers and consequently painters to European art and made changes in Iranian painting. The tendency to European art was one of the reasons for breaking away from the traditional Iranian painting style and orientation to new forms of painting such as inanimate nature, iconography, landscaping and naturalization. These new types also brought new aspects to painting. One of these new aspects was backgrounding of the art works.

Among the painters of the first Qajar period, Mirzababa is considered the most important aulic artist. Apart from his transitional role in portraiture and painting from Zandi to the Qajar period, due to the popularity of his works in the court and with Fath Ali Shah, he established unwritten rules of aesthetics in the Qajar period that continued even after him and by the end of the Qajar period. For these reasons, the analysis and study of various aspects of Mirzababa's works can play a decisive role in understanding the patterns and conventions in the art of the Qajar period. One of the most important aspects that were added to Iranian painting during the Qajar period was the planning and backgrounding of works. What constitutes the problem of this article is to study and analyze the background of Mirzababa's works and answer the following questions:

- 1- How was the backgrounding done in Mirzababa's works?
- 2- Can a special pattern be found in the background of Mirzababa's works?

## **Research Method**

Based on the purpose, this research is a basic-theoretical and a descriptive-analytical research. The statistical population of this research consists of the works of Mirzababa and because the number of works that have reached us is limited, the sample size is all of his works.

## **Research background**

Many books have been written about Qajar period and art, and many of these books refer to the works and artistic features of this period. One of the first and most authoritative books in this field is the book of Iranian painting from long ago to today written by Rouyin Pakbaz (2000) in which the author explains the history of Iranian painting from the oldest historical periods to the contemporary period and in the meantime, he presents his theories and discussions in the field of Qajar art. The Encyclopedia of Art (2011) also written by the same author has entries related to the discussion of the leading article such as aulic Iconography, Westernization and Mirzababa, which gives general and basic information in this field. Morteza Goodarzi also deals with the art of Afshari, Zandi and Qajar, the features, similarities and differences of these arts in the fifth chapter of his book entitled The History of Iranian Painting from the Beginning to the Present Age (2016). Behnam Jalali Jafari deals with the subject matter, style and framework and analysis of compositions and some works of Qajar artists such as Mirzababa, Mehrali and Mohamadsadeq more specifically in his book, which is taken from the author's Ph.D. Thesis entitled Qajar painting and the evolution of portraiture in Iran (2003). What the author is doing in this work is the analysis of the main lines and the overall composition of the work, and the backgrounds have not been considered and addressed separately by the author. In the

Mostafa Lal-shateri's work, whose master's thesis is entitled *The Influence of Western Art on Nasser period Art* (2016), the author has tried to explain the influence of various fields of music, drama and painting from Western art in the Qajar period. Of course, the author does not specifically mention how to include any particular component in Iranian works, but he has provided the basis for a better explanation of the influence of Western art in Iranian art. S.J. Falk introduces and describes some famous painters of the Qajar period, including Mehr Ali, Mirzababa, Mohammad Hassan, Abolghasem and Shirin Negar in the book of *Qajar iconographers* (2014), which is mainly dedicated to the iconography methods, pictures of princes, courtiers' men and women. In a study entitled *The Role of Mirzababa as a Painter in the Qajar Period* (2019) by Elahe Panjehbashi, an attempt has been made to examine the characteristics and the originality of the works assigned to Mirzababa. In another article entitled "Study of the evolution of painting, especially landscaping in the engraving of the Safavi period until the end of the Qajar period" (2010) co-written by Ali Naderi Alam and Dr. Kazem Chelipa, which examines and analyzes the Qajar period pen boxes, and also refers to Mirzababa pen boxes. In none of the mentioned works, Mirzababa's background method has been considered and analyzed, so there is no overlap or research with this subject.

### **Qajar period**

Dekhoda considers Qajar as Turkish tribes. This tribe migrated from Central Asia to the West in the 7th century when Genghis Khan invaded. (Dekhoda, 1998: 17292). In fact, the Qajar dynasty belongs to one of the Oghuz Turkish tribes in northeastern Iran, who first settled near Armenia.

The Qajar ruled in Iran from about 1174 to 1304 A.H. for about 130 years. The kings who ruled over the Iranians in this historical period are: Agha Mohammad Khan from 1161 to 1176 A.H., whose kingdom was one year, Fath Ali Shah from 1176 to 1213 A.H., Mohammad Shah from 1213 to 1227A.H., Nasser al-Din Shah from 1227 to 1275A.H., Muzaffar al-Din Shah from 1275 to 1285A.H., Mohammad Ali Shah from 1285 to 1288 A.H. and Ahmad Shah from 1288 to 1304A.H.

What happened in the Qajar period in general and should be considered as one of the most important and influential events on art and the artistic movement, was the expansion of Iran's relations with other countries, especially Europe and the West, which paved the way for influence and change.

### **Art in the Qajar period**

The art in the Qajar period was a continuation of artistic currents such as Westernization, which continued during the Afshari and Zandi periods and then reached the Qajar period. Rouyin Pakbaz uses the word Westernization (*farangi sazi*) instead of Westernization (*farangi maabi*) in his book *Encyclopedia of Art* and considers this as a term for incomplete imitations of Iranian painters of European painting (Pakbaz, 2011: 371). Westernization gradually led Iranian painters and artists to the style of Western art during the Safavi period and its extension up to the Afshari and Zandi periods. Finally, in the first decades of the Qajar period, this tendency led to a coherent style (Shafizadeh, 2009). Painting in the Qajar period can be divided into two general periods. The first period, which covers the period from Fath Ali to the kingdom of Nasser al-Din Shah, has its own characteristics, and the Iranian elements and expression dominate the European style. The second period begins during the kingdom of Nasser al-Din Shah and continues until the end of the Qajar period. During this period, the works became more naturalistic, new features such as cameras and lithography affected the painting, more relationship with the West changed aesthetically, and thus a new form of art was created that can be said that no longer resemble its previous art, although elements and principles of past Iranian painting were still observed. (Rajabi and Shafizadeh 2008: 60).

Iconography with figures in natural dimensions and size is one of the characteristics of Qajar painting, which flourished during the kingdom of Fath Ali Shah. Aulic iconography was created as a result of Westernization and a combination of Iranian art traditions with elements of European painting. In this way, the representation of the human body as an independent element within the work became important. One of the features of these iconographies is the introduction of human-centered European painting elements in natural dimensions, while the simulation was not the artist's concern. The artist's approach to the subject of man in this type of work is an abstract approach, which means that an ideal human being with specific characteristics that represent a kind of aesthetics becomes common. For example, a slim waist, stare, mustache, and long beard were used to portray men and oval faces, crimson eyes, henna-covered fingers, and continuous eyebrows were used to portray women, regardless of the age and specific characteristics of each person. Thus, features such as aging and personal characteristics never appeared in these works. (Pakbaz, 2011: 147).

In these works, the calligraphy element loses its importance and colors become more limited and painters pay more attention to texture than calligraphy and color. Painters try to display jewelry by putting colored spots. The peak of these paintings can be seen in the works of Mirzababa and Mehr Ali Isfahani and some other masters of painting in the era of Fath Ali Shah (Qelichukhani, 2009: 374). The compositions of this school of art are symmetrical and static combinations with horizontal and vertical elements, brief arrangements on the face and clothes, combination of decorative and visual patterns and limited color selection with the dominance of warm colors, especially red. (Panjeh Bashi, 2019: 70).

## **Background**

A background is actually anything that is placed behind the main objects and elements inside the frame. The history of using background in the Western theatrical and visual tradition has always a special place to separate the subject temporally and spatially and keeping the subject in the scene. (Afhami and Badakhsh: 2016: 13). But the use of background in this meaning and use has little place in the Iranian visual tradition. Perhaps it can be said that with the influence of Western elements during the Qajar period and changing the texture of the structure and worldview of painting Iranian background, it became meaningful and became a part of the work.

## **Mirzababa**

According to the sources, the name of this artist has been introduced as Mirzababa Naghash (painter) or Mirzababa Hosseini Emami. (Panjeh Bashi, 2019: 69). The exact years of Mirzababa's life are not known, but he was probably born in 1763/1117 AH - and died in 1824/1240 AH. (Pakbaz, 2011: 556).

Based on some sources, Mirzababa is known as a Shirazi person and based on some others he is an Isfahani person. However, based on a signature of himself, in which he explicitly introduced himself as Shirazi and made such a text "the signature of the little Shirazi Baba (father) in the month Dhi Al-Hijjah in the year 1218" and also the writing of Mirza Sadegh Sources who have introduced him as Mirza Baba Shirazi, we can consider Mirzababa as a Shirazi person (Panjehbashi, 2019: 70 and Karimzadeh Tabrizi, 1984: 1123).

One of Mirzababa's most important students is Mehr Ali, who has done more oil paintings than other painters with Mirzababa. His son Mohammad Ismail, with the title of painter, was able to create the European style with Westernization and landscapes in small dimensions. Apart from this information, there is no much accurate information about the continuation of Mirzababa's style by other members of his family, and in general, traces of some members of the Imami family such as Seyyed Abolghasem

Hosseini Imami who was a religious man or Mohammad Mehdi, Mohammad Taghi Mohammadzadeh, Mohammad Reza, Mohammad Javad, and Nasrullah Imami who were famous for painting pen boxes, mirrors and candlesticks, and book covers can be found throughout the Qajar period. (Flora et al., 2002: 47-48).

### **The Zandi art, Mirzababa and his transitional role**

Zandi art is a continuation of the westernization tradition in the Safavi era. During Zandi time, oil paintings, which were often painted in large sizes, received more attention from painters and artists. In these large paintings, apart from the use of oil painting as tools to create the work, techniques such as shading and perspective have also been used. At the same time, the supportive role of Karim Khanzand as a person who tried to improve Shiraz artistically such as Isfahan in the Safavi era is undeniable. The Zandi court's interest in European-style portraiture and its combination with Safavi art in Isfahan created a combination of Iranian and European elements in iconography, which can be called the basis of Qajar iconography. (Lal Shateri, 2016: 190-189).

At the end of Zandi's kingdom, Mirzababa began painting with Karim Khan. Mirzababa's collection of works shows his aesthetic look, which is inspired of the Zandi period. (Panjehbashi, 2019: 73) Mirzababa became an artist of the Qajar court during the kingdom of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar. Of course, only one watercolor image of Agha Mohammad Khan by Mirzababa has been obtained, while many portraits of Fath Ali Shah by this artist are available. Mirzababa was very good at simulation and portraiture, and this aspect of his work did not change during the Qajar period. This led Mirzababa to play an important role in the transfer of art from the Zandi court to the Qajar court, and in fact laid the foundation for many of the laws that artists committed to until the late Qajar period. (Panjehbashi, 2019: 69).

Mirzababa was involved in performing various mediums and types of art such as oil painting, watercolors, lacquer paintings and flowers and hens, traditional pen boxes, enameling and mirror frames.

Among the works of Mirzababa, Hormoz son of Noshirvan and Nadiman (1789 AD / 1204 AH), Fath Ali Shah with a pocket watch (1798 AD /1213 AH), watercolor of sitting Fath Ali Shah (1802 AD /1217 AH) Chaldoran War pen box (1896 AD /1211 AH), book cover with flower and hen (1803 AD /1218 AH), the enamel snuffer with the image of an old man with a girl (1809 AD /1224 AH) should be mentioned (Pakbaz, 2011: 556).

### **Mirzababa and aulic iconography**

Mirzababa, who had worked in the court of Karim Khan Zandi since the end of Zandi's kingdom and was proficient in depicting human figures, was one of the founders of the school of aulic iconography and transferred this art from Zandi's court to the Qajar court. Mirzababa has the largest number of iconographies of Fath Ali Shah. And this led what he did to be observed as unwritten rules throughout the Qajar period, because the volume of works he did from Fath Ali Shah shows the approval of the artist's painting and visual rules by the Shah. As a result, Mirzababa, who had a background in Zandi art, led to the continuation of Westernization, or in other words, the entry of European art elements into Iranian painting and visual traditions, and formed the foundations of a new art. (Panjehbashi, 2019: 69). What makes Mirzababa very different from others is the use of materials, painting techniques, and the choice of diverse subjects rather than works of other artists. (Jafari Jalali, 2003: 56). Among the interests and characteristics of Mirzababa's art works is the tendency towards naturalism, although this tendency is not necessarily in the scientific meaning of the word, that is, the

exact observance of perspective or light and shadow, because Mirzababa did not know about the scientific perspective. (Pakbaz 2011: 556).

Mirzababa was very talented in painting human moods and various emotions such as fear, joy and sadness, and in his watercolor works, he uses such a stylist that it is very difficult to distinguish a painting from the photographs he has made. Of course, he did not act with such a skill in oil paintings, which may have been due to the transformation of painting tools and also the change of painting dimensions from small works to large works and in actual size. (Panje Bashi 2019 74).

### **Background in the works of Mirzababa**

To examine the background in Mirzababa's works, first of all, the works must be classified in terms of type so that a more accurate view of the works and the possible connection of the backgrounds with the used medium by the artist can be understood. For this purpose, the works are divided into four groups: iconography, book decoration, inanimate nature and lacquer painting, and pen box works.

### **Background in iconography works**

As mentioned at the beginning of the article, Mirzababa is one of the founders of aulic iconography. This artist has painted only about 6 paintings of Fath Ali Shah, so we will look at this type of artist's works to analyze the iconographers.

In the picture number one, we see a painting of Fath Ali Shah with a jeweled watch in front of his feet. The subject and time of the painting have been related to the beginning of Fath Ali Shah's kingdom



Image No. 1. Analysis of the image of Fath Ali Shah. Mirzababa's work. 1798-1799. Image taken from (Raby,1999:3)

and his coronation to the throne on Nowruz and the carbunched watch in front of his feet is related to his lucky kingdom hour (Panje Bashi, 2019: 71). This work is painted interior. The figure as the main and dominating subject occupies the most space of the work, in the background of the work, interior

architectural elements such as niches and walls are painted. If we separate the background of the work with a few lines, we will notice a kind of geometric division in the background of the work. There is one horizontal rectangle as a niche at the bottom of the background and three vertical rectangles at the top of the background that make up the walls. Almost the same method of division and geometric pattern (with a slight change in the number of wall surfaces) can be seen in the other two works of Mirzababa. What is common in the two works No. 1 and 3 is the existence of an object in addition to the elements of the interior space. In image number 1, that is, Fath Ali Shah with a carbuncled watch, curtains can be seen in the right corner of the image at the top of the frame, and in the third image, a crystal vase with decorative flowers in it can be seen on the right side. In this kind of works, Mirzababa has tried to use a kind of inanimate nature in addition to the interior architecture elements to diversify and change the background of the work.

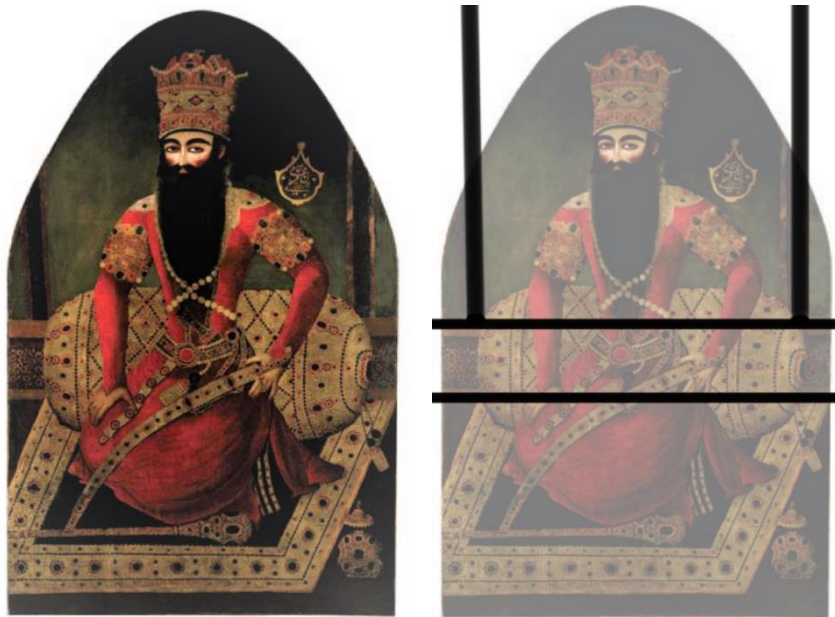


Image No. 2. Background analysis of the Fath Ali Shah image. Mirzababa's work. Image taken from: (Ali Mohammadi Ardakani, 2013: 87)

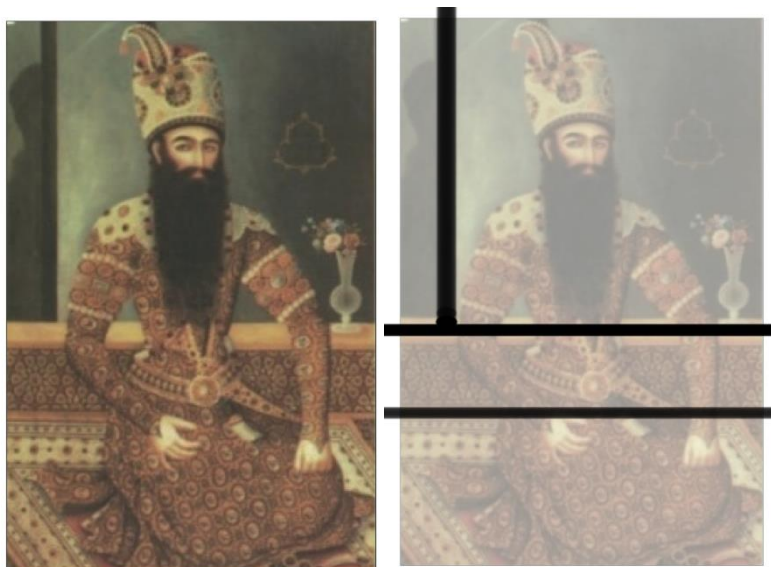


Image No. 3. Background analysis of Fath Ali Shah image. Mirzababa's work. About 1798. Image taken from: (Diba and others, 1998: 180)

One of the most attributed controversial works to Mirzababa is painting about women. The work, which is said to have been dubiously attributed to Mirzababa, depicts two girls with continuous eyebrows, bud lips, and almond-shaped eyes. The painting appears to have been part of a larger panel that has been cut and turned into a smaller work. What is noticeable in this image, apart from all the cuts and problems, is the repetition of the same pattern of the previous background, with the difference that this background is done as a rule for each of the figures. This means that we see exactly the same way of backgrounding in the interior architectural elements such as a niche, a horizontal geometric rectangle, and walls and doors in the form of three vertical rectangles behind the figures. The three divided sections behind the figures (as part of the walls) are cut by vaults and then the same pattern is repeated. What is important here is the repetition and replication of the same

background pattern for the group backgrounding of the bodies.

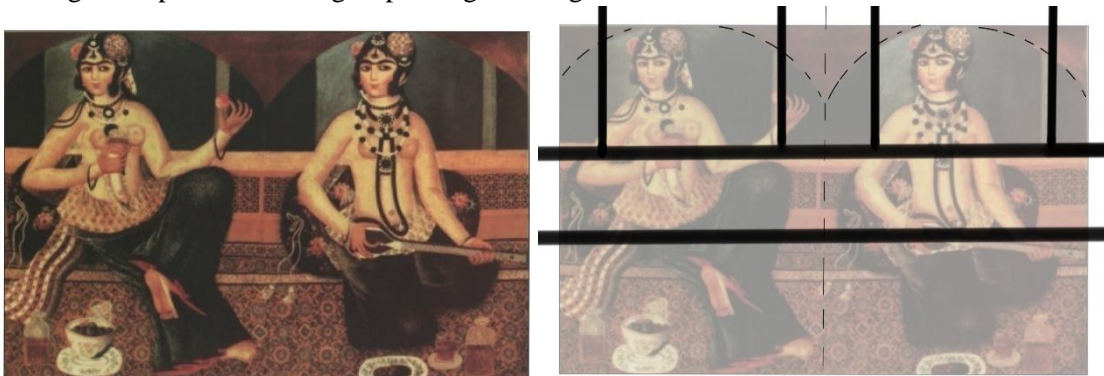


Image No. 4. Background analysis of a painting of two girls in a harem. Appointed to Mirzababa. Around 1811-1814 AD. Image taken from: (Diba and others, 1998: 270).

### Backgrounding in book decoration works

Mirzababa had the word Mirza at the beginning of his name because he served as writer, and for this reason, he had knowledge of Persian, Arabic, poetry and prose, and the writing of various calligraphy in his background. One of Mirzababa's works is illumination, decorating and making the lacquered cover of Fath Ali Shah, which was published in 1812 AD, 1227 AH and was awarded to the British Viceroyalty. Of course, the painters also collaborated with Mirzababa in painting and miniature of this work. In the same version, there are two single iconographies that both have Mirzababa's signature. The subject of these paintings is the Qajar kings. One of these paintings is of Agha Mohammad Khan and the other is of Fath Ali Shah (Panjehbashi, 2010: 75-76).



Image No. 5. Picture of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar in Khaqan version. Mirzababa's work. (Ali Mohammadi Ardakani, 1392: 58).



In the background of Agha Mohammad Khan's image, we see a kind of architectural space, which is different from the architectural space of iconography works. In this work, the figure does not dominate the whole space and what surrounds most of the space of the work is the vast architectural space in which the figure is located. In the lower part of the background, the same horizontal niche can be seen as a platform and to the left there is a pillar that can be reminiscent of part of the division of iconographical spaces, but the important point is that this work is not enclosed in the interior and instead of walls in the back, the figure is covered with open space and architectural landscape.

Although this architecture is painted with a distorted perspective, it shows the vastness of the space behind Agha Mohammad Khan. To the right of the wall painting, there is an exterior space behind the figure and to the left, there is a pillar, which indicates the presence of Agha Mohammad Khan on the architectural liwan. In terms of the used elements in the landscape and architectural space, the background of the image of Agha Mohammad Khan shows dry and barren lands with a predominant color of tan and brown, which may indicate that the king had no generation and represents this barrenness.

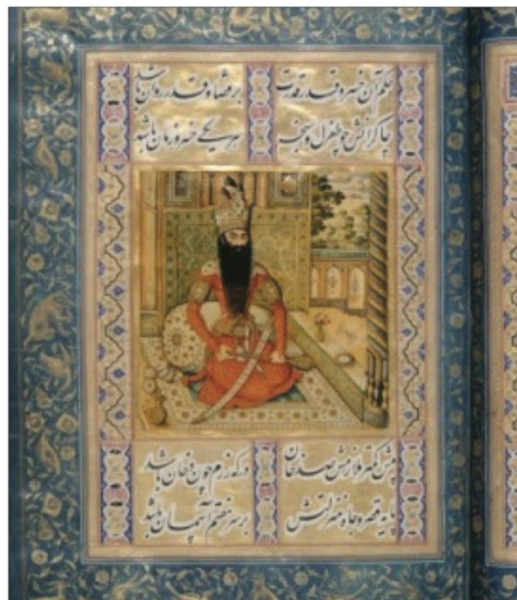


Image No. 6. Picture of Fath Ali Shah in Khaqan version. Mirzababa's work. 1802 AD. Royal Library of Winsor. ([www.Royalcollectiontrust.uk](http://www.Royalcollectiontrust.uk))

In the image of Fath Ali Shah of this version, the king is also in an interior-exterior space. Thus the king is depicted on the right with walls, on the back with niches, and on the left with the outer space. The exterior space on the left, like the image of Agha Mohammad Khan, is a combination of architecture and interior space with nature, which shows that Fath Ali Shah is sitting in the liwan<sup>3</sup> like Agha Mohammad Khan. The image of Fath Ali Shah is more similar to the iconographical works and some horizontal and vertical divisions can be seen behind the king. But these divisions are very different in terms of the amount of geometric surfaces from the background divisions of oil painting works. The outer space of Fath Ali Shah image is filled with the architectural landscape in the upper part of which trees and green nature can be seen in the distance. The colors used in the background of this image are greener and fresher than the image of Agha Mohammad Khan. Behind Fath Ali Shah there is a cushion that reduces the emptiness of the space and fills the space of the work, but in the image of

<sup>3</sup> Liwan is a word used since ancient times into the present to refer to a long narrow-fronted hall that is often open to the outside. An Arabic loanword to English, it is ultimately derived from the Persian "eyvān" came to be said as Liwan in Arabic and later, English

Agha Mohammad Khan there is no other elements and the emptiness of the workspace shows Agha Mohammad Khan very lonely.

In general, in the background of the two book arrangement works obtained from Mirzababa, a combination of interior and exterior architectural space at the same time can be seen, but still the importance of architectural space and architectural priority in these works cannot be ignored.

### **Background in the works of inanimate nature**

Among Mirzababa's works there is a work with the title and content of inanimate nature. The choice of such a title for this work shows Mirzababa's awareness of the painting of inanimate nature, a kind of painting that had never before existed as an independent work. This painting has a new structure and it is in fact a landscape that can be seen from the window and from the space inside the room. In the front part, the effect of inanimate objects such as fruit dishes, vases and a part of the architecture such as niche can be seen, and in the background, we see the architectural landscape, which is probably a part of the architecture of Khajoo Bridge and a part of Zayandehrood, which has been tried to dominate a kind of naturalism in the work using perspective techniques volumetrication, although this naturalism has been done in a small extent and perspective and with wrong rules. It is important to divide the work in the first place. The architectural landscape can be seen in the upper one-third of the work. The architecture is parallel to the niche line but smaller and farther from the background images. In terms of geometric composition, due to the cuts in the work, it is not possible to make very precise judgments, but it can be said that the architecture in the background divides the space into two parts and creates a border between earth and sky.

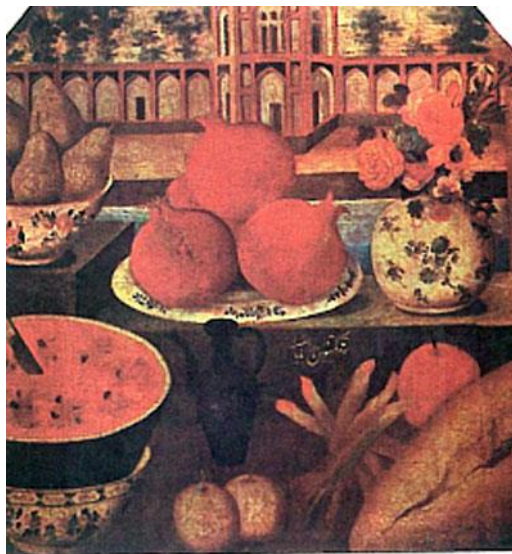


Image No 7. Inanimate nature. 1793 AD. (Jafari Jalali, 1382: 62)

At the back of the architecture, green and large trees can be seen, which in combination with the architecture, form the background content. As far as we have this work today, it can be said that the background architecture landscape space has been done regardless of the conventional divisions of iconography. And in terms of the type of used space, it is a combination of interior and exterior space such as book decoration works that includes the backgrounding exterior of the work and its subject is also the architectural facade.

### Backgrounding in lacquer works and pen box

Mirzababa, in addition to oil paintings, book decorations and portraits, also has very beautiful works in oil lacquer style on the surface of boxes, covers and pen boxes. Among his lacquer works, we can mention a painting on the lid of a box depicting Fath Ali Shah riding a horse with three horsemen and a slave child on foot while hunting. While in the foreground of the image we see the hunting scene of Fath Ali Shah and his companions, in the background, we can see the nature which is painted in European style; a few trees, mountains and sky that are clearly painted in a naturalistic way, apart from hunting scenes in Iranian painting, and influenced by elements of Western art.



Image No. 8. Box with Fath Ali Shah hunting plan.  
Mirzababa. (Adamova, 1386: 253)

Another lacquer work by Mirzababa is a pen box with the subject of an old man and two young girls. Both of the old man and the young girl are painted in a European style and influenced by Western art. In the background of this work, mountains, trees and the sky can be seen, which are also painted in the European style with the same shades and colors. Inside this nature, architecture can also be seen, buildings with pillars and Iranian architectural roles that are painted in parts of the work's background. The method of backgrounding the exterior space with a combination of architecture and nature especially the tree in the front and the building in the back parts, is the image that has been repeated in each frame and around the work by the artist.



Image No. 9. lacquer pen box. Old man and two young girls. 1808.  
(<http://malekmuseum.org>)

In another pen box of Mirzababa's works, which is kept in the Khalili Collection in London, the subjects of Mirzababa's works such as painting, depiction of hunting scenes, nature painting and architectural painting and landscaping can be seen. In this pen box, we are faced with several small frames and the face of a woman is painted between each hunting scene in the upper part of the frame and in the middle of each scene in the sides of the pen box. In the background of the surface of pen box, which is in the subject of hunting, inside the hunting scenes, there is often a single tree on the left and a view

of a more distant architecture with a number of trees on the right. On the sides of the pen box, a combination of several single trees and an architectural image can be seen in each frame.

In these paintings, architecture and nature are the subject of the work, and the background of the work is often nothing but the sky or a few smaller trees in the distance and behind the architectural buildings. We can generally consider the backgrounds in the exterior space and a combination of architecture and landscaping too.



Image No. 10. Pen box surface and sides. Mirzababa. 1794. (Khalili, 1386: 93)

Another image of another pen box, which is likely to be from Mirzababa's work, shows battle scenes on the top and hunting scenes on the sides. The background is covered by the ground and open spaces of the battlefield, and in the side parts, like the previous works, there are trees with European-style behind the horses and hunters, and views of architecture in a smaller size and farther away in the background. The background space is the exterior space and its subject is a combination of architecture and landscaping.



Image No.11. Top and sides of pen box. Appointed to Mirzababa. 19<sup>th</sup> century. ( Khalili, 2007:247).

In general, it can be said that in most of lacquer Mirzababa's works, the background of the work consists of exterior spaces with a combination of landscaping and architecture.

## Conclusion

According to the studies done in Mirzababa's works, it can be said that first of all, the backgrounding in Mirzababa's works depends on the type and artistic style that the artist chooses. This means that the backgrounding in Mirzababa's works should be divided into four groups: iconography, book decoration, inanimate nature, and lacquer and pen box works. The background of iconographical works is interior architecture. In these works, we can point to a specific geometric pattern using architectural elements such as niches, walls and windows. In some parts of these works, traces of inanimate nature can be found, such as curtains, vases, clocks and similar objects, which can be seen in the corners of the composition of these works. But the whole composition is the same geometric composition consisting of a horizontal rectangle at the bottom and a few vertical rectangles on this rectangle as walls and doors. In the book decorating works, the background is a combination of interior and exterior space. The interior space is almost different from the pattern of iconographical backgrounds, and the exterior space is a combination of landscape nature with parts of the architecture. The same pattern of combination of architecture and landscape can be seen in the works of inanimate nature in such a way that the existence of architecture is an inseparable part of the background of this group of works. In the works of lacquers and pen boxes, the background of the works of the exterior space and in most cases, this exterior space is a combination of landscape and architecture. The architectures of this type of works are generally cottages and buildings that have been made smaller and much farther away from the main subject in order to induce dimension and create depth of field in the frame. Therefore, in answer to the second question, it can be said that Mirzababa followed a general pattern depending on the type of his work. Thus, the iconographies follow a kind of geometric pattern with the interior architecture, the book decoration and the inanimate nature with a combination of interior and exterior architecture, which determines a type of relationship and backgrounding method integrating exterior space from interior architecture, and the lacquer works and the pen boxes with the exterior space in the European style of paintings with a landscaped nature and small buildings and architectures in the image.

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