

DN: 18460

Deql / Khop
Kātūphanada Movcutta:

203. Shah Jahan, circa 1635. Signed Bichitr. A page from the Minto Album. Chester Beatty Library, Dublin.

204. Musician, Archer and Dhobi, circa 1630-1640. Signed Bichitr. A page from the Minto Album. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

miniature by Bichitr in the Victoria and Albert Museum demonstrates that he was not indifferent to the work of his colleagues in the imperial atelier:

Musician, Archer and Dhobi (fig. 204) was based on a superb miniature by Govardhan, known for his genre scenes showing modest folk on the fringes of sophisticated gatherings of courtiers. Perhaps guided by Govardhan's innovative influence, Bichitr occasionally abandoned his usual subject matter of imperial deeds and grandeur for depictions of holy men discussing theological issues.

At least two works in this more intimate, personal vein can be attributed to Bichitr, given their stylistic similarities to the masterful court scenes that made Bichitr's reputation. Both *Six Sages in Discussion on a Terrace* (fig. 207) and *Two Mullahs Conversing under a Tree* (fig. 205) are drawn from the *Late Shah Jahan Album*, whose margins were traditionally decorated with motifs relating to the central miniature. These paintings attest to an interest in stereotypical images of dervishes and other holy men, perhaps reflecting the artistic influence of Shah Jahan's favorite son, Prince Dara Shikoh, who was known for his strong spiritual leanings.

Executed in the years 1640-1650,

these two miniatures are from Bichitr's later period, examples of his second major style. The artist nevertheless continued to paint masterful portraits of

emperors and court dignitaries up to 1650. The Arthur M. Sackler Gallery in Washington, D.C. possesses a double portrait of Shah Jahan and his vizier Asaf Khan, who died in 1641 after an illustrious career (fig. 208). This posthumous portrait of the vizier was based on earlier models, yet displays all the stylistic and iconographic features associated with Bichitr's painting at its best — the realist portrayal, the clean, concise lines, the cool, subtle palette, and above all the numerous allusions to Western engravings.

As cloud-borne *putti* look on sympathetically, God the Father emits the divine light that forms the golden halo surrounding the head of Shah Jahan, the great and omnipotent Mughal whose Islamic title

proclaimed him to be the "Shadow of God" on earth.

Abu'l Hasan

In the eyes of Emperor Jahangir, Abu'l Hasan was the most remarkable of all imperial artists. The emperor wrote in his memoirs, "On this day, Abu'l Hasan



NADIAŪ'R-ZAMAN
ABŪ' HASAN
(Mingra Jārcū)
v. 1630' dan sonra