

PLATE XX
PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. xi. A-C

ON the end wall of this shrine was a painting of the Parinirvāṇa with a crowd of mourners gathered round the recumbent body of the Buddha. The part here reproduced shows a group of monarchs or chiefs among those assembled on this grievous occasion. Only a small portion of the halo border surrounding the body survives in the picture and the body itself is missing. The surface of the picture has suffered badly from streams of liquid mud washed down from the broken roof, and although much of it has been cleared away it was found inadvisable to attempt further cleaning because of the risk of disturbing the paint below. Many details remain obscured or indistinct which might have helped in determining the nationality of the mourners. The artist has given careful attention to physiognomy and head-dress in his desire to demonstrate the importance and solemnity of an event which drew the representatives of so many nations to join in the universal lamentation at the scene of the calamity; and the identification of the individual types presents an interesting task.

At the left is a Dharmapāla with wide staring eyes, distinguished by a nimbus. On his immediate left is, presumably, an Arab, with red complexion, green eyes, and large nose; his mouth open giving voice to his overwhelming grief so eloquently rendered by his expression. Above is a Chinese dignitary wearing the head-dress of a judge, and directly below is another Chinese with a broad-brimmed conical hat like that worn by one of the pilgrims in the group to the left at the lower part of Bez. xiv, plate xxxi. A curiously broad face is that of the elderly man in a loosely tied white *pagrī*, and beside him is an unmistakable Persian with grotesquely long and bulbous nose, flowing moustaches, full beard, carefully trimmed, gazing in wide-eyed wonderment. He and another near the bottom of the fragment, wear the typical wing-shape Persian hat, kept in position by a chin-strap. A Sasanian crown is worn by the person with long black curls, in front of the second Persian, and this is also secured by a chin-strap. Rising from the middle of this crown is a flaming jewel, its tip partly covering the chin of the face behind. At the lower corner of the picture is a man wearing a hat of rather Chinese type, with chin-strap. His long face has peculiar eyes, in that they slope in the reverse direction to those of the Mongol. Screening his chin is a conical cap resembling the type