

PLATE XXVIII
PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. xii. J-L

THIS fragment is from the wall facing A, B, C, plate xxvii, and is part of a group of mourners at the head of the recumbent Buddha. All four are loudly lamenting. The figure on the left, in his wild demonstrations, waves aloft in his right hand a long-necked flask and in his left a leaf-shape fan.¹ His robe is red with buff lining. His short hair, rising on top in a small *uṣṇīṣa*, is blue and trimmed in front like that of the small Buddha at I, on plate xxvii.

Bez. xii. I

Some interesting details appear in this enlargement of the upper left corner of the picture on plate xxvii. The head of the monk shows careful study of the bony structure. Pronounced supra-orbital ridges bulge over the seemingly lidless eyes, with grey-green irises and the whites now oxidized to brown. The nose is rather long and pointed, and the prominent jaws reveal a few teeth between the slightly parted, nervous lips. Shaven head, eyebrows, and beard show a stubble of, probably, white hair, indicated by a stipple of dots, now discoloured to red. Asceticism has reduced the flesh of neck and breast to a mere drapery of flaccid folds. The hands, with long, pointed finger-nails, are folded in adoration as he seems to listen in breathless ecstasy to the inspired words of the Master.

Above is a mansion which seems to stand on a tiled terrace, raised within high walls. Although the chequered space within the walls has the appearance of tiling, there are certain irregularities that would favour the interpretation of it as steps or stylized rocks. Outside the walls a rather similar scheme certainly favours this explanation. The mansion would thus be on the summit of a hill surrounded by the wall, reached from below by steps rising in rather confused construction from an indefinite lower level. Entrance to the enclosure is by way of a pair of solid wooden doors, considerably ajar, for they give access to the precincts of the mansion, which, as the Chinese character boldly inscribed on the gable-end proclaims, is Heaven. Scrollwork decorates the face of the wall, and a band of roundels borders the top. At the top of the inner surface is a band of a kind of plait pattern, familiar in early Chinese textiles. Chinese, too, is the architecture of the building,

¹ Cf. the figure with the same attributes in Bez. x. I, J, plate xxv.