

PLATE XXIX  
PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. xiii. C

IT is unfortunate that so little remains of this very interesting painting, and that the surviving part is so extensively damaged. The decorative treatment of the face of the figure of the Buddha, while retaining the traditional characteristics of kindness blended with authority, is carried to an extreme of stylization, more particularly in the drawing of the lips and the fantastic treatment of moustache and 'imperial'. The boldly arched eyebrows, the parallel folds of the upper eyelids, and the gentle curve of the nose help, by contrast, to give importance to the sharp narrow slits of eyes with their lazy but calculating expression. Unlike most of the Bezeklik faces, the lines of the eyebrows do not join that of the nose; and the inner ends of the eyebrows do not meet. The mouth is closed, and the artist seems to have delighted in drawing its graceful curves and those of the rippling moustache. The small part remaining of hand and wrist, in the pose of reassurance (*abhaya-mudrā*), shows grace and accuracy of drawing, and is less out of proportion to the size of the head than usual. It will be noticed that considerable use is made of double lines. The explanation of this is that at some period it became the practice with artists in Turfān to give sparkle and animation to their work by the introduction of 'high lights', applied in thin lines of white, generally close alongside the contour lines of red, blue, or black. The white used in some cases was probably a lead preparation, imported from China; and in course of time the white lines became grey or black through oxidization, and so the double lines appear. In this and the two adjoining heads the whites of the eyes have, from the same cause, turned to dark grey.

Hair, eyebrows, moustache, and 'imperial' are blue. The flesh, now discoloured by oxidation, was pale, almost white. On the left, beside the cheek, are traces of a green nimbus.

The *intonaco* of this fragment is peculiar in having a layer of fine-grain, tough and flexible, dark red clay below a coarser surface layer of the usual grey fibrous mud. These two different textures can be seen in the reproduction beside the cheek and to the left of the hand.

Bez. xiii. D. a

Head and part of the body of a monk with hands in *añjali* pose; all badly