



ČĀR BAKR

ČĀR BAKR (lit. “four Bakrs,” possibly referring to descendants of Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Sa‘d, d. 360/970, who are buried there), family necropolis of the powerful Jūybāri shaikhs (see [bukhara iii](#)) near the village of Sumitan (Samtin), about 5 km outside the Šīrgarān Gate of Bukhara. It grew up around the venerated tomb of Abū Bakr, to whom these shaikhs traced their genealogy. In the 16th century the tomb was under the care of the influential K̄vāja Moḥammad Eslām, head of the K̄vājagī order of Naqšbandī shaikhs and a supporter of the Shaibanid ‘Abd-Allāh Khan (q.v.; 964-1006/1557-98). In 966/1558-59 ‘Abd-Allāh instructed that a complex including a mosque, a *madrasa*, and a *kānaqāh* (Sufi monastery) be established there. It was completed by 976/1569, and a tree-lined avenue was laid out from the Šīrgarān Gate to the necropolis. The complex stands on a platform, with a central courtyard. Flanking the courtyard are the mosque and the *kānaqāh*; they are connected by the *madrasa*, a long, narrow structure with two tiers of arcades facing the courtyard on either side of a tall central portal. The fourth side of the courtyard is open. The portals of the three structures, with their tiled *pīštāqs* (fiat frames rising higher than the neighboring walls), and their domes, which stand on tall drums, loom impressively above the lower monuments in the necropolis. The most noteworthy features of the interiors are complex systems of intersecting ribs on the cupolas, dividing the concave surfaces into patterns of small facets. Beyond this core of buildings is a sprawling cemetery containing family mausolea, small fenced courtyards, paths, and many tombstones. A small minaret, echoing the shape of the Kalān (“great”) minaret in Bukhara, was erected here in the 20th century.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

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