

# 16 The Destination Marketing Development of Religious Tourism in Uzbekistan: A Case Study

**Bakhtiyor Navruz-zoda\* and Zebiniso Navruz-zoda**  
*Bukhara State University, Bukhara, Uzbekistan*

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## Introduction

In terms of overcoming the impacts of the global financial crisis, an important socioeconomic problem is to keep and create new workplaces to tackle unemployment. This problem can be mitigated somewhat through diversification of tourism activities. Innovative and effective diversification can arise from the development of religious tourism based on Sufi interests. In recent years, especially among young people and intellectuals in European countries, Islam has spread largely due to Sufism.

Sufism is a Muslim religious and philosophical doctrine that developed in the Arab countries in the eighth century. The reason for the development of Sufism was the social conditions in Muslim countries. Sufism contains elements of the new doctrine of Plato (platonic love). According to Sufism, there are four stages – *shartah*, *tarikat*, *marifat* and *haqiqat* – leading to spiritual perfection. In order to achieve these goals, Sufis have to undertake special meditative exercises called *zikr*.

The peculiarity of Sufism is its prevalence around the world through its orders and the existence of unique rules of conduct in each of the orders. The Sufi order Naqshbandiya has the

greatest impact and has had particular influence on the territory of modern Uzbekistan. The founder of this order is Baha-ud-Din Naqshband. The main motto of Naqshbandiya is 'Heart in love (with God), hands at work', which calls Sufis to be saints in the process of labour (Narshakhi, 2008).

Sufism became widespread in the Middle East, northern India, south-west China and the Caucasus, but for the purpose of this paper, we consider its development in Maverennahr, especially in the territory of Uzbekistan. Sufism was widely practised in the period of feudal wars in the second half of the ninth century and the beginning of the tenth century. During the 13th and 14th centuries, Baha-ud-Din Naqshband's Sufi order of Naqshbandi was founded in the noble Bukhara (city in Uzbekistan). The teaching of the Naqshbandiya fraternity is based on 11 ethical principles, and since the 15th century this brotherhood of Naqshbandiya has become one of the most widespread Sufi orders in the world. In Uzbekistan, in the years since independence, the monument of saint Sufi, Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandi, has been restored. Muslim Sufis make pilgrimage to this holy place, and according to their faith, visiting his grave three times replaces the Hajj to Mecca and Medina (Navruz-Zoda, 2005).

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\*Corresponding author e-mail: [bnzoda@mail.ru](mailto:bnzoda@mail.ru)

## Sufism – Scientific Basis of Islam

Sufism is a distinctive phenomenon that arose within Islam, thereby making it a subculture of Arab-Muslim culture. Sufism is defined as a mystical-ascetic form of Islam. Its origin is explained by historical changes in the economic, political and spiritual situation of Muslims after the four righteous caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman and Ali Abu Talib. Following these caliphs in the Muslim community (umma) a sharp polarization occurred: at one pole of society enormous wealth and luxury were accumulated; at the other, poverty and wretchedness. Many Muslim rulers, in spite of numerous prohibitions of the Quran and the Sunnah, subjected their followers to robbery, rape and abuse. Most often, the role of senior Muslim clergy was limited to appease those in power. Ordinary Muslims, poor God-fearing people, often found neither justice nor protection from the rulers and the official clergy. In addition, the power struggle in the Muslim world between the different clans often reached horrific levels. In-fighting between Sunni and Shia and between the Umayyad and the Abbasids, and the frequent uprisings of Muslims against individual rulers, ultimately led to the collapse of the empire of the Arab caliphate and the emergence of tiny states, which were subsequently conquered by the Mongols and the Seljuk Turks.

According to the majority of Islamists, the term 'Sufism' (Arabic name 'tasavvuf') comes from the word 'suf', which means 'wool'. The first Sufis, emphasizing their ascetic life, wore a rough woolen-patched rag (hirk). A synonym for Sufism is tariq, which means 'path' in Arabic. Tariqat is a system of spiritual and mystical preparation of the believer who has chosen the path leading to the truth (God). The first source, which provides theoretical information about Sufism, is a book by the Bukharin scholar Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Abu Iskhokov Ibrokhim al Bukhori al Kalobody (d. 991) called *Al-Taarruf Mazhabi bi-tasavvuf* ('Introduction to the Sufi Way Tasvuvuf'). In it, Sufism is defined as: the science of the state – ilmi xol; esotericism, or the inner-world science – ilmi botin; or the science of indication – ilmi ishora. Thus, it is differentiated from exoterism – the science of external events – ilmi zohir.

Sufism is seen to be a form of world wisdom; it is 'a religious philosophy of love, harmony and beauty' (Inayat-khan, 1914, p. 30). Its purpose

is to reveal the spirit of humanity until the beauty of the universe leads one to achieve perfection and become, so far as possible, the expression of divine harmony. 'The essence of Sufism is the Truth. [The] definition of Sufism is the knowledge of Truth' (Nurbaxsh, 1993, p. 7).

Therefore, Sufism is a mystical trend in Islam that promotes contact with Allah. How is this connection made? To communicate with God, according to the teachings of Sufism, a person should seek personal spiritual perfection, which involves four stages (Fig. 16.1):

**Shariah** (translates as 'exoteric path') – strict compliance with the laws of Islam;

**Tariqah** (translates as 'esoteric path') – the period of probation under an authoritarian sheikh;

**Marifa** (translates as 'final mystical knowledge', *unio mystica*) – knowledge, not just with the mind but with the heart and in unity with the universe and God (the world is an emanation of God); and recognizing the equality of all religions (rays from the one sun) and the relativity of good and evil;

**Haqiqa** (translates as 'mystical truth') – complete identification of the knower and the deity.

Al-Faraj gives various definitions of Sufism (Inayat-khan, 1914). Here are some of them:

- Sufism is the adoption of noble manners;
- Sufism is a competition in pious deeds, and an allowance of the most senior mores by the person;
- Sufism is the observance of fidelity and renunciation of callousness.

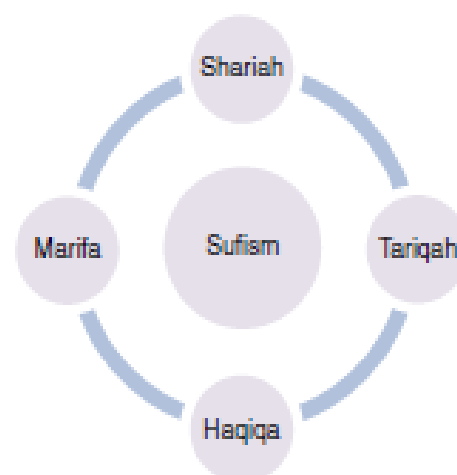


Fig. 16.1. Philosophy of Sufism (developed by the authors).

Naturally, these are not the only definitions, but they are the most characteristic ones. In his work, al-Derbendi (Magomedov *et al.*, 2007) provides highly instructive moral and philosophical maxims:

1. Great God closes the doors of luck to some of his slaves in one of five causes: receiving knowledge, but not acting on it; enjoying prosperity, accompanied by good people, but not following their examples; committing sins, but not repenting; burying the dead, but not learning a lesson from it; witnessing heritage, but not preparing for the afterlife.
2. Science is perceived only by learning, gentleness is achieved only by patience; little benefit is derived by those who have not studied, yet have learned from those who do not seek to be gentle and patient.
3. Refusing envy will eliminate grief; renouncing sweet delight will get rid of sins.
4. Respect for people should be expressed in three forms: love the person as God loves them; pray for them to ask for forgiveness of their sins; help them to repent of their sins.
5. Respect for parents is also expressed in three formulas: respect and give them compliments; take their dependants and supply them with all their needs; do not raise a voice to them.

In short, the treatise of al-Derbendi is a treasury of moral-philosophical and Sufi wisdom, a source for understanding the Muslim world of the 11th century.

In Sufism, there are 12 main (parent) *tarikats* (Navruz-zoda, 2005): *rifaiya*, *yasaviya*, *shizaliya*, *suhravardiya*, *chishtiya*, *kubraviya*, *badaviya*, *kadirya*, *maulaviya*, *bektashtiya*, *halvatiya* and *nakshbandiy'a*. The names of these *tarikats* are derived from the names of their founders. Some of them gave rise to many branches, transformed into a structured Sufi Association (brotherhood), with their charter, led by mentors (*murids*, peers, *sheikhs*). Members of the Sufi brotherhood are called *murids*, who by Sufi statute must be in constant communication with their spiritual mentor.

According to western orientalist Trimingham, the number of Sufi orders, including older systems and those now functioning, exceeds 600. These are united in dozens of different 'chains' or communities, and fraternities – the basic orders were often large and sophisticated organizations,

each with their own leader and special internal rules. Some of the orders hold high-profile rites (*dxahriya*), others are silent and contemplative (*hufiya*).

Sufism has spread worldwide through the orders, and the internal organization of each order is characterized by a strict spiritual hierarchy. In each chapter of the order is a teacher (*sheikh*, *pir*), who is the bearer of spiritual power (*barracks*). This passes from one chapter to another by means of emanations from the founder of the order, who is revered as a saint. Each order has its own rules of conduct such as:

1. A person's clothing should be kept clean and always tidy.
2. Do not sit and gossip at the mosque or in other holy places.
3. The first step should be, all together, to read a prayer.
4. One must pray repeatedly during the night.
5. At dawn, one should ask forgiveness from God.
6. In the morning, one should read the Quran as much as possible and not talk until sunrise.
7. Between the evening and the night, obligatory prayers should be repeated.
8. One should assist the poor and all who need it, as well as all those who join the community.
9. One must not eat food alone.
10. One should not be absent without asking each other's permission.
11. Leisure time should be devoted to study of theology, religious exercises or comfort.

### **Great Hadja Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandi – founder of the Naqshbandiya Sufi Order**

At different times, representatives of various Sufi orders have operated in the territory of modern Uzbekistan (Khimushin, 1997). However, the most influential was the Naqshbandiya order. The founder of this order is Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandi, also known as Khodjai Buxurg and Shahi Naqshbandi. The Naqshbandiya motto is: 'Dil ba yor, das ba kor'. Translated from Farsi this means: 'heart in love (with God), hands at work'. In other words, one should be holy, but at the same time one must work. Starting in the 15th century, the brotherhood of Naqshbandiya became one of the most widespread Sufi orders in the world.

Baha-ud-Din was born in 1318 to the family of a tajik craftsman in the village of Qasr-Hinduvar (castle of the Hindus), which was later renamed the Qasr-i Arifan (castle that had learned the divine truth), 10 km from Bukhara city. He died in 1389 and was buried in his native village, which later became a place of pilgrimage. He spent practically all his life in Bukhara, or close to it. Twice he made Hajj. Nicknamed Naqshbandi (meaning minter), his interest in Sufism came from his grandfather. His first teacher was Sheikh Muhammad Babayi Samast, who died in 1340. His teacher sent him to the Amir Sheikh Sayyid Kulaly, who dedicated him to the hodzhagan society of dervishes. The spiritual initiation (ruhaniya) of Baha-ud-Din was received from Abdulhalik al-Gijduvani, whom he saw in a dream, and he sent him to the Amir Kulaly. The history of his tariqat began with Abu Yusuf Ya'qub al-Hamadani (d. 1140). However, Abdulhalik al-Gijduvani is regarded as the creator of the new practice, which has become characteristic of his teaching. Unlike others, this system of Sufism greatly encouraged the development of a quiet, silent zikr, and, in addition, developed eight underlying rules, under which this system is formed. Abdulhalik al-Gijduvani studied the retention of breath from al-Khizir, and this was adopted in this particular form of Tariq. Al-Gijduvani Hajj Abd al-Khalik Abd al-Jamil is the founder of the independent school of central Asian Sufism known as Hodjagan, the doctrine of which was later fully accepted by the founder of the brotherhood of Naqshbandi.

The basis of the Naqshbandi tariqat is the knowledge of God, the desire to meet him and the remembrance of Allah, hidden in the heart. Naqshbandi said: 'Murid is one whose hidden is fighting, but clear is in the world'; that is, the murid wages war with temptation, working to clean the heart from doubt, and, at the same time, does not let others know their condition. If a murid talks about maqams, in which he wasn't raised and which he doesn't have, it means Allah did not lead him to this maqam, and deprives him of this level. Ahlyullah must patiently endure all hardships and adversities by their approach to God. There is no vali who is not looking to Almighty Allah, irrespective of whether the vali knows about it or not. Aside from that, all who meet with the vali receive dignity from them. The following words belong to Naqshbandi: 'Our

path to God is not through asceticism, asceticism brings glory and death hides behind the glory. Good deeds are found among the people.'

Naqshbandi was an advocate of simplicity and was unassuming about asceticism, rejecting false rites and piety. He formulated 11 rules of meditation (mushahid) and extended 'silent zikr' with a certain method of breathing. He had a very negative attitude towards false rituals, vagrancy, public vigils with music, dancing and loud zikr. He also regarded as useless the principles of silsilat al-Baraka, when grace is transmitted personally by sheikhs via a transmission line from the founder. According to him, grace is granted directly by God, not from the sheikh or patron.

His principles were: spiritual purity, renunciation of luxury and greed, simplicity, denial of contact with the authorities, seclusion in the cloister and in a narrow circle. In addition, the Sufi must strictly follow the Sunnah and fulfil all requirements of Shariat. Naqshbandiya is a tariqat that follows the belief of silent zikr. Naqshbandi zikr, which Sufis perform together, is called xatmi xadjagan.

Baha-ud-Din, in teaching naqshbandi, adopted four principles based on the guidance of Yusuf Hamadani (1050–1142):

- xush dar dam (conscious breathing);
- nazar bar kadam (monitor steps);
- safar dar vatan (voyage through the homeland); and
- khilvat dar anjuman (loneliness in humans).

He also established four principles based on the teachings of Abdulholik Gijduvani:

- yodkard (remembrance);
- bozgasht (return);
- nigohdosht (vigilance, conservation); and
- yoddosht (remembrance).

In addition to these eight principles, Baha-ud-Din founded the following three principles:

- vukufi zamani (a pause for self-control) – permanent self-monitoring of time: if righteous, one must thank God, but if not, one should ask forgiveness;
- vukufi adadi (pause for an account) – repeating individual zikr should be undertaken in strict accordance with the prescribed number of repetitions and the established ritual; and



- *vukufi qalbi* (pause for the heart) – making a mental representation of the heart with the name of Allah, to feel that in the heart there is nothing but Allah.

The community of Naqshbandi initially relied on the urban population, but subsequently spread among nomads and throughout central Asia. Gradually, adoption of the system expanded in Ottoman Turkey, India and the Muslim Volga. The emblem of the society is inscribed in the heart with the word 'Allah'.

Hazrat Baha-ud-Din wrote a number of texts: *Hayotnoma* (Book of Life), *Dalil-ul-ashikin* (Evidence of lovers), and *Al-Avrod* (Cover). Among the many Naqshband disciples and successors of the spiritual tradition of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din, the best-known are: Hazrat Alauddin Attar, Hadja Porso Bukhari, Mavlana Muhammad and Hadja Musafir Khorezmi. The books of Hadja Porso, *Makomati Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandi* and *Alfosi Quds*, and a treatise of Muhammad Baqir entitled *Makomati Hadja Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandi* (Steps of the Sufi Path), were written about Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandi. Jami, Navoi, Ali Safi, Makhdumi Azam and Hadja Akhror have also written about Hazrat Baha-ud-Din with great reverence. The son-in-law of Baha-ud-Din was Hazrat Alauddin Attar and his grandson was Hassan Attar. The work of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Naqshband, *Al-Avrod*, is considered to be one of the most valuable sources of Islamic thought and is of great value in the education of young people in the quest for perfection.

The order has had a great impact on both the rulers and the general population in Uzbekistan. Members of this fraternity include the eminent Persian poet Jami (1414–1492) and the great Uzbek poet Alisher Navoi (1441–1501).

At the burial place of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din, the ruler of Bukhara, Abdulazizkhan built a *dahma* (mausoleum) and a *hanaka* (monastery of dervishes and pilgrims) in 1544. In the 18th century, the mother of the ruler Abulfayzhan erected a mosque with two *ayvans* (terraces), and in the 19th century Kushbegi Hakim Amir Nasrullah built another mosque. The minaret (tower) was built in 1720. *Sakkohana* is a construction of the 20th century for storing clean drinking water.

After his death, Naqshband was recognized as a saint and the patron of Bukhara, in the

vicinity of which he had spent all his life. His mausoleum became a place of pilgrimage for central Asian Muslims, containing the tombs of the seven 'sacred visages' – Abdulkhalik al Gijduvani (1103–1120); Arif Rivgari (d. 1259); Mahmud Andjir Fagnavi (d. 1245 or 1272); Axtazan Ali al Ramitani (d. 1321); Muhammad Bobo Samost (d. 1354); Amir Said Kulal al-Bukhari (d. 1371); and Muhammad Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandi. This is now a place of pilgrimage for many Muslims and is known by the name 'Seven pirs' (Seven saints). It is believed that visiting the mausoleum of Baha-ud-Din Naqshband three times is equal to one visit to the shrines of Mecca and Medina.

In the Soviet era (1920–1991), due to militant atheism, the shrine was in a state of desolation, gradually becoming a ruin. In 1993, after the independence of Uzbekistan, for the 675th anniversary of Baha-ud-Din Naqshband's birth, the shrine was restored. Major improvement works were carried out in 2003. The gates to Dilovar were restored. On the southern side of the memorial complex a *darvazahana* (entrance space) was built with a high canopy. On the eastern and western sides of the tomb of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din, richly decorated *ayvan* (terraces) were recreated according to ancient designs. The extensive garden was combined into a single entity composed of the sacred burial place of Hazrat Baha-ud-Din and the burial place of his righteous mother. In the memorial, *Dahmat Shohon* (necropolis of the rulers) was restored, which contains the graves of the rulers of the Timurid, Sheibani and Ashtarkhanid dynasties.

### Destination Model of Marketing Development of Religious Tourism

Destination marketing is an applied regional method and organizational form of management of tourism demand. Its task is to determine the time and place of demand for the destination, the volume formation and the structure of demand for travel services to the destination. The destination marketing model may be based on two theoretical assumptions: the theory of marketing associated with the formation and development of demand; and the theory of regional management associated with the

creation and management of a regional commodity proposal. As a result of integration of destination demand and regional supply, the process of converting tourist attractions into a tourist destination occurs. Thus, by saying 'tourist destination', we refer to 'the tourist centre (region), where the goal of travel is realized' (Fig. 16.2).

A characteristic feature of the tourist destination lies in its components. The attraction (holy places) is characterized by the travel (pilgrimage) proposal, i.e. attractive from the standpoint of potential visitors (pilgrims) and the tourism (pilgrimage) objects. Thus the tourist destination includes both geographical and marketing components. The geographical component of destinations appears in the form of the attraction (the holy places). As part of its marketing component, it takes the form of objective travel (pilgrimage). Thus the tourist destination, as an integral component of destination marketing, expresses the degree of the organic compound of tourist demand and tourist supply in the destination of a certain region.

The destination marketing concept consists of four marketing activities related to the tourism market (Fig. 16.3.). On the basis of these

actions, marketing tools for tourist destinations can be developed.

The following sections consider the content of these marketing tools for the newly recommended Sufi pilgrimage destination 'Homeland of the Sultan of Sufism – Baha-ud-Din Naqshband' (SP&RCD 'Sufi Hajj'), which covers the Sufi holy places located in the cities of Uzbekistan – Tashkent, Samarqand and Bukhara. The suggested destination will have a dual nature:

1. a *pilgrimage* nature, providing an opportunity for Sufis to make Sufi-religious rituals in the Sufi shrines; and
2. a *cognitive* nature, involving visits to Sufi shrines in order to study the philosophy of Sufism, or cognitive visits to these shrines by different categories of tourists.

Therefore, the destination is labelled as a 'Sufi Hajj', a Sufi-pilgrimage, which is both religious and cognitive.

An important tool for marketing activities is market knowledge. Securing this knowledge involves a multi-stage process: comprehensive market research, market segmentation and product positioning in the market. First, it is important to determine the size of the market for

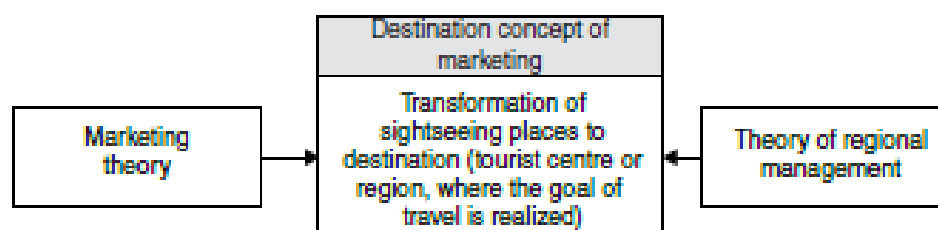


Fig. 16.2. Methodological basis of the destination model of marketing (developed by the authors).

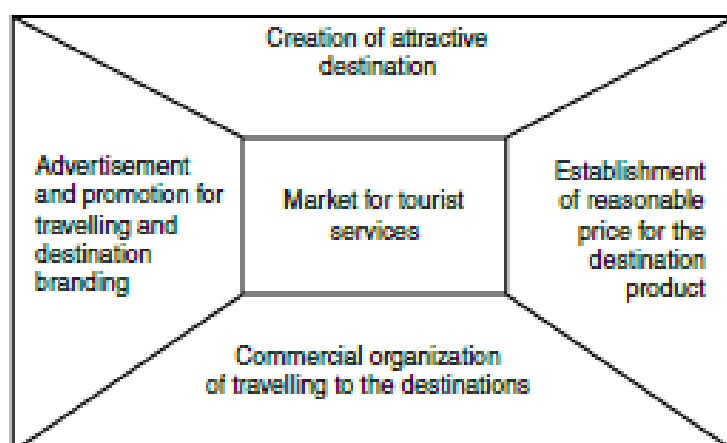


Fig. 16.3. Tools of destination marketing (developed by the authors).

Sufi-pilgrimage and a religious-cognitive 'Sufi Hajj'. Each year more than 2 million Muslims perform the Hajj ritual in Mecca and Medina at a fixed time. Many of them, with sufficient and accurate marketing information and the provision of services to them at any convenient time of year, could make a 'Sufi Hajj' in Tashkent, Samarkand or Bukhara. The market capacity of SP&RCD 'Sufi Hajj' in a year may amount to more than 500,000 people.

### Segmentation

It is recommended to distinguish two categories of Muslim visitor according to conviction: *Mumtins* – religious people who are fully obeying the five rules of Islam and trying to live according to Sharia laws; and *Muslims* – the category of Muslims who, for whatever reason (childhood, sickness, employment, business), are not fully complying with these rules but who, mentally, confide in God and consider themselves to be Muslims.

The overall market can be segmented according to purpose of travel into five groups:

- Muslim-Sufis*, whose goal of travel is the realization of Sufi rituals in Sufi shrines;
- Muslim non-Sufis*, whose goal of travel is visiting Sufi shrines as part of religious ceremonies;
- Representatives of other religions*, whose purpose of travel is visiting Sufi shrines as part of religious ceremonies;
- Scientists, intellectuals, researchers and educators*, who are visiting Sufi shrines in order to study the philosophy of Sufism; and
- Other categories of tourists*, who are visiting these places as part of another tourism package.

On a geographical basis, there can be distinguished domestic and foreign pilgrims. They may be divided according to gender: the pilgrim man and the pilgrim woman. Other segmentation factors could include race, socioeconomic factors, etc.

### Implementation

Implementing pricing of the proposed religious pilgrimage product, based on optimal combination

of price and quality of services, by the method of 'cost plus' is recommended.

In order to increase the flow of foreign pilgrims to Uzbekistan, the creation of a new intermediate marketing company (IMC) 'Sufi-pilgrim-destination' is recommended. This organization may be responsible for the organization and running of trips to SP&RCD 'Sufi Hajj' for both domestic and foreign pilgrims. For effective performance of these tasks, it is proposed to build a functional organizational structure, including national and international units of marketing management of Sufi tourist flow (Fig. 16.4).

The means for effective marketing of SP&RCD 'Sufi Hajj' is the development of its communication tools of advertising and branding. Advertising of this destination should be built on the principles of truthfulness, objectivity and accessibility, and should meet the requirements of Shariah. As a brand for SP&RCD 'Sufi Hajj', we recommend a photograph of the Bahaud-Din Naqshband ensemble, located in the suburbs of Bukhara, with the inscription 'Travel to Holy Bukhara – the motherland of the Sultan of Sufism – Baha-ud-Din Naqshband' (Fig. 16.5).

Formation of a product policy for marketing of this destination, connected to the creation of a pilgrimage product, can be tailored to the needs of Sufi pilgrims. By identifying these, a pilgrimage product is formed. From this Sufi tour, a range of services develops, including transport, accommodation, catering, holy places, worship spaces and other related facilities to serve pilgrims. Given the characteristics of pilgrimage demand and its ability for qualitative satisfaction, we have proposed this programme ('Sufi Tour' in SP&RCD 'Sufi Hajj').

### Summary

Sufism is a way of life, which allows the person to realize his/her full potential given to us by God (Nature), and is founded on the ideological basis of Islam. Baha-ud-Din Naqshband is now recognized as the Sultan of Sufism. A visit to his mausoleum is equal to one visit to the shrines of Mecca and Medina – the 'Great Hajj'. This may be an important motivational tool for attracting tourists to the Sufi-pilgrimage and

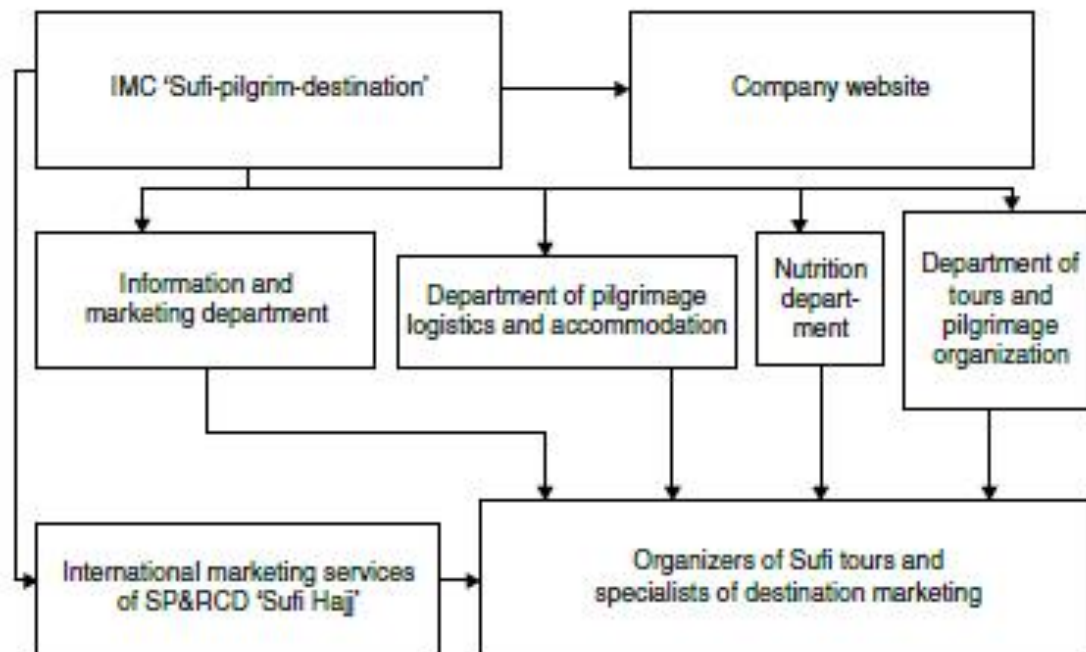


Fig. 16.4. Organizational structure of the IMC Sufi-pilgrim-destination (developed by the authors).

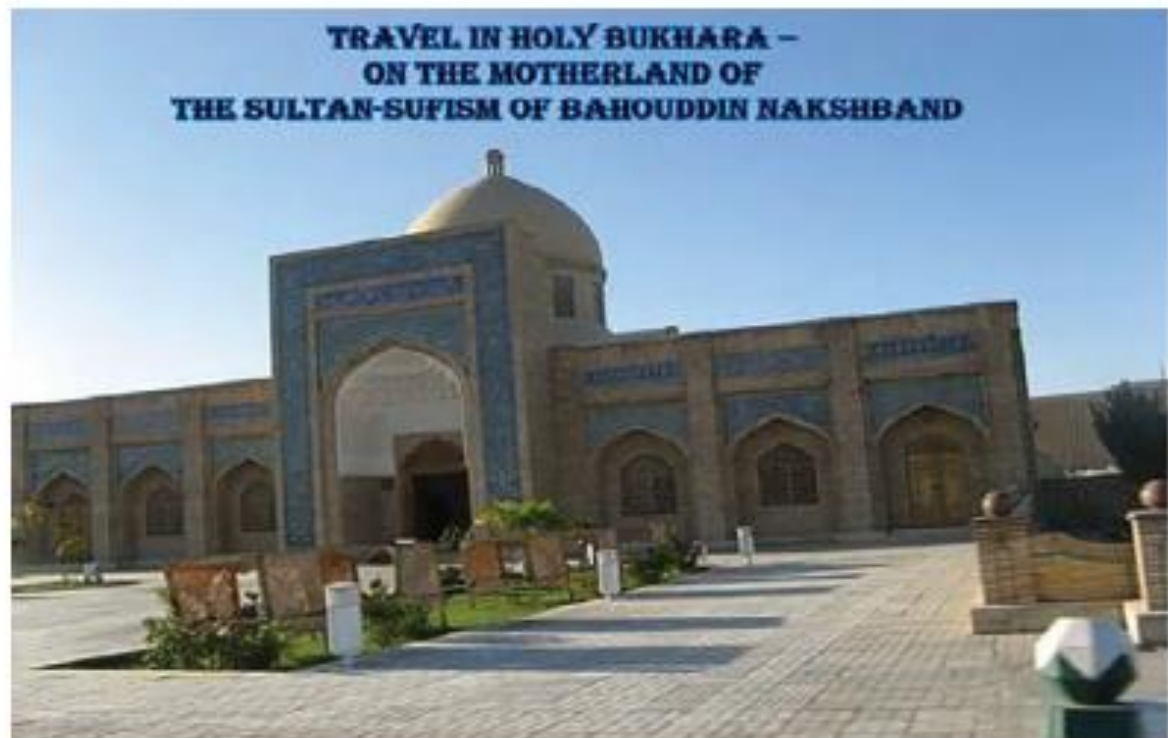


Fig. 16.5. Brand of the Sufi-pilgrimage and religious-cognitive destination 'Sufi Hajj', Bukhara, Uzbekistan.

religious-cognitive destination 'Homeland of Sufi Sultan – Baha-ud-Din Naqshband'.

The application of a destination marketing model in the field of religious tourism, based on Sufi interests, allows for the implementation of product diversification of tourism services in

Uzbekistan through the establishment of a prestigious Sufi-pilgrimage and a related religious-cognitive destination. This 'Sufi Hajj' may involve hundreds of thousands of people interested in the ideas and philosophy of Sufism. This development may also facilitate the implementation



- of a geographical diversification of tourism services, through the transformation of sometimes unrelated 'holy places' in the tourist destination. Linked to this is an integrated travel demand for destinations that are linked in the region. In turn, this should:
- reduce the impact of seasonality;
  - improve the tourist potential of Uzbekistan while increasing the flow of tourists;
  - create new jobs in the Sufi shrines;
  - grow foreign exchange earnings; and
  - increase revenue from tourism activities.

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