



The Harabati Baba Tekke

The Harabati Baba located in Tetovo, North Macedonia. This tekke is the finest surviving Bektashi lodge in Europe, the sprawling complex features flowered lawns, prayer rooms, dining halls, lodgings and a great marble fountain inside a wooden pavilion. The tekke was originally built in 1538 around the türbe of Sersem Ali Baba, an Ottoman dervish. Sersem travelled the vast empire of Turkey until he came upon the River Pena in the tranquil mountains of Tetovo. There he settled until his death in 1538, quietly practicing the way of the Bektashi order. After his death, his only pupil to survive him, Harabati Baba, founded a monastery in Tetovo to commemorate Sersem's life.

The present-day buildings were built at the end of the 18th century by Rexhep Pasha, also a dervish, whose tomb lies next to Sersem's in the tekke mausoleum. Not all the buildings are still standing today; in the courtyard was originally built to house the sick daughter of Abdurrahman Pasha. The reception inn is still in disrepair, although the library is being refurbished. One of the buildings has been turned into a Sunni mosque, but the inns around the Bektashi graveyard have been preserved for the Baba. The Tekke in Tetovo remained the seat of the Bektashi until 1912 when the Ottomans were driven out of Macedonia. Although the tekke saw a small revival between 1941 and 1945, the lands were taken as state property during Yugoslav times and made into a hotel and museum. In recent years, however, the Bektashi order has regained access to the tekke and the site is being slowly refurbished. Although in considerable disrepair it is still the largest and most well-preserved tekke in the western Balkans.

The Tekke can be visited as part of the Old Trade Trail

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