

DERVISH ORDERS OF CONSTANTINOPLE

It was a great surprise to me to find in Constantinople the large number of Tekkés (Tekiyas or Zawiyahs), which a recent investigation revealed. There are now according to official information 258 Dervish Houses in the city. A few years ago there were 319. The great fires have wiped out 61 Tekkés within a period of ten or a dozen years.

The following list to date comprises 17 different Orders:

<i>Name of Order</i>	<i>Former number of Tekkés</i>	<i>Tekkés destroyed</i>	<i>Present number of Tekkés (July, 1921)</i>
1. Bairamiyeh	4	2	2
2. Bektashiyeh	8	0	8
3. Bedaviyeh	8	0	8
4. Djelvadiyeh (Hudaiyeh) .	22	6	16
5. Djerahiyeh	14	4	10
6. Gulsheniyeh	3	1	2
7. Helvadiyeh	13	9	4
8. Kadriyeh	57	15	42
9. Mevleviyeh	7	0	7
10. Nakshiyeh	65	5	60
11. Rufa'iyeh	36	7	29
12. Saadiyeh	23	7	16
13. Shabaniyeh	25	0	25
14. Shazaliyeh	3	0	3
15. Simbaliyeh	23	5	18
16. Sinaniyeh	3	0	3
17. Ushaghiyeh	5	0	5
(Total, 17 Orders).....	319	61	258

We have the addresses of each of these establishments.¹

The Bektashis, included above, do not appear in the Imperial Government records, since, as is well known, they are not considered within the Orthodox ranks of Islam, and are anathematized by the *Ulema*.

Besides these official Tekkés, most of which receive more or less aid from the Turkish Government, there are

¹These will appear in the "Survey of Constantinople" soon to be published by a committee representing the American Philanthropic, Educational, and Missionary organizations operating in Constantinople.

said to be a considerable number of Dervish Orders which have Houses, or which meet in private homes, of which the government takes no official cognizance, or which receive no financial aid but are supported privately by members and adherents of the Orders.

It is rather strange that but seventeen Orders appear in the above list. One would expect to find in the political capital of Islam a Tekké representing every Dervish order.

II

Through the courtesy of an honored member of the Imperial Government Board of Dervishes, the writer obtained a list of what was said to be all the Dervish Orders known. This includes the names of 161 Orders and Sub-Orders.²

This number is incomplete, for the writer has found the names of sixteen others, which bring the list up to 177. There is considerable difference of opinion among Dervishes themselves, and also among scholars, as to the exact number of Orders and Sub-Orders. Canon Sell quoting Rinn states there are 88.³

D. B. Macdonald gives the number of Orders as 32, and remarks that there are "innumerable" Sub-Orders.⁴ Petit claims there are "several hundred" Orders and Sub-Orders in Islam, and it may be true⁵ The author of the pamphlet entitled "The Dervish" (himself a Dervish) claims there are twelve "distinct" Orders, and gives them as follows:

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|----------------------------|------------------|
| 1. "The Bedevi | 7. The Nakshi |
| 2. The Bettushi (Bektashi) | 8. The Rufa'i |
| 3. The Kadri | 9. The Sadi |
| 4. The Dussuki | 10. The Salmani |
| 5. The Idrissi | 11. The Shazali |
| 6. The Mevlavi | 12. The Sumbuli" |

The Salmani Order mentioned as number 10 in the list just given (we are informed by the writer of "The Der-

²The Senussi among others were omitted entirely from this official list.

³Religious Orders of Islam; page 35 (1908). *Vide* Rinn, "Marabouts et Khouan," pp. 26-51.

⁴Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th Ed. *vide* article "Dervishes."

⁵La Confrérie Musulmane—R. P. L. Petit, Paris 1902.

vish"), has no definite teaching, nor is it an organized body of dervishes. "During the performances of religious ceremonies of other Orders, when the names of the founders...are recited, the name of "Salman the Pure" is also mentioned." He is considered as patron saint by Mohammedan barbers, and they "are regarded as his dervishes."⁶

No Tekké nor organization of the Senussi has been found in Constantinople, although diligent inquiries have been made. The relations of the Senussi dervishes with the Turkish Government in Asia Minor seem very cordial at present, although they were formerly strained enough. Last spring the Sheikh of the Senussi, on his way to the Holy cities, telegraphed Mustafa Kemal congratulating him on his victories over the Greeks.⁷ This is natural in view of the Pan-Islamic aspirations of his Order.

The list of 177 Dervish Orders is given herewith.⁸

Ahmediyeh	Byumiyeh	Gharibiyeh	Khafriyeh
Ansariyeh	Djesniyeh	Ghazaliyeh	Khafifiyeh
'Azimiyeh	Djemaliyeh	Ghavsiiyeh	Khilvitiyeh
'Adiliyeh	Djundiyeh	Gulsheniyeh	(Khilwatiyya)
'Ashuriyeh	Dedjaniyeh	Ghaysiyeh	Khavajagan (?)
Abbasiyeh	Derdiriye	Haririye	Kazrouniyeh
Adjliyeh	Dermirdashiyeh	Haqiyeh	Kasaniyeh
'Arusiyeh	Debiyeh	Hukmiyeh	Kayaliyeh
'Aziziyeh	Djelvetiyeh	Hakimiyeh	Kubreviyeh
'Aliyeh	(Jalwatiyya)	Halabiyeh	Kumeliyeh
'Ashkiyeh	Esaviyeh	Hereviyeh	Medadiyeh
'Affiyeh	(Christian	Hilaliyeh	Minhajiyeh
'Akiliyeh	"Jesus"?)	Hamadaniyeh	Membouliyeh
'Aleviyeh	Edhemiyeh	Hevariye	Mujedtdidiyeh
'Amudiye	(Adhamiyeh)	Hutjajiyeh	Mouhasibiyeh
Abdurrussiyeh	Erdebilyeh	Idrisiyeh	Mahboubiyeh
Aperiye	Essediye	Ishakiyeh	Medariyeh
Ahrariyeh	Eshrefiyeh	Ibadiyeh	Medeniye
Bahshiyeh	Euveysiyeh	Ilmiyeh	(Madaniyeh)
Bedriyeh	(Uwaissiyeh)	Jebriyeh	Mudayniyeh
Bedeviyeh	Ehdiliyeh	Jirahiyeh	Muradiyeh
Bistamiyeh	Ekbiriyeh	(Djerahiyeh)	Meshishiyeh
Bekhtasiyeh	Ferdevisiyeh	Jesveliyeh	Musriyeh
(Baktashiyya)	Futuniyeh	Khalvetiyeh	Mustariyeh
Bekriyeh	Fatliyeh	Khatriyeh	Muslihiyeh
Behaiyeh	Faydiyeh	Khalidiyeh	Mazheriyeh
Bairamiyeh	Ghaziyeh	Kharaziyeh	Melamiyeh

⁶New York, 1895; translated by Dr. Avac Cutujian. This number was confirmed in a conversation recently with a Rufa'i Sheikh, who stated also that there are 18 Sub-Orders.

⁷Orient News—Constantinople, May 1921. It seems the Sheikh has been in Turkey since he was brought from Africa in a German submarine during the war.

⁸The writer would be glad to have his attention called to any duplications, omissions or errors, in this list. He has not yet been able to consult Rinn's list.

Mevleviye	Qarabashiye	Senaniye	Sufhiye
(Maulawiyya)	Qashberiyeh	Sinbaliye	Seiyadiye
Mihdeviye	Qasriye	Sehrverdiye	Tajiyeh
Mejousiye	Qatnaniye	(Suharwardiye)	Taziye
Nasriye	Rashidiye	Schliye	Taghraliye
Nussusiye	Reslaniye	Shaziliye	Teyfutiye
Nuzamiye	Rufaiye	Shahalimiye	'Ushakiye
Nakshbandiye	(Rifaiyya)	Shernubiye	Unsiye
(Nakshbandiyya)	Rukniye	Shatariye	Yafeiye
Nurbahshiye	Ramazaniye	Shabaniye	Yesefiye
Nuriye	Revsheniye	Sharaniye	Yemeniye
Nouviye	Rumiye	Shabiye	Yunisiye
Qalanderiye	Seraniye	Shemsiye	Zahidiye
(Wanderers)	Sutusiye	Sheybaniye	Zurnkiye
Qadriye	Sadiye	Sadberiyeh	Zehriye
(Qadiriyya)	Sehaniye	Saviye	Zeliveh
Qasmiye	Seyariye	Salabiye	Zainiye

In addition to the above list furnished by a member of the Board of Dervishes, I would include the following:

Alwaniye	Dousukiye	Rahmaniye	Sennussiye
Amirghaniye	Darqawiye	Siddiquiye	Salmaniye
Bakayiyeh	Hansaliye	Shadhiliye	Tijaniye
Chishtiye	Karzaziye	Shaikhiiye	Taibiiye

III

During the war a manual of instructions and regulations was published by the Ottoman Government for the use of government officers and the Dervish Orders. A summary of the important points in this pamphlet may be of interest.

There is a Board of seven Dervishes called the Mejlis al Meshaiyé, appointed by the Sheikh of Islam, which sits in Constantinople daily, except on Fridays and holidays, and has the supervision and control of all Dervish Orders and all official Dervish Tekkés in the Ottoman Empire. In the Provinces there are similar Boards having the same functions, except that they are subject to the Board in Constantinople. These Provincial Boards are called Enjamin Mejliss. The duties and powers of these Boards are described in the manual of Rules and Regulations published in A. H. 1334 (A. D. 1918).

The Board has a president and two secretaries. There is also a sub-committee of three inspectors. This Board is appointed by the Sheikh of Islam on the approval of H. M. The Sultan. The duties of the inspectors are to visit the Tekkés, to see that government regulations are kept, and to investigate reports of infringements.

The members of the Board receive salaries from the Turkish Government. The President's salary was fifty Turkish liras per month; and the other members, twenty liras per month, before the war. This has now been considerably modified and food allowances also made.

To assist this Board, a committee of three in each Tekké district has been appointed. This committee consists of the Sheikh of the Central Tekké, of which there is one in each district; and one dervish from each of two other Tekkés in the same district. Such committees have the direct oversight of all Tekkés in their own districts.

The functions of the Central Board and Provincial Boards are in detail as follows:

1. The appointment of new sheikhs as heads of the Tekkés, after due examination as to the fitness of the candidates for office. When an appointment is made, the name of the new Sheikh must be reported to the Ministry of Evkaf (Pious Foundations or Endowments) for financial reasons, e. g. the payment of the Sheikh's monthly stipend; his grant of food; the collection of rents from any part of the Tekké property which may be let to others (such as a room, office or shop), since the Tekké is Dervish property administered by the government for the benefit of the Order.
2. To fix the rank of each Tekké in its district, e. g. The Central Tekké.
3. To exercise control over Endowment Funds.
4. To keep Tekké records. (Evidently membership statistics are not included.)
5. Publicity and Propaganda.

Three members of the Board are appointed to publish articles on Sufism, or the peculiar mystical beliefs of Dervishdom and on the religion of Islam. Formerly there was a Dervish periodical published by the Board called "Sufieh," but it has now been discontinued. A monthly periodical called "Jerideh al Miyeh" is published by the Turkish Government's Ministry of Religion

(under the Sheikh of Islam) which frequently contains articles of interest to the Dervish Orders and their affairs. These articles are contributed by members of The Board of Dervishes (Mejlis al Meshaiyé).

6. *Discipline.* There are official Tekkés and private Tekkés. The Board has entire control over all official Tekkés and their members, can remove a Sheikh for cause, and discipline any member. This is evidently exercised very rarely indeed, and the official Orders are practically free, except in financial control, unless excesses in practice are brought to the government's notice.

7. *Private Tekkés.* The Board of Dervishes has no control over private Tekkés; save over the rites and ceremonies conducted therein (to guard against excesses or irregularities).

Private Tekkés are self-supporting and receive no government aid. The members of private Tekkés choose and support their own Sheikhs and meeting places. They often meet in private houses.

All private Tekkés (or organizations) must report when organized to the Board of Dervishes regarding their organization, ceremonies and practices. Also they must give assurances that their faith and practice accord with the tenets of Islam.

8. *Hygiene.* Sanitary regulations exist for the proper cleanliness and ventilation of all Tekkés; and for the prevention of infectious and contagious diseases. Some of the Tekkés visited by the writer left much to be desired in respect of cleanliness and good ventilation; while some others were very clean. Hygienic regulations were introduced by the late Government of the "Party of Union and Progress" during the war, so they are very recent.

IV

An earnest effort was made to obtain membership statistics, but without success. It developed that some local Orders keep careful lists of members, while others do not. The Board of Dervishes claims to have no record of the

number of members of the official Tekkés; nor does it have a record of private Tekkés. Of course it should have knowledge of the new organizations when reported, but not necessarily a record of memberships. Old private tekkés may not be registered at all. Only a strict official government census can obtain this information; and even then it would hardly be accurate unless the Tekké records were examined, showing the names of all members and adherents.

So far as can be learned, all official Tekkés perform their ceremonies once a week, and these are usually crowded with devoted worshippers. No fixed day is chosen for all orders, but each chooses the day and hour to suit its membership and clientèle. Some meet in the afternoon, and others at night. In Constantinople one can attend dervish ceremonies every day in the week.

Out of 250 official Tekkés in Constantinople (excluding the eight Bektashi Houses) the following figures show the days the Dervish Orders meet:

33	meet on Sundays
25	meet on Mondays
17	meet on Tuesdays
25	meet on Wednesdays
76	meet on Thursdays
52	meet on Fridays
22	meet on Saturdays

Total 250 hold meetings every week.

The Bektashis are said to meet irregularly (i. e. on call) for their ceremonies.

The performances of the Tekkés visited by the writer have all been well attended, showing much popular interest and sympathy, especially from the common people and some from the middle classes. Our data are not complete enough to give reliable attendance statistics for many Tekkés in Constantinople.

The cause of popular interest in dervish ceremonies and mysteries is no doubt due to the deep seated dissatisfaction of many Moslem worshippers with the ordinary forms of their religion. The discussion of the philosophy

of Sufism has no place in this paper. But several conversations with Dervish Sheikhs in Constantinople Tekkés confirm the previous conclusions of eminent scholars, viz., that the Dervishes themselves believe they are able to penetrate divine mysteries and to come into communion or attain union with God through their system and ceremonies, which experience it is impossible otherwise for the ordinary worshipper ever to have.

One prominent Sheikh told the writer that he divides the people of all religions into:

1. The Common People, or the Ignorant.
2. The Select People, or the Educated or Learned.
3. The Elite, or Enlightened or Illumined ("Gnostics").

He stated that only the latter ever know God or attain to divine knowledge and thus get complete satisfaction in life. At any rate the Dervishes teach this, and many Mohammedans believe it.

It is not at all probable that the private Tekkés are as numerous as the official Tekkés. Estimating then 300 Tekkés in Constantinople with an average weekly attendance of fifty (50), which does not seem unreasonable, we get a monthly attendance of sixty thousand (60,000) persons or seven hundred and twenty thousand (720,000) per year. It is safe to say that many thousands attend these ceremonies annually in Constantinople alone, which certainly indicates that they exert a very wide influence in this city. On the whole, the writer thinks that these may be a liberalizing influence, and much broader than that affecting the ordinary worshipper through Orthodox channels. This makes the minds of such devotees more open to new religious ideas.⁹ Dervish influence would naturally be much greater if it affected more of the middle and upper classes of society;¹⁰ and a larger number of *different* individuals, at least in Constantinople.

There are of course regions such as North Africa and

⁹Of course Orders such as the Senussi are exceptions.

¹⁰The Mevlevis have exerted considerable influence on the Turkish government in the past through their Head, the "Tchelibî" in Konia, who ordinarily girds the sword of Osman on the new Sultan when he ascends the throne. The Sheikh of the Senussi, however, performed this service for the present Sultan. Formerly the Bektashis were very influential at court through the Janissaries, until 1826.

Arabia where practically the entire Moslem population comes under the influence of the Orders or Brotherhoods like the Senussi.¹¹

Once obtain the acceptance of any religious doctrines as divine truth from other than Koranic sources, and the minds and hearts of the Moslem world will begin to be open to Christ's teaching. If only the Sheikhs can be persuaded to study the Scriptures, the light will break through. Recently the writer offered a prominent Sheikh of the Mevlevi Order a copy of the New Testament in Turkish. He gladly accepted it, said he would read it carefully, and suggested he would be glad to get one in Persian also. Another Sheikh (a Rufa'i) refused a copy very courteously, with the statement that he had read it.

While it was true in the early history of Christianity that the movement spread from the "lower" to the "higher" layers of society (and this has been true also in the modern history of Christian Missions), yet leaders like Paul were raised up to blaze the way. May it not be that such leaders for the spiritual conquest of Islam can be won from among these Dervish Sheikhs whose tremendous enthusiasm for the faith of the Meccan prophet, and for the founders of their Orders, and whose enormous influence among their followers (and it is hard to over-estimate it), might be devoted to the cause of advancing Christ's Kingdom in the world.

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¹¹The Akhwan of Arabia, however, are not dervishes, cf. Harrison: *Missionary Review*, July 1920, page 599.