

Alevism

Key Question: What does the
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Let's review the vocabulary:

- Cemevi is the place of worship.
- Semahs a set of mystical and beautiful body movements in rhythmic harmony.
- Baglama or Saz - musical instrument.
- Cem is the central Alevi communal worship service.
- Hakk is the Alevi word for 'God'. It means "Truth".

Ancient Anatolian
Cemevi (13th Century)

The Cemevi

- The Cemevi is the place for Alevi to come together and worship. This ceremony is called **Cem**. If possible everyone will sit in a circle facing each other.

Why do you think they will face each other?
What do you think this shows about their beliefs about people?

Modern Cemevi in
London (2018)



The Cemevi

Why do they face each other?

What does this shows about their beliefs about people?

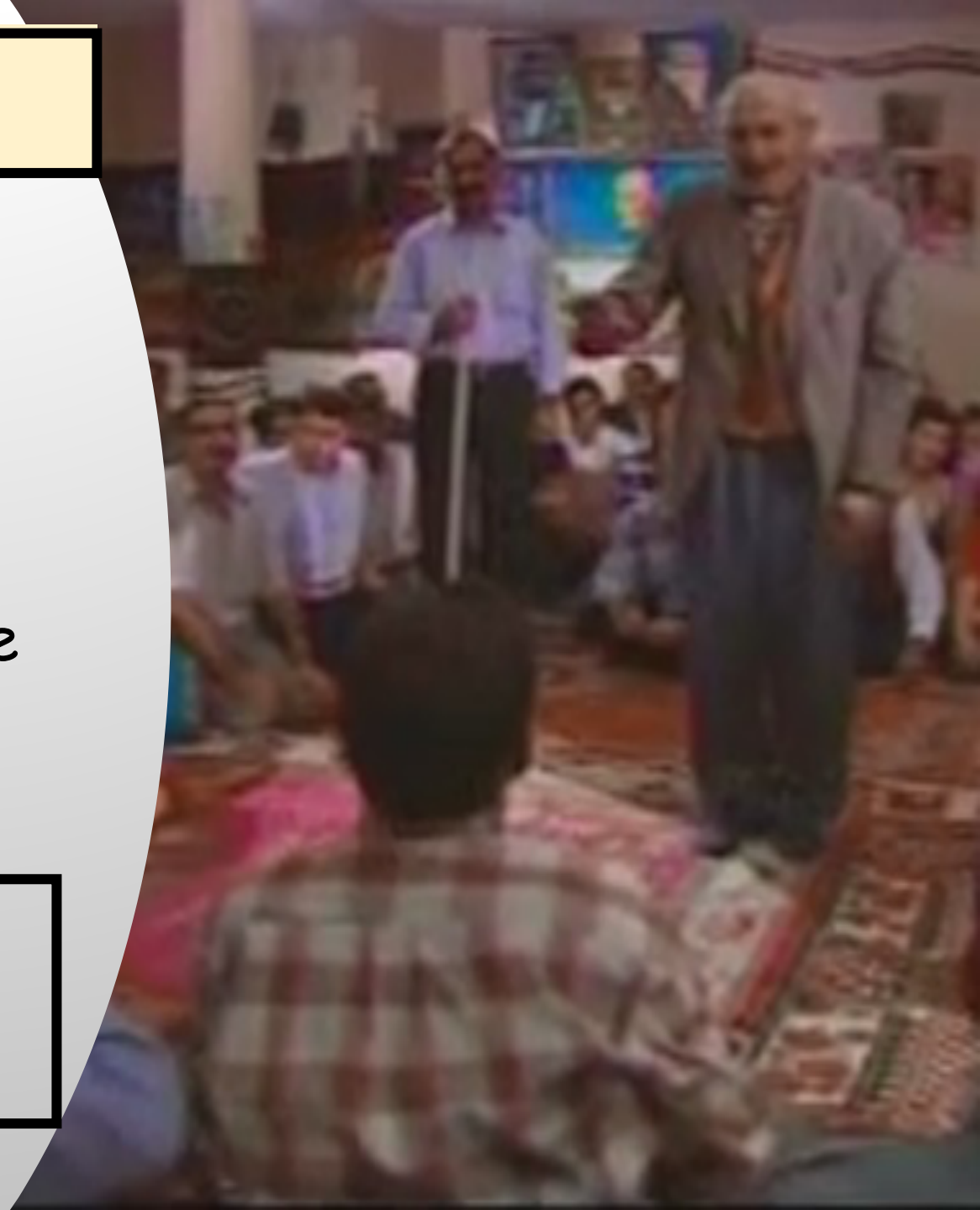
The Alevi believe Hakk (God) is in everyone and therefore everyone is equal. They all sit on the same level facing each other to show this. A circle is a good way to link their experience.



The picture shows a man resolving an issue with the aid of the Dede (religious leader) and the whole community.

- The Cem is the place for Alevi to share their acts of kindness, happiness, sadness, worship and equality.
- Everyone is equal in the Cem. Those hurt and upset with each other will be reunited and wrongs will be resolved.

Why do you think it is important to resolve conflicts in a group?
How do you resolve conflicts?



In the Cemevi

Candles will be lit. Usually there will be three, one each for Hakk, Muhamet and Ali.

Surprisingly there are no holy books,
Using the "holy book with strings", which is another name used for the baglama/saz (stringed instrument). The teachings and beliefs are expressed through poetry, music and hymns with the saz.

Do you think the hymns, music and poems are important? Why?



In the Cemevi

Semahs will be danced.

People who are oppressed by others
will be remembered.

In the circling of the Semah, the
dancers feel at one with each other and with Hakk (God).

The dancers have deep feelings of becoming one with Hakk/God and each other.
They become immersed in the dance.

The words of the hymns and poems remind them of how they should live, while
the music and dance engage them more deeply as a group in the feelings and
attitudes needed to become the best they can be.



In today's world, most Cemevis are also used as education centres.



Hace Bektash Veli, the 13th C founding Saint (Pir) of Alevism, said that 'the end of the path would be dark if the path is not knowledge.'



Alevis should be open, questioning and see themselves as on a continuing journey through of learning life. They should not accept claims of truth that have not been justified (through reason) or evidenced (through experience) and they should stand against falsehood and lies.

Why do you think learning is important?

Have you ever found out things you learned weren't true? Have your parents?

Why should we check what we learn?

Task: Write an answer to each question.

1. What would you expect to see at the Cemevi?
2. What is their importance?
(Look back at the slides for information)
3. What more would you like to know about Alevism?
4. Write two questions that you would like to ask at a Cemevi.