

Balinese priest in white clothes sprinkles holy water on kneeling women

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A standing Balinese priest wearing white clothes and holding a silver bowl sprinkles holy water on kneeling women who hold out their cupped hands to receive the blessing. The women, who are formally dressed in long colorful sarong and sashes, many wearing flowers in their hair, kneel in rows passed by the priest. In the background, other people walk past a platform laden with bowls of flowery offerings delivered for an Odelan festival, which is like a birthday party held for each temple routinely every 210 days. The Balinese have a special and ancient calendrical system that figures the intersections of days and weeks differently than the Gregorian calendar we use. There are seven-day and five-day weeks with thirty-five day intersections or months. Six of those months make a 210-day temple year. With thousands of temples on the island of Bali, there are Odelan festivals held somewhere most every day, some simple and some more elaborate depending on the size and wealth of the temple and its supporters.



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