

## Balinese priest in white clothes blesses dancers before performance

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A Balinese priest in white clothes and headscarf stands in the center and disperses holy water from a glass to bless dancers seated in a circle before their night-time performance. The male dancers, dressed identically in black and white checked waistcloths, hold their hands out to receive drops of water blessed by the Balinese Hindu priest.

In Bali, dance and music performances traditionally are conceived as offerings for the gods and community, akin to the carefully prepared flower, leaf, and food offerings. Even now when performances are open to, or even staged for, foreign tourists, they often hold religious or ritual as well as entertainment value.

Many Balinese dramas enact encounters between positive and negative beings in the universe. At the end of the performances, evil beings are never completely eliminated because the Balinese accept that good and bad always will coexist although human efforts should attempt to keep evil and disorder to a minimum.



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