Ramayana redux: Hanuman, the Monkey General, plays his part in the Indonesian telling of the Ramayana epic drama during an evening of cultural performances presented by local Indian, Indonesian, and Thai communities at the Third International Ramayana Conference Sept. 18–19 at NIU. See conference recap below.

Indonesian leaders to speak at NIU this week

1. This week’s lecture: Chandra-nuj Mahakanjana and Tatchalerm Sudhipongpracha
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1. This week’s lecture: Chandra-nuj Mahakanjana and Tatchalerm Sudhipongpracha
Chandra-nuj Mahakanjana, associate dean for academic affairs of the Graduate School of Public Administration at the National Institute of Development Administration in Bangkok, and Tatchalerm Sudhipongpracha, a Ph.D. candidate in political science at NIU, will present “Achieving Democratic Accountability in Thai Local Government,” an update on a NIDA-NIU collaborative research project on the professionalization of municipal clerks in post-decentralization Thailand, at noon Friday, Oct. 1, in Room 110, Campus Life Building. Bring your lunch and feed your mind.

2. Two Indonesian leaders to speak at NIU this week
Two distinguished Indonesian leaders will present “Indonesian Update 2010: Political Islam and Regional Autonomy” at 11 a.m. Monday, Sept. 27, in the Heritage Room of the Holmes Student Center. Professor Bahtiar Effendy, dean of the Social and Political Science Department at Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University in Jakarta, will discuss Islam politics in his portion of the program. A leader of Muhammadiyah, the second largest mass religious organization in Indonesia, he received his doctorate in political science at Ohio State University. Dr. Ryaas Rasyid, a member of Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s advisory council and formerly the country’s Minister of Regional Autonomy, will speak on regional autonomy issues. Rasyid received his master’s degree in political science from NIU in 1988 and his doctorate from the University of Hawaii in 1994. The lecture is co-sponsored by NIU’s Center for Southeast Asian Studies, the Political Science Department, and the Division of International Programs.

3. International Ramayana conference combines scholarship, culture
More than 70 international scholars and others interested in the Asian epic story known as the Ramayana came to NIU Sept. 18–19 for the Third International Ramayana Conference co-sponsored by the center, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, and the International Ramayana Institute of North America (IRINA). The conference included presentations on the influence of the Ramayana story on various cultures and civilizations, the epic’s political aspects, its relevance in contemporary society, and other topics. Center director Jim Collins and IRINA president Nyoman Mahartayasa opened the conference Saturday with remarks, followed by the keynote speaker, Satya Vrat Shastri of the University of Delhi, whose topic was “Moral Values: How the Ramayana Enunciates Them.” On Sunday, NIU art historian and Center for Burma Studies Director Catherine Raymond gave the plenary address, “Are Depictions of Stories and Characters from the Ramayana Still Popular in Buddhist Mainland Southeast Asia?” Other center associates involved in
the conference were Susan Russell (Anthropology), who moderated a panel Sunday on the Ramayana’s acceptance in different countries with Saturday’s keynote speaker, and Alan Potkin (CSEAS adjunct), who presented “Digitally Replicating the Lost Lao Ramayana Murals at Vat Oub Mong.” The conference ended with an educators’ workshop, moderated by outreach coordinator and center associate Julie Lamb. Selected papers will be linked to the conference website, said Lamb, who coordinated the event with Anne Petty Johnson, director of external programming for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

4. Hartmann travels to D.C. for Thai embassy roundtable
Language professor and center associate John Hartmann traveled on behalf of the center to the Royal Thai Embassy in Washington, D.C., for a Sept. 14–15 roundtable for students, faculty, and administrators involved in global Thai studies programs and university student organizations to discuss the study of Thailand and the promotion of a new international image of the country and its culture. As a representative of NIU, which in the past two years has received $200,000 to establish a Thai Teaching and Research Endowment Fund, Hartmann reported on use of the endowment to underwrite student and faculty research travel, grants for language study, and funds for NIU Anthropology Museum projects, among others. He also discussed the upcoming Council of Thai Studies conference, which began at NIU, and other Thai studies activities at NIU.

5. Flying the flag for Thailand: Instructional teaching doctoral candidate Piyathida Sereebenjapol, a former Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant now working as a graduate assistant in the Foreign Language Multimedia Learning/Training Center, is on the field with more than 500 local fifth-graders participating in International Programs’ Parade of Flags on Sept. 17. Sereebenjapol gave a talk about Thai culture and Thai classical dance (which she has studied for 15 years) to students before they took to the East Lawn behind Huskie Stadium to carry the flags of more than 100 countries up Lucinda Avenue to the Martin Luther King Commons.
6. Seeking host families, warm coats for SEAYLP

NIU is actively looking for area families to act as hosts Oct. 31–Nov. 11 for 28 high school students and seven adult leaders from Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam participating in the fall session of the center’s Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP). Students are placed in pairs and adults may be placed as singles. Host families provide a bed for each participant, breakfast each day and most dinners, all meals during one free weekend (Nov. 6–7) and transportation to and from class sessions at NIU. Host family orientation will be at 7 p.m. Oct. 25 in the Heritage Room of the Holmes Student Center. For details, contact NIU host family coordinator Leslie Shive at 815-753-9546 or e-mail lshive@niu.edu. For details about the fall SEAYLP program, see the center website. The center is also collecting fall and winter jackets for its SEAYLP participants. Look for collection boxes in the Stevens Building, Founders Library and various dormitories. Youth and adult sizes are needed. For details, call 815-753-1981.

7. NIU president welcomes international scholars: NIU President John Peters hosted a reception for NIU’s international scholars Sept. 21. Among those attending, from left, were Niko Gosal (Indonesia), Leizel Arsenal (Philippines), Jocelyn Sim (Malaysia), Nanda Octavia (Indonesia), Grace Luntungan (Indonesia), Olga Singkoh (Indonesia), and Darus Tharim (Malaysia).

8. Save the dates: Career fairs; international lectures; trickster tales of Southeast Asia

- **Sept. 30:** The International Student and Faculty Office opens its weekly Brown Bag Series at noon in 300 Faraday West with a presentation by Andrea Buford, research development specialist with the Office of Sponsored Projects, who will present an overview of the Haitian earthquake disaster response as well as an exploration of what universities can efficiently and effectively offer in large-scale disasters such as Haiti.
- **Oct. 2:** Be the Change: A Day of Community Service, a national event sponsored by South Asian Americans Leading Together, which encourages communities to serve in honor of the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi. NIU will participate with drives for canned food for local families and books for Africa, and a noodle
cookoff. To register to the group’s website and select “Northern Illinois University.” For details, email Priti Nemani at nemanip@gmail.com.

- **Oct. 5:** NIU Career Services’ Graduate School and Professional Fair, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Duke Ellington Ballroom, Holmes Student Center.
- **Oct. 6:** NIU Career Services’ Internship Fair, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Convocation Center.
- **Oct. 20:** The trickster tales of Sri Thanonchai, or Xiang Miang, as he is called in Laos, are part of a widely shared cultural package—about a prototypical hero with different names and traits as he moves across the Mekong and Southeast Asia. The attempt to translate the tales’ humor into English—in text or art—depends on both the intentions of the translator or artist and the receptivity of the audience. Language professor and center associate John Hartmann will present “Translating Humor: Examples from Southeast Asian Trickster Tales” at noon in 110 Watson, part of the Foreign Languages and Literatures department’s fall Brown Bag Lecture Series. Political science graduate student Pinitbhand Paribatra, a Ph.D. candidate, helped research and write the presentation.
- **Oct. 20:** NIU Career Services’ Job Fair, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Convocation Center.

### 9. U.S. Department of Education looking for field readers

The U.S. Department of Education’s International Education Programs Service is looking for language and area studies specialists to serve as field readers for its various grant competitions, which include its Fulbright-Hays and Title VI programs. Most reviews are conducted electronically with no travel necessary in most cases. Where travel is necessary, expenses for travel, hotel, and meals are covered. Readers are provided modest compensation. For details, see the department’s field reader website.

### 10. Money for study: Fellowships, scholarships and more

- The Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies at Leiden (KITLV) has established a post-doctoral fellowship for the study of medical history in early modern Southeast Asia. KITLV is looking for a historian to participate in its Health, Disease, and Medicine in Southeast Asia project. Candidates will be expected to live in Leiden for four to six months. Senior KITLV researcher Peter Boomgaard is the supervising scholar. Applications should include a resume, brief research proposal, and timetable; send to Gerry van Klinken at klinken@kitlv.nl. **Deadline to apply: Dec. 1. NEW**
- Undergraduate or graduate students learning Indonesian are eligible for a summer scholarship through the U.S. State Department’s Critical Language Scholarship Program. Scholarships provide fully funded, group-based intensive language training and cultural enrichment for seven to ten weeks. Students in all disciplines, including business, engineering, law, medicine, the sciences, and the humanities, are encouraged to apply. **Deadline to apply: Nov. 15. NEW**
- The U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is actively seeking three graduating seniors and master’s-level students for its new
**Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship program in Laos** for the 2011–12 academic year. Students must be committed to teaching English in Laos for 10 months. All instruction is in English, but knowledge of some Lao will be needed. **Deadline to apply: Oct. 18.**

- The Council of Overseas American Research Centers (COARC) is expanding its multi-country research fellowship program for 2010–11 to include master’s degree candidates. Doctoral candidates are already eligible for the fellowships, which are given to both individuals and teams who carry out research in two or more countries outside the U.S. Details on the fellowships will be available on the [COARC website](#) in October.

- The Center for Khmer Studies, the American Overseas Research Center in Cambodia, invites applications from U.S. scholars in all disciplines who wish to conduct research in Cambodia. Ph.D. fellowships are as long as eleven months for doctoral dissertation research. Senior fellowships also available to scholars who already hold a Ph.D. The fellowship is open to U.S. citizens only. **Deadline to apply: Nov. 15.** For details, e-mail publishing@khmerstudies.org.

- The National Security Education Program’s David L. Boren scholarships and fellowships provide unique funding opportunities for American students to study in many countries, including Southeast Asia. Applications for the 2011–12 undergraduate scholarships and graduate student fellowships are online at the [NSEP](#) website. Boren Scholarships provide up to $20,000 for an academic year’s study abroad. Boren Fellowships provide up to $30,000 for language study and international research. **Deadlines to apply: Feb. 1 for fellowships; Feb. 10 for scholarships.** For details, e-mail boren@iie.org or call 800-618-NSEP.

11. Conferences and calls for papers

- **Council on Thai Studies annual conference**, Oct. 29–30, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Contact: Kathleen Gillogly at gillogly@uwp.edu.

- **Fifth Annual International Workshop and Expo on Sumatra Tsunami Disaster and Recovery**, Nov. 23–24, Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Organized by Tsunami and Disaster Mitigation Research Center at Syiah Kuala University, and others. Tsunami area and historic Aceh tours Nov. 25. See [conference](#) website for details.

- **Power and Change in Malaysia and Singapore**, Dec 10–11, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia. Sponsored by the [Malaysia and Singapore Society of Australia](#). E-mail to massa.colloquium@anu.edu.au. Some postgraduate registration fees will be waived on a competitive basis.

Governance, Human Rights and Development: Challenges for Southeast Asia and Beyond, First International Conference on International Relations and Development, May 19–20, Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand. Scholars and graduate students encouraged to submit abstracts. E-mail to abstracts@icird.org. Deadline: Oct. 30. See conference website for details.

12. Area Southeast Asia cultural opportunities

- **Burmese lacquer** is on display through Oct. 2 in ‘Legacy in Lacquer: A Living Art from Burma’ at the NIU Art Museum in Altgeld Hall.
- The Indonesian Consulate in Chicago offers **free Balinese and Javanese dance and gamelan classes** on weekends. For details, see the consulate website.
- The **Cambodian Association of Illinois** holds **free traditional Cambodian music and dance lessons** Sundays at the Cambodian American Heritage Museum and Killing Fields Memorial, 2831 W. Lawrence Ave., Chicago. Museum hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday and on weekends by appointment.

If you are a person with a disability who may need assistance at any center-sponsored event, contact office manager Nancy Schuneman at 815-753-1771 or nschunem@niu.edu. If you no longer wish to receive this bulletin, please reply to this e-mail with a request to remove your name. Thank you.