The Theravada Civilizations Project announces
A Dissertation/post-Doc Workshop
To be held in Seattle, Wednesday March 30, 2016

DEADLINE for proposals: January 15, 2016

The Theravada Civilizations Project is pleased to announce plans for an intensive dissertation/post-doc workshop, which will be held immediately preceding the Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting (March 31 – April) in Seattle. There will also be a business meeting of the Theravada Studies Group of the AAS on Saturday, April 1.

This workshop brings together doctoral students and/or post-doctoral academics in the humanities and social sciences who are (1) developing dissertation proposals or are in early phases of research, dissertation writing, or revising dissertations for publication; and who are (2) engaging some aspects of Theravada classical and/or vernacular literature and/or researching aspects of Theravada history and cultural practice among South or Southeast Asian communities. The workshop will be limited to 6 doctoral students and/or post-doctoral academics, ideally from a broad array of disciplines and working on a wide variety of materials in a variety of time periods on themes related to Theravada traditions and communities in Southeast Asia. Priority will be given to doctoral candidates and post-docs at North American universities. There will be four faculty mentors present.

Theravada Buddhism is practiced throughout the world with over 150 million practitioners settled primarily in Cambodia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Burma, Nepal, and Thailand. The South and Southeast Asian diaspora communities as well as the rise in global interest in vipassanā meditation has led to the growth of Theravada Buddhism in the Americas, Australia, Japan, and Europe. The scholarly study of Theravada Buddhism began with the scrutiny of Pali literature, but now covers many disciplines including literature, ethics, anthropology, philology, philosophy, history, cultural studies, political science, urban studies, and art and material culture.

The Theravada Civilizations Project is comprised of scholars from Arizona State University, Bowdoin College, the University of Chicago, Cornell University, the École Française d’Extrême-Orient, Harvard University, the University of Leeds, the University of London, the University of Louisville, Missouri State University, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Toronto, the University of Vermont, the University of Washington and the University of Wisconsin, and in consultation with scholars from a range of other Asian, Australian, and European institutions. A description of the larger project can be found in Juliane Schober and Steven Collins, “The Theravāda Civilizations Project: future directions in the study of Buddhism in Southeast Asia,” in The Journal of Contemporary Buddhism, vol. 13 (1), May 2012.

The Theravada Civilizations Project will provide up to 1,000 US dollars in support for participants to help cover travel and accommodation. Meals will be provided at the workshop. Students needing additional funds to attend the workshop are encouraged to approach their home institutions for support. Applicants need not have advanced to candidacy but must have drafted a dissertation research proposal to apply. Applications are also welcome from doctoral students in the early phases of writing their dissertations, as well as those in the later phases and recent post-docs. Applications consist of two items only: (1) a current Curriculum Vitae, and (2) a dissertation proposal, or a statement of the specific issues being addressed, the intellectual approach, and the materials being studied. Neither should exceed 10 double-spaced pages in length.

Application materials must reach Steven Collins at s-collins@uchicago.edu no later than January 15th January 2016. Workshop participants will be selected on the basis of the submitted projects, the potential for useful exchanges among them, and a concern to include a wide range of disciplinary perspectives, intellectual traditions, and regions. Applicants will be notified by February 8th 2016. For further information about the workshop, or eligibility, please contact Prof. Collins at the above email address.