

# Regulating Academic Colonialism — Thailand's Code of Conduct

*In several countries in the Third World the problem of academic colonialism is causing increasing concern. Academic colonialism, the process by which structures of academic development in the Third World are suppressed and not allowed to grow and is in extreme cases distorted to provide espionage facilities for rich countries has come under increasing attack. Within the last few years several countries have attempted to control their academic resources against these predatory tendencies. Below we give a code of conduct and regulations promulgated by the Government of Thailand for this purpose. It relates basically to the role of Foreign Research in Thailand and has object lessons for Sri Lanka where academic colonialism has now become a subject of intense discussion.*

"Owing to the fact that the Regulations of the National Research Council Governing the Promotion of Foreign Research in Thailand B.E. 1509 dated October 1966 has been in use for a considerable period of time and is not current and appropriate to the present situation, the administrative committee of the National Research Council has granted permission for the Regulations Governing the Promotion of Foreign Research in Thailand B.E. 2509 to be superseded by the Regulations Governing Foreign Researchers to Conduct research in Thailand B.E. 2516 as follows:

**Item 1. Objectives.** To encourage the expansion of research in Thailand, the results of which Thailand may utilize in expediting her social, scientific and technological development, and to offer Thai researchers opportunities to collaborate with foreign researchers, to exchange ideas and knowledge, to gain experience and to increase research effectiveness. This will create international scientific co-operation and enhance the feeling of fraternity among scholars.

**Item 2. Principles.** Research work is essential to national development. Therefore one main policy of the Thai government is to encourage research activities. It is necessary for the government to protect the rights and status of Thai researchers and to have due regard to the security and interests of the country. However to accelerate national development through the utilization of research findings, the government shall encourage foreign researchers to conduct

research in Thailand in accordance with the following principles:

(1) The research must be for the interest of both parties and not solely of the foreign party.

(2) The research must be sponsored by a foreign government or institution in co-ordination with the Thai government.

(3) The research must be conducted jointly with Thai researchers who are active on a full-time or part-time basis.

(4) The research findings must be published in English with the collaboration of Thai researchers whose names shall be included in the report, except in cases under (7) and (8).

(5) The rights to findings and copyright of the research will be in accordance with prior agreement with the National Research Council.

(6) Samples studied or collected in the course of the research shall become the property of the Thai government. Should there be several specimens of the same samples, the National Research Council may permit them to be exported as property of a foreign country unless the exportation of such things is specifically forbidden by law or regulation.

Should it become necessary for any sample to be sent abroad for further investigation as part of the study, the National Research Council will grant a temporary export permit provided that a binding agreement to return

said sample to Thailand be made with the National Research Council in advance.

(7) Research work sponsored by a foreign government or institution in terms of equipment and funds, provided that upon the completion of the research the equipment is donated to the Thai government, may be conducted totally by foreign researchers.

(8) Should Thai researchers not be available to participate in a research study, the National Research Council may permit foreign researchers to conduct such research by themselves.

(9) A research study must employ as many Thai assistants as possible.

**Item 3. Procedure.** Foreign researchers desiring to conduct research in Thailand shall proceed in the following manner:

(1) Submit an application to the National Research Council in the standard format not less than 90 days prior to the anticipated starting date.

(2) With the application submit a work programme stating the period of time, place and an agency or institution in Thailand and, if possible, the names of persons who shall participate in the proposed research.

(3) Submit an estimate of expenditure to be paid to Thai co-researchers or Thai assistants, if any, such as salary, wages, travelling expenses, and per diem.

(4) Upon receiving permission from the National Research Council produce this written permission in applying for a visa to enter Thailand.

(5) Upon entering Thailand, report in person at once to the National Research Council in order to:

(a) pay an initial processing fee for the conduct of research in Thailand Baht 200 (app. \$10) and at every extension of the said research period a processing fee of Baht 100 (app. \$5).

(b) deposit Baht 4000 (app. \$200) against the failure to perform under (8) hereof.

(c) obtain an identification card (bring three photographs of 3 Cm.x 4 for such a purpose).

(d) receive a letter addressed to the Immigration Office requesting permission to stay in Thailand for the necessary period of time but not exceeding one year each time.

(6) Submit a progress report at each six-month period during the course of the research.

(7) Upon completion of the research work and prior to the departure from Thailand, submit an abstract summarizing the results of the research or the knowledge gained through the research, and deliver samples studied or collected to the National Research Council. If there are several specimens of the same sample, certain specimens may be sent abroad with prior permission from the National Research Council.

(8) A complete report on the research shall be published in English and three copies of the said Report shall be delivered free of charge to the Office of the National Research Council within a period of one year from the date of the departure from Thailand. If the researchers fail to submit a report within the given date, the Office of the National Research Council may extend the delivery date for a period of time not exceeding one year.

In the event of failure to perform in accordance with the above provisions, the National Research Council reserves the right to forfeit the deposit placed under (5) (b).

(9) Thai co-operation shall have the right to go abroad to participate in the final preparation of the report. Prior arrangement shall determine which party will bear the expenses thus incurred. The Thai Government may bear the expenses in such cases as it deems necessary.

Item 4. This regulation does not apply to any foreign researcher who conducts research in Thailand as a direct employee of or has a contract with an international agency or belong to an official mission. However, such researchers also must submit an application to conduct research in the format of the National Research Council.

Item 5. The effective date of this Regulation is from January 1974.