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Article: Implications of the Urban Landscape Aspects of the Isan Culture Maintenance and Revitalization Programme

This paper describes the multilingual landscape aspect of the Isan Culture Maintenance and Revitalization Programme (ICMRP), a 500,000-euro, four-year European Union co-sponsored cultural maintenance and revival project focusing on the Thai Lao, Thailand's largest ethnic minority community, in four quasi-autonomous municipalities of Khon Kaen Province. The paper begins with an introduction situating the multilingual landscape of the ICMRP within a holistic project, including manufacturing 'ethnic' student and municipal uniforms, teaching Isan as a mother tongue, recording a multimedia cultural archive, and designing and installing multilingual signage. It then contextualizes the multilingual landscape created by the ICMRP in terms of geosemiotics, the linguistic landscape, and language policy and planning. Next, the paper provides a geosemiotic description of the aesthetics and design aspects. Finally, it discusses the multicultural landscape created within the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, one of three main pillars of the ASEAN Community, employing community building and inclusion.

Personal Information

John Draper is Director of the Rockefeller Foundation co-sponsored Social Survey Center at Khon Kaen University, where he is working on the 'Human Achievement in Thailand by Ethnicity Project'. He writes the 'Special Circumstances' column for *Prachatai* (<http://prachatai.org/english/category/special-circumstances>) and is the only regular foreign columnist writing on Thai society in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*, where he writes from a social democrat perspective. Former project officer for the European Union co-sponsored Isan Culture Maintenance and Revitalization Programme (2011-2016), he holds an MA in Applied Linguistics from the University of Southern Queensland and is a PhD candidate in the Doctor of Public Administration programme at the College of Local Administration, at Khon Kaen University. One of Thailand's leading sociolinguists, John is author of the *Thailand* chapter in the forthcoming *Routledge Handbook on Language Education Policy in Asia* and recently re-vamped the *Wikipedia Thailand*, *Ethnic Groups in Thailand*, *Languages of Thailand* and *Demographics of Thailand* main pages to reflect the presence of the Thai Lao and 61 other ethnic communities in Thailand. He is also on the Project for a Social Democracy Working Group and co-author of the PSDWG Statement of Purpose (<http://www.prachatai.com/english/node/6537>).