

Neufeld 123 Rediscovering Dan Keyi (The Peoples Land) Protected Areas, the State and Aboriginal People

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Protected Heritage Areas (Parks) in Canada are deeply entrenched in Western cultural conceptions of both nature and the human presence. As important features in Canadian life, Parks play significant social, economic and environmental roles in the support of Canadian cultural life. These broad cultural expectations of Parks complicate relationships between Parks, as evidenced in State governance and management policies, and resident Indigenous peoples. Parks are on the front line of cultural negotiations between the State and Indigenous peoples.

The paper presents a survey of the Canadian State's response to Indigenous peoples through a study of National Parks governance and management practices within the environment of formal agreement negotiation with Indigenous people in northwestern Canada. It compares the trajectory of the resulting practices with the evolution of international conventions regarding cultural recognition and commemoration ratified by the United Nations.

The paper concludes with some observations on the variations between the international discourse of cultural recognition and the implementation of Canada's evolving Parks program with resident Indigenous peoples, noting implications for the future of Parks.