Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

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“Respecting Sovereignties: Indigenous/State Agreements in British Columbia and their Alignment with a Dual Sovereignty Concept”

Department of Political Science

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Remote defence

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. James Lawson, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Heidi Kiiwetepinesiik Stark, Department of Political Science, UVic (Member)

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Dr. Mary Ellen Purkis, School of Nursing, UVic

Dr. Stephen Evans, Acting Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

This thesis explores a conception of dual sovereignty, consisting of Indigenous and state sovereignties existing and operating within the same territorial space. A dual sovereignty construct, standing as it does in distinct contrast to a common settler-held presumption of Canadian state sovereignty and hegemony, provides a superior frame for articulating just relations between Indigenous peoples, the Canadian state, and that state’s citizens. The thesis examines the role of agreement-making in defining relations between sovereign Indigenous peoples and the state, both in treaty and non-treaty form. Focused on non-treaty agreements that pertain to land and resources in the province of British Columbia, a case study approach reveals a congruence of several such agreements with elements of a dual sovereignty construct. Some of the agreements exhibit substantial compatibility with a dual sovereignty concept, with dialogical forms of recognition and a well-articulated Indigenous land-use vision and worldview built into the agreement-making process. Those agreements centered on land-use planning seem particularly well-equipped to embrace a more dialogical process that creates space for an Indigenous vision, and allows Indigenous Nations to expand their institutional and structural power meaningfully in relation to the state. Agreements designed primarily to help manage the state-driven consultation processes that are required under Canadian state law seem inherently monological by contrast, providing only a restricted space for increased institutional or structural power of Indigenous peoples.