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“Canada: A Conservative Society?”

34th Annual Conference of the Association for Canadian Studies
in German-speaking Countries

Grainau, Germany. 22-24 February 2013

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The 34th Annual Conference of the Association for Canadian Studies in German-speaking Countries (GKS), held in Grainau in February 2013, was organised by the Political Science and Sociology section of the Association. The two-day conference entitled “Canada: A Conservative Society?” included papers from a wide range of subjects divided into three workshops: Conservatism and its “Others” in Contemporary Canada, Language and Literatures in Canada: Reflection of a Conservative Society and Nature Revisited: Economic, Ecological and Cultural Values of Natural Resources in a Conservative Society. The conference was opened by the President of GKS at the time Martin Kuester, the Canadian Ambassador to the Republic of Austria Dr. John Barrett, the Canadian Ambassador to Switzerland, Roberta Santi, the Canadian Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Peter M. Boehm, and the President of ICCS, Patrick James. The opening was followed by the presentation of the Prix d’Excellence du Gouvernement du Québec, the Jürgen Saße Award, the Foundation of Canadian Studies Award and the GKS Scholarship to prominent Canadianists.

The conference started with an introduction by Dr. Steffen Schneider from Bremen University, Germany, and a keynote lecture “Conservatism and the Transformation of the Canadian Party System,” presented by David Laycock from Simon Fraser University, Burnaby. The presentation gave an overview of the developments of the federal party system in Canada. Attention was drawn on the changes that took place in 1993, the Liberal Dominance, the post 2006 party system and the Harper Government.

There were over 150 professors and students from fields such as history, political science, American studies, English studies, Native studies and Romance language studies in attendance at the conference. Attendants were predominantly from universities across Austria, Germany and Switzerland. There were participants from Denmark, England, Norway, Sweden and Ukraine as well.