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## On the Eighth Conference of Japanese and Korean Theologians

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On November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Seigakuin University (SEIG) and the Korean Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary (PUTS) of Seoul held the 8<sup>th</sup> Japan Korea Theological Conference: Japan Korea Theological Symposium 2018. This symposium has been run under the guidance of the “Japan Korea Theological Conference” agreement since its formation to promote the free and open exchange of ideas between the two schools in 2008. According to the provisions of the agreement, the two schools alternate responsibility for hosting the conference, and this year SEIG was the conference venue.

In 2017, PUTS was the stage for the conference marking the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. This symposium was a momentous event that further strengthened the bond between SEIG and PUTS. At PUTS, it was proposed that the theme for the 2018 symposium would be [Anthropology]. In light of the myriad of challenges facing Christianity in the modern age, as well as a positive impression from our staff, SEIG enthusiastically accepted this proposal.

Of the three divisions of The Seigakuin University General Research Institute, The General Cultural Research Center assumed responsibility for organizing the symposium. This opportunity for international scholarly exchange is worn as a badge of pride by both the General Research Center and SEIG as a whole.

On the theme of [Christian Anthropology], plenary lectures were given by Professor Eichi Katayanagi of Japan, and Professor Kim, Do Hoon of Korea. Professor Katayanagi’s lecture was followed by commentary from Professor Baik, Chung-Hyun and Professor Kim’s lecture followed by commentary from Instructor by Special Appointment Amadeo Murase.

There are many issues which strain the relationship between Japan and South Korea. It is my earnest hope that the tranquil and spiritual scholarly

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exchange we have established between our two schools will someday, in some form, strengthen the bond of peace and righteousness between our two great nations. PUTS representative Shin, Ok-Su's sermon during the symposium was included in the school's prayer hour. The strength and clarity of her message was deeply impressive.

It was decided that the same theme be carried over to the symposium in 2019. This year's symposium, consequently, was the first of two on the same theme. I don't think it too bold to say that our embarkation this year surpassed expectation and laid a strong foundation for the discussions to come. Issues were raised from a wide swath of topics in theology, biblical science, philosophy, ethics, and philosophy and the history of science, and solutions explored through a wide variety of related matters, providing an opportunity for deep and meaningful academic and spiritual discourse. Above all else, this symposium provided scholars from both schools an opportunity to display the fruits of our collective academic endeavors.

I'd like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the presenters, Professor Eichi Katayanagi of Japan and Professor Kim, Do Hoon of Korea for their thought provoking plenary lectures, and Professor Baik, Chung-Hyun and Amadeo Murase for their comments and rebuttals. I'd also like to extend my gratitude to Yoshibumi Takahashi for acting as Master of Ceremonies, and the continually astounding multilingual translation and interpretation efforts of Assistant Professor Nag, Woon-Hae of PUTS, as well as reverend Baek, Chon Hwang of the United Church of Christ in Japan.

I'd also like to acknowledge the dedicated and detailed coordination of Associate Professor Yuki Shimada leading up to the symposium. Professor Shimada shouldered a great deal of responsibility, surely making the jobs of those to follow her easier. This event would not have been possible without the thorough planning and preparation of Masato Watanabe (Professor, Secretary general • Academic support division head), Miki Kikuchi (section chief, academic support division) and the rest of our wonderful staff. The diligent and courteous efforts of Tetsuya Kubo and the rest of the Christian Center in providing the pristine level of hospitality which represents SEIG must also be recognized.

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Next year we will continue to explore the theme of [Christian Anthropology] in Seoul, and I pray that it may become an even more enriching and cooperative experience.