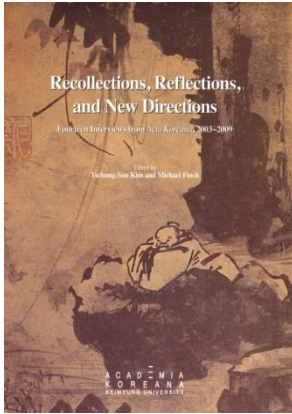


Recollections, Reflections and New Directions

Fourteen Interviews from *Acta Koreana*, 2003-2009



This book is a collection of dialogues with fourteen outstanding figures in the broad world of Korean studies, who have gladly told us about their academic, literary or artistic pursuits through direct interviews with *Acta Koreana* over the course of the past seven years. Among the interviewees are seven figures from the worlds of literature and music and seven from academia. All these persons are respectively engaged in widely differing areas of concern. Nevertheless, they all have one thing in common, namely, the outstanding quality of their contributions to the fields of Korean studies and Korean culture.

Scholarship and culture are ultimately composed of the stories of human beings. If that is the case, Korean studies and Korean culture comprise the collective stories of Korean scholars and cultural figures. Given the fact that the history of Korean studies is relatively short compared to that of Japanese or Chinese studies, these records of interviews with scholars and cultural figures function as an important 'oral archive', providing invaluable information related to the development of the history of Korean studies, as well as insights into the lives and thoughts of key figures in the realm of contemporary Korean culture.

It gives us great pleasure, therefore, to share the contents of these fourteen interviews with a wider audience through the publication of this collection and at the same time to take this opportunity to reaffirm *Acta Koreana's* unswerving determination to continue to be a vehicle not only for scholarship, translations and reviews, but also, through its interviews, to be a forum where the voices of those who have contributed the most to the development of Korean studies and contemporary Korean culture can be clearly heard.

January, 2010

Tschung-Sun Kim and Michael Finch, editors