

## **Final Remarks on the Third Academic Forum**

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As the Chinese saying goes: “Every feast must come to an end”, so does our meeting. However, I don’t think that we were here just to chew the fat or grumble and get upset over this matter. On a positive note, this will remind us of our efforts, of what we have been doing in all these years, of what we have created. For example, we have at least urged the society to pay attention to the detrimental impacts of urban development to the historical landscape. We have initiated the production of textbooks on cultural heritage and urban planning. We have also brought along such interesting topics of discussion. And we have brought about understandings and appreciation of cultural heritage sites, which definitely has a number of benefits for future studies.

Throughout this, I was a guide accompanying Prof. Dr. Masahiko Yamano on a study tour to see mural paintings in temples in Bangkok, Ayutthaya, Ang Thong, Pechaburi and Chonburi provinces. I am interested to see that Yamano particularly took an interest in the Traiphum scenes. This adds new experience and dimension to my thinking. While some (Thai) people are infatuated with Modern Art, many foreigners, in turn, have developed expertise in Thai art. And these people are not just busy gathering information—they question what ancient Thais’ thinking and attitudes are towards the Traiphum paintings. This, we haven’t been interested in or give it significance and value in terms of study. Ironically, we tend to regard them as our ancestors’ imagination about Heaven and Hell.

What I can do for now is to hope that one day we will have someone to replace us and continue what we have been doing, someone who will keep going on and until the majority of people develop greater appreciation towards what we have been talking about in this Forum. I also hope they will take it more seriously than just some routine actions—or just a part of the (government) Mission of Statement’s Policy.